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Healing from the heart - *Jananulzhi zhigakukui*:  
A history of 500 years of resistance of the Kaggaba indigenous People.  
Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia

By

Peter Adams Rawitscher

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Stanley H. Brandes, Chair

Professor Nancy Scheper-Hughes

Professor Ruth B. Collier

Summer 2024

Healing from the heart - *Jananulzhi zhigakukui*:

A history of 500 years of resistance of the Kaggaba indigenous People

Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia

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By Peter Adams Rawitscher

## Abstract

Healing from the heart - *Jananulzhi zhigakukui*:

A history of 500 years of resistance of the Kaggaba indigenous People.

Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia

By

Peter Adams Rawitscher

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Professor Stanley H. Brandes, Chair

This dissertation is a history of 500 years of resistance to violence amongst indigenous peoples in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta -SNSM, in Colombia, as practices of healing and reciprocity. It is focused on the legacy of the Kaggaba People to maintain themselves as an indigenous people, confronted by violence and domination since the Spanish invasion of their territory, until to today. The work is written from a perspective of my lasting and ongoing collaboration with those peoples. It combines Kaggaba historical memory, with written historical sources and present-day situations.

The work focuses on how Kaggaba practices of reciprocity form part of processes of resistance and healing. It addresses how the Kaggaba deploy precise forms of reciprocity that link territory, people and things, all connected with “the spirit”, as what the Kaggaba call the Law of Origin, involving “paying debts” at a spiritual level. We analyze how these forms of reciprocity can have effects on the other elements along those linkages, to produce results through transformations of context centered around ancestral territory. The Kaggaba consider territory as living entity which produces responses through practices of reciprocity.

To approach Kaggaba practices of resistance as reciprocity, we propose the concept of articulated assemblages in which reciprocity, articulates processes of transformation between things, people, territory and the “spirit”. Reciprocity as an assemblage engages with elements from linguistic anthropology, theories on violence, articulation and relationally produced identity, and expanded concepts of context. We address implications of Kaggaba practices of reciprocity as process of rearticulation of the self with context and power in ways that transcend subject-object divides, at the heart of healing and violence.

It weaves together grounded scenarios based on the deployment of debt relations. As a history, the work starts with the colonial imposition of “encomiendas” in Kaggaba territory, as forms of domination through debt and violence, and how the indigenous people redeploy those same links of reciprocity as resistance. Then it moves into Kaggaba deployments of reciprocity as



linked to the “spiritual” origin of ancestral territory as hybrid strategies of coexistence with the colonial catholic church. During most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, colonial forms of domination and debt combined with public policies for the dissolution indigenous identity and land. These elements morphed into a “State of Exclusion”, with deplorable levels of violence against the indigenous people of the SNSM, invisibly subsisting within modern nation.

The dissertation addresses how the indigenous peoples of the SNSM transform violence at personal and political levels. Especially the Kaggaba and Arhuaco, directly deploy their “Law of Origin”, embedded in the ancestral territory of the “Black Line” as processes of reciprocity based on principles of care. These practices of embodied reciprocity generate profound transformative responses from territory, enabling the indigenous people to cast off those chains of debt and violence. The Kaggaba present various forms reciprocity as practices of healing. These are ancestral” practices upon which the indigenous people have based their existence since before the arrival of the Spanish. They offer new ways of conceptualizing healing and forms reciprocity between people, things, nature and territory and expanded concepts of context.

For my mother, father, wife, children, brother and all our family.

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## **1.0 Introduction: towards a committed anthropology.**

This dissertation is written together with the Kaggaba, one of the four indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta in Colombia on their strategies of transforming violence. Initially my research centered on indigenous practices of non-violence, to confront the Colombian armed conflict that had overrun their territory from about 1995 to 2005. The Kaggaba and the Arhuaco indigenous peoples were one of the few communities in Colombia who had been able to avoid becoming immersed into the logics of violence, from becoming “victims”, to some degree. They resisted the violence of the armed conflict. How did they do it, I wondered? They might be able to show a route out of processes of violence that have plagued Colombia, and the world.

While doing this research I found that these indigenous practices of resistance to violence during the armed conflict were just the tail end of a history of centuries of resistance. Their work is based on a much wider set of practices that would not fully visible if I had done an ethnography centered only on the armed conflict. The indigenous people have been employing similar variants over hundreds of years, at least since the arrival of the Spanish to their territory some 500 years back. This dissertation traces through some of the key moments of how the Kaggaba maintained their identity over the last 500 years to the present. It is a living history of how the indigenous people circumnavigated the Spanish “invasion”, evangelization by Catholic priests, forced settlement of their lands, and violent debt peonage systems until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Not just the Kaggaba but many indigenous peoples around the Americas have been subject to extreme forms of domination, violence and forms of genocide or structural violence denounced since the Jewish Holocaust. The path that has enabled them to still be present, has been silenced under centuries of history and writing. As a collaborative work with the Kaggaba, it breaks from a Colonialist lens and standardized narratives on indigeneity (Comaroff 2006)

It is possible to comprehend forms of Kaggaba resistance to violence as profound practices of healing based on the deployment of practices of reciprocity as form of Law. I propose the term “articulated assemblies of reciprocity” in which reciprocity links together and has effects on many domains including politics, the environment, territory, the spirit, and embodiment of the self. The Kaggaba call this the “Law of Origin”, as forms of exchange between people and the principles of life seen by the Kaggaba. Reciprocity as situated practices enables these indigenous peoples to transform their relationships with context, and as they assert, of context itself.

The dissertation brings together several areas of anthropological theory to situate and understand Kaggaba practices of reciprocity and how they describe them. Fundamental to the dissertation are theories that situate violence as linked to unsatisfactory relationships, between the “self”, and context and the exercise of power and domination. I claim that forms of reciprocity, deployed by the indigenous people resituate or heal these relationships between the self and context. To dimension those relationships, I use work from linguistic practice that links specific situations with broader fields of context to situate Kaggaba strategies of reciprocity as communicative practice, work on practices of articulation and identity as forms of production.

This dissertation is grounded in the context of my years of participation in indigenous processes of defense of their rights in the Sierra Nevada, which in my opinion gives it a different viewpoint from previous academic work done about the Kaggaba. It is embodied practice of working with

the Kaggaba. This dissertation would not be relevant if it did not arise from those same assemblages of resistance and reciprocity which I will be talking about, and hopefully giving back.

### **1.1 The indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta – Mamos, Sakas and territory.**

The Kaggaba indigenous people, who this dissertation is centered around, is one of the four indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, alongside the Arhuaco, Wiwa, and Kankuamo, as the descendants of the “Tayrona” who lived in the Sierra Nevada before the Spanish arrived. The four indigenous peoples state they share the same principles of origin, each one with their own sector of ancestral territory. The Kaggaba are often called Kogui. The Arhuaco call themselves *Ikun*.

The ancestral territory of the indigenous peoples is a large coastal mountain located along the Colombian Caribbean, in Spanish called the “Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta”. It rises from the sea, with its coral reefs, mangrove swamps and river outlets, and then through many ecosystems including dry forests, humid tropical forest, and Andean forests to the lakes in alpine tundra - *Paramos*, that form the headwaters of its rivers, and then up to the snow-covered peaks at 5,500 masl. To walk from the sea to the paramo takes at least 4 or 5 days, depending on the physical condition of the walker, and the Kaggaba are excellent walkers. Above a certain level, there are no roads. The entire ancestral territory covers about 17,000 square kilometers. The lower areas are shared with cities and non-indigenous rural communities, with other indigenous people like the Wayuu, the Ette Ennaka and some Afro-Colombian communities (See Map 1).

Here I will summarize how the four indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada describe their own territory and peoples from a document they recently wrote called the “Mother Document” that accompanies the legal Decree that the Colombian government issued in 2018 recognizing their ancestral territory<sup>1</sup>. The indigenous people call their ancestral territory the “Black Line” or *Se Shiza* in the language of the Kaggaba, organized according to the principles of “Mama Sushí”. It is not just a mountain. It is an assemblage of thousands of sacred sites, spiritual mothers – *Jaba*, and fathers - *Jate*, related to most aspects of nature and people. From the ocean, these mother and father sites take the form of coastal lagoons and then extend up the mountain as other “sacred sites” related to forests, water, lakes, and most natural aspects of territory, finally arriving to the Gonawindua peak at the center, the spiritual origin of territory. Territory is a living entity, the “mother earth” - *Jaba Sénenulang*.

The “Mother Document” put it like this: “Sacred spaces form our ancestral map that indicate the use, management and care that we must adhere to both at a spiritual level ... and on a material level to achieve adequate management of each of the principles of territory.... and all of nature (CTC 2015, 19). The ancestral territory of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, for the indigenous peoples is also the “code” of the Law, the “code of Mama Sushí” of reciprocity with the principles of life, manifest in diverse forms, including through the sacred sites. **Mama Sushí**, is pronounced in Kogian as “Mama Sálshi”.

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<sup>1</sup> Decree 1500 of 2018 declares the ancestral territory of the Black line of Arhuaco, Kogui, Wiwa and Kankuamo indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (Ministerio del Interior 2018).



These sacred sites are linked to the spiritual origins of territory and life, and are deployed around the four cardinal points, as the four principles of Origin of existence. Every part of territory is linked to the center, the origin of territory, at a mountain called Gonawindua. At the heart of indigenous practices is the embodiment of territory, people, practice, spirit and their “principles”, interrelated through practices of reciprocity with the Spirit.

In our cultures we assume that each person is a copy or replica of the Earth and of the Universe itself, which must be understood not only as a symbolic representation but as a real manifestation of reciprocity, where health, balance and protection depend on mutual compliance with the order, function and management of each part (CTC 2015, 18).

This relationship of reciprocity between all things, expressed at a spiritual and material level, is what the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada loosely call “The Law of Origin”. That law is “the knowledge of how to administer and care for everything, which we often call our norms (CTC 2015, 7)”. People and things share the same spiritual essence of origin. That Law encompasses forms of mutual care for all living things and the spirit, based on sharing and reciprocity. These are also what the indigenous people call “ancestral” practices or *shibulama*. The indigenous people say that they have learned and evidently have passed down the generations for thousands of years these practices based on knowledge of the correct practices of reciprocity with the principles of life.

In terms of territory, within the ancestral Black Line, the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada have three main Reservations or “Resguardos”, the Resguardo Kogui Malayo Arhuaco– RKMA shared by the Kaggaba, Wiwa and some Arhuaco, the Resguardo Arhuaco – RA, and the Resguardo Kankuamo. They represent themselves through their own indigenous organizations. The Confederación Indígena Tayrona - CIT (Arhuaco People), the Organización Gonawindúa Tayrona - OGT (Kaggaba / Kogui People), the Organización Wiwa Yugumaiun Bunkuanarrua Tayrona - OWYBT (Wiwa People), and the Organización Indígena Kankuama. They are politically united under the Consejo Territorial de Cabildos –CTC-, “the highest level of representation” of the four indigenous peoples of the SNSM (CTC 2015, 37)”, to “comply with the mandates and principles of Origin which govern and care for our ancestral territory (CTC 2015, 34)”.

Each indigenous people occupy their respective sector of ancestral territory, forming the “four corners of territory”, and complying with their responsibilities mandated from the principles of Origin. The Kaggaba live principally in the northern areas of the Sierra Nevada, from the Rancheria to the Aracataca Rivers. They have a population of about 25,000 people. The Arhuaco live in the southern sectors of the Sierra, with some communities around the Palomino River, and population of about 60,000 people. The Wiwa live in the southeastern sectors of the mountain and some northern areas, with a population of around 15,000 people and the Kankuamo territory is in southeast sector of the mountain with a population of about 10,000 people.

- Kaggaba Mamos, Sakas, community and territory.

Especially the Kaggaba, the Arhuaco and the Wiwa are well known around Latin America as indigenous peoples who tenaciously maintain their traditions. Much has been written about the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada. Several very good traditional descriptive ethnographies are available, most of which are cited in this dissertation, notably those of Gerardo Reichel

Dolmatoff, and several others. A few films have been done about the Kaggaba, and the Arhuaco<sup>2</sup>, as peoples who are also publicized on the internet. Thus, over the course of the dissertation, I try not to describe again, who the indigenous people “are”, except when necessary

The Kaggaba explain that they organize their part of ancestral territory into **ezuamas**. This is a term that they use frequently. According to the Kaggaba mamos, an Ezuama is a geographical space in Kaggaba territory, usually a river valley. Each Ezuama has its own territorial jurisdiction under its original lineages of Mamos, with the responsibility of taking care of that territory according to the ‘Law of Origin’, through its respective network of sacred sites connected to nature and people in that territory, and the Mother Earth in general. Kaggaba territory is divided into four major ezuamas, Kuamaka, Makutama, Jukumeizhi and Surivaka, that link with a network of sub ezuamas and their jurisdictions (Mestre and Rawitscher 2018, 113-20).



Figure 1 The Kaggaba ezuama of Takina

Each Ezuama has a number of places, also called ezuamas as the locations of the ceremonial houses, *nujue*, from where their respective mamos live. Most Ezuama sites date from pre-Columbian times and have ancient “Tayrona” terraces for their *nujue* houses. They are central places of Kaggaba governmentality occupied by the same lineages of mamos and Sakas since before the Spanish arrived. From their ezuamas the Kaggaba Mamos practice the Law of Origin with dances, music and spiritual “payments” of varying complexity<sup>3</sup> (See Map 2: Kaggaba Ezuamas and their Jurisdictions and Map 3 - Kaggaba Ezuamas, Church Towns and Communities).

The elders in the Indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada are called ‘*mamos*’ – the men, and ‘*Sakas*’ – the women, and are specially trained to spiritually consult the “Law of Origin” to orient most aspects of indigenous life. They are brought up by their elders from an early age to be in contact with, or embody, the spirit of the Mother Earth in the land and are experts in applying the rules of spiritual reciprocity to care for like and those same principles. Usually, their work is

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<sup>2</sup> Palabras Mayores: ¿Por qué es sagrada nuestra tierra? by Amado Villafaña Chaparro, Arhuaco People,, 2008, “Aluna the movie”, 2012. <https://www.alunathemovie.com/>; “From the Heart of the World, the Elder Brothers Warning,” 1991. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4590278/>, and many more. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Wiwa were sometimes called colloquially the “Malayos”

<sup>3</sup> Ezuama comes from the word, Ezua meaning “one” as the unification of the origin of the spirit, Sé, in territory expressed as the unity of all the sacred sites, in that Ezuama. We will further describe practices of reciprocity and resistance around the Ezuama in this dissertation, especially in Chapters 5 and 6,

based on interpreting and applying though what kinds of spiritual “payments” need to be made to the sacred sites, as part of the practices of reciprocity with territory, people, and nature.

The Mamos and Sakas can spend many hours or days consulting the correct practices of reciprocity to apply. This is a communal process in which the Mamos, the authorities and the community come to an agreement about what the spirit of the mother is indicating, not what the Mamo decides. In this sense, the “Law of Origin” is not an authoritarian law, nor do the Mamos and Sakas embody disciplinary power, but rather orient peoples’ relationships with territory so they can live better and avoid the consequences of not taking proper care of its spiritual principles. Most members of the indigenous communities also understand, practice and live through these spiritual laws of reciprocity with things

Families are basically self-sufficient and live directly from the land. They practice agriculture with their own seeds, producing great varieties of tubers, corn, plantains, and other crops, including coffee and cacao to produce some money to buy basic goods. They use and make their own traditional clothing from their homegrown cotton, speak only their own languages, and live in isolated communities several days walking up the mountain. They are also expert weavers, make bags and hammocks, and have a very detailed knowledge of at the plants and animals in their territory, the rocks and all the Tayrona objects they use.

Most indigenous people in the Sierra live in small communities. Each Kaggaba community has a population varying from about 100 to 500 peoples. At its center is a *nujue*, a ceremonial meeting house for men and another for women, where they hold community meetings every two weeks that last to daybreak. Each family has a little mud daub house with grass or palm thatching, all biodegradable, and built from materials extracted from the forest based on reciprocity with the spiritual mothers and fathers of those materials. Each community is oriented by its mamos, Sakas and “ancestral authorities” who are responsible for maintaining order. Hierarchy is part of indigenous life in the Sierra Nevada. As everywhere, there are problems and difficulties to be solved. Some indigenous persons also speak Spanish, and use western technology. Networks of schools and health posts are run by the indigenous organizations.

In general, indigenous peoples from the Sierra Nevada live in extended families and get married from a rather early age. Each family is part of a lineage. The women generally stay in their parents’ houses and the young husband comes to form part of the family, having to do lots of work, like bringing firewood, and cutting the fields. Eventually the young family builds their own house and are assigned land for their own use.

The indigenous communities in the Sierra Nevada tend to have clear gender relations and roles. In the family the men are expected to do heavier agricultural and building work, the women also participate in agricultural work, and are responsible for harvesting and the kitchen. Most indigenous people are excellent walkers and can easily walk 10 to 15 hours a day up and down the steep slopes of the mountain. The men, especially amongst the Kaggaba and the Wiwa usually occupy more visible public roles. However, women also exercise fundamental roles of authority in their communities.

Because of my social position as a male, most indigenous people expect me to work with other men. This is especially the case for this dissertation, since I am sharing public information. This does not mean that my work is not sensitive to gender. I do work with indigenous women in the

Sierra Nevada, and am fully aware that their work is fundamental to processes of resistance. Also, because indigenous women in the Sierra work through defined spaces, I do my best to respect that. I believe that it is easier for women as anthropologists to participate and generate more trust with indigenous women. That is the case, for instance, for Maria del Rosario Ferro's and her writing on reciprocity amongst the Arhuaco (Ferro Umaña 2012).

## 1.2 Writing a history of Resistance, and the contents of this dissertation.

- Barefoot anthropology in the Sierra Nevada.

For my dissertation, I thought that research on indigenous practices of resistance to violence could show a route out of violence in Colombia. On one of my visits to Santa Marta in 2003, an Arhuaco leader mentioned an example in which their communities around the town of Serankua in the Aracataca River Valley had gotten tired of Guerrilla and paramilitary violence, their interference in ancestral governance, abducting indigenous youth, and assassinations.

The Arhuaco started to organize around their mamos, doing large community "spiritual payments" oriented thought their laws of care for life. The Arhuaco would mass in groups of 200 or 300 women, men and children and encircle the guerrillas where they had forcefully conscripted their youth, and demand their release. On one of these occasions, the mamos and community had given a guerrilla leader so much "consejo" - counseling, that what he was doing was so completely against the indigenous view on life and the principles upon which their territory was based, that returned the captured Arhuacos, and abandoned the guerrillas altogether, something quite unheard of in Colombia. I knew this was a good topic to work on.



*Figure 2 A Kaggaba Family walking the Sierra. Photo Peter Rawitscher*

When I arrived in Santa Marta in 2006, to write my dissertation on forms of indigenous resistance to violence, I went to the Casa Indígena to propose it. My main friend there was Danilo Villafaña, a younger Arhuaco leader. He thought it was a rather good idea. But he was also quite clear "You can't come here and write your thesis, and then just go away!! What is that going to do for us? You have to give something back".

I would have to do something else of assistance for the indigenous people in the Sierra. Margarita Villafaña another Arhuaco leader, suggested that I write a history of the Organización Gonawindua Tayrona, of its first Mamos, how it was organized and the problems of violence its first members had to confront. The book would be useful for the OGT to remember its history and it also would be part of the research for my dissertation. That sounded like a good idea. To

start, Danilo said I had to sign an agreement with the Kaggaba governor of the OGT, Arregoces Conchacala. We drafted it up, and Arregoces signed it so I could start.

I had already worked with the indigenous people in the Sierra in years past. I had arrived from the United States to Colombia, some years ago, for a student exchange program. I stayed on, and finished my undergraduate work in anthropology at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá. At least from my point of view then, Colombia was an interesting place to work as an anthropologist, with practices constantly and unexpectedly emerging from the strata of history.

One day on the bulletin board in the Anthropology Department, appeared a little notice "Student summer Internships to work in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta", with the Fundación Pro-Sierra. I had read about the Kaggaba, and immediately I wanted to go, but those internships were mostly all taken up in advance. Fortunately, I had made friends with professor Elizabeth Reichel, an established anthropologist on indigenous peoples in the Sierra Nevada and around Colombia. She thought I would be a suitable candidate, and sent her recommendation, and myself off to the Sierra Nevada along a path that I am still on today.

I did two of those internships, from 1989 to 1990. I worked with the Wiwa indigenous people in the Guachaca River and wrote a short ethnography about their community (Rawitscher 1992), occasionally still cited. For the next few years, I returned occasionally to the Sierra, sometimes working as production assistant, for Alan Ereira, a director of documentary films on the Kaggaba<sup>4</sup>.

After I graduated from UniAndes in 1992, I worked around the county with indigenous peoples. Then, Colombia fell into what seemed like a bottomless pit of violence. Paramilitary, guerrilla groups and the government fought out harsh battles for control of Colombia, power, wealth and status, directly involving the civilian population. By around 1998 this had gotten to the point where it was mostly impossible to travel around Colombia, plagued by roadblocks, rampant kidnapping, extortion, and war. Many anthropologists, myself included, had to stop field work outside the city. I fortunately had the opportunity to start my doctorate work at UC Berkeley.

Around 2005 the intensity of armed conflict started to fade away, and it was possible to start thinking of cautious fieldwork with the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada. After signing that agreement with Arregoces and Danilo to start work with the OGT, the Kaggaba had been having their own problems. Illegal armed groups had prohibited Kaggaba leaders, including their own governor, from visiting their own communities, fearing the indigenous organizations capacity to organize their own people. The entire region was surrounded by a veil of violence, with paramilitaries controlling the lower areas and guerrillas the upper flanks of the mountain.

In February 2006, the intensity of the armed conflict started to diminish. Arregoces took the risk of holding the first OGT general assembly in years. A United Nations delegation would accompany the meeting and the indigenous commission's 7 hour long walk to Pueblo Viejo, one of the main Kaggaba communities. Having recently started my dissertation with the OGT, and with my book proposal, I came along. Apparently, the various illegal armed groups were watching us along the path, but we got up to Pueblo Viejo without major incident.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.alunathemovie.com/>

After a couple of days in the meeting, I proudly presented my newly approved book topic to the Kogui Mamos as they were consulting their Zhatukuwa around the rocks of a special sacred site. Everyone politely agreed that it was a good idea. The OGT medical doctor, confronted me straight out “Don’t think that you are going to get that book done. In one year? Forget it, you will never do it”, and dismissed the whole thing. He had experience in those matters as he was in fact working on a book for the indigenous health program. And yes, like he predicted, the book, and then this dissertation did take much longer to finish.

About a week later when the assembly was wrapping up, the lieutenant of a Colombian platoon that was temporarily at Pueblo Viejo, placed himself in front of the group of about 100 Mamos and indigenous leaders and announced that Pueblo Viejo apparently had been surrounded by guerrillas. It was too dangerous for the “students” meaning myself to walk back down and I should go instead in an army helicopter which was scheduled for the next morning. There was such confusion, that I couldn’t ask the Kaggaba governor what to do, so I let the angst take over and stayed. The next day the OGT commission set off on foot without me.

The promised helicopter took two weeks to arrive, leaving me in the middle of what was a rather difficult situation. The guerrillas actually did make an attempt at taking out Pueblo Viejo. I also got to know the Kaggaba in Pueblo Viejo quite well. When I finally got back down, I went to the Casa Indígena and presented myself to Arregoces. He was furious. Nothing had happened to them on their way down the mountain. “You can never go back up to Pueblo Viejo. We don’t need any scared people here! Don’t you understand that you can’t abandon your group? But you did”. He dispatched me from his office. I learned this fundamental lesson of working together, and keeping trust in the Sierra and my companions. After a while I was able to return for many other Kaggaba assemblies and activities.

The initial idea was to find funding to make the book together with the OGT. I found it in the form of a rather large project from the European Union, on helping indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada displaced by violence. The next Kaggaba Governor, Juan Mamatacan unexpectedly told me “If you wrote it, you have to coordinate it!!”. That project lasted from 2007 to 2011.

I had to organize the community construction of three new indigenous “frontier” towns. Help them buy their land, navigate through government programs, and set up agriculture and ancestral government projects. The next Kaggaba governor, Jose de los Santos, told me “Peter, just use your best judgment and do it, I trust you”, and I did it. I worked very hard on that, but I still had not gotten my book done. When that project finished, Santos assigned me to work with Arregoces, and his group of Kaggaba in the OGT who dedicated themselves to cultural politics and processes for the defense of their territory and people. Santos thought I would be a good fit and he was right.

After that difficult Pueblo Viejo trip, we started to work together. Over the years, Arregoces brought me up the mountains and taught me how to live with the Kaggaba. I stayed with his family, and pretty much became part of it, with his children, and his wife Mariana, helping to shovel the yard, clean and bring firewood from the forest. Arregoces showed me many

apparently small but important things: How to enter a *nujue*<sup>5</sup> and greet everyone there with Jañu, how to walk long hours during the night, speak to the mamos, do spiritual “payments”, patiently wait my turn to talk, and interpret the sounds of the forest and birds. With Arregoces, or other Kaggaba, we walked all over the mountain and visited many of the principle ezuamas, and communities, sometimes walking several day treks. Many of the Mamos knew me now, and I knew my way around the mountain and its people.

The Kaggaba made me sort of a member of the OGT. With Arregoces’ group we worked on projects and policy defending ancestral territory for the indigenous people. The first was project called the “Programa de Garantias” (CIT 2011). The idea was to write a document on how indigenous capacity for survival had been affected by armed violence from 1991 to 2005, especially the Kaggaba. We then went on to the “Canas River ancestral land management plan”, and several “prior consultation” processes for the OGT. We defended sacred sites and indigenous territory from large development projects. All sorts of things. By 2014, the Kaggaba included me in CTC team to write up the Black Line Decree. In 2017 the Kaggaba had me coordinate the processes to expand the Sierra Nevada National Park In conjunction with the indigenous peoples.

Anthropology as a grounded practice is fundamental to this work, as a relationship of reciprocity. It involved going to meetings with the Kaggaba mamos and communities, writing documents with them, going up and down the mountains, working with the Mamos at sacred sites doing spiritual “payments” so that it would orient by the same relationships of reciprocity with ancestral territory these processes were supposed to protect. It was a commitment to collaborate with the indigenous peoples of the Sierra. As such, my work also shares in a tradition of “indigenista”<sup>6</sup> anthropologists who have collaborated with indigenous communities in Latin America over the last century, from the standpoint of “empathy” (Bartholomew 2023). In my case this was not from any “left” or “right” political orientation.

Nancy Scheper-Hughes term “Barefoot anthropology” comes to mind. Being barefoot is a requirement for everyone in the Kaggaba ceremonial houses, the “*nujue*” and for participating in “spiritual work” with mamos on sacred sites. I often go barefoot with the Kaggaba in those places. Kaggaba mamos walk barefoot all the time and are incredibly good walkers. I however, use boots on the trails. Being barefoot situates the person within the assemblage of spiritual mothers and fathers embedded in the land. That concept situates the work as contributing something to the people beyond the research interest, but as a shared embodied practice. It is a matter of position, or stance. “Are you with us or not?”.

Barefoot anthropology as Scheper-Hughes proposes is “an active, politically committed, morally engaged anthropology and not just a form of passive representation”, “ethnographers, as natural historians of people until very recently thought to have no history... as a tool for critical reflection and human liberation”. This kind of anthropology overcomes a “reluctance to name wrongs,....

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<sup>5</sup> The ceremonial community meeting house located in each community. *Nujuakala* means the house of the spirit in mountains, and the *nujue* is also the house of the spirit.

<sup>6</sup> See chapter 8 on writing the book of Mamo Sushi.



to prescribe change even in the face of considerable human misery” (Scheper-Hughes 1995, 415, 418).. “a committed grounded anthropology.... makes us available as *comrades*.: 420”.

For Phillipe Bourgois, one of the purposes of “Ethnography,... is to clarify the chains of causality that link structural, political, and symbolic violence ... that buttresses unequal power relations and distorts efforts and resistance (P. Bourgois 2001, 22)”. Understanding and contributing to transformation of oppression and violence, becomes both a practical and an academic challenge.

The book that I had agreed to write with the OGT started to emerge in 2012. Our group was attempting to transform an institutional instrument for environmental and territorial management, called the POMCA<sup>7</sup> for the Cañas River Valley, into something that would defend Kaggaba “ancestral” land management and territory. To that end, the OGT had agreed with Corpoguajira (the public environmental authority of the Department of the Guajira), to write the POMCA. Finally, it was impossible to reach an agreement with them on how to “homologate” practices of indigenous territorial management with a POMCA.

We decided that the OGT needed a source of funding to do the study and write its book on how the Kaggaba take care of and protect their territory as an ancestral form of law. It was to be the Kaggaba’s book about themselves. We won another project from the European Union for that<sup>8</sup>. Over the next four years the Kaggaba team, including myself as the “Anthropologist” worked on rendering visible these “ancestral” practices of caring for territory as a law.

We worked together with groups of Kaggaba Mamos and Sakas, leaders and authorities, biologists, and cartographers all committed to the same idea. We traversed the Sierra, did consultations in the “Ezuamas”, the mamos explained the “sacred sites”, how they cared for nature and people. The work also had to create legal effects as an effective ancestral “model” for protecting territory that would position the Kaggaba “Law of Origin” as something recognized by “Occidental” law.

The book basically had two parts. The first was about the Law of Origin and its relationship to territory. Arregoces placed a very effective Arhuaco leader of our group, Yanelia Mestre, as responsible for writing that part. Though long sittings and narrations from the mamos, she, together with help from the rest of the team, condensed in writing, how ancestral territory was organized under the spiritual principles of the Law of Origin.

The other part of the book was on how the Kaggaba and their principles of origin had had been “affected” by “Occidental society” since the arrival of the Spaniards to the Sierra and how the Kaggaba resisted, or managed to keep on practicing their Law of Origin up to today. Arregoces had me write that part of the book, and a few case studies that went with it. My job was to accompany him and groups of Kaggaba around the mountains, and document the work of the mamos. I also had to collect histories from the mamos of how the Kaggaba people had survived the pressures affecting them and their territory since the arrival of the Spanish. I was to complement that with historical research. The idea was to identify those “affectations” and their

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<sup>7</sup> POMCA – Plan de Ordenamiento y Manejo de Cuencas Hídricas. Decreto 1640 de 2012. MinAmbiente.

<sup>8</sup> “Defensa el Ordenamiento Ancestral y Protección Ambiental de los Territorios de los Pueblos Indígenas de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta”, 2013. Project European Union . RKMA, DCI-NSAPVD/2013/294-059



origins, given that they were often hidden under centuries of misrecognition from the distant past, to help orient the Kaggaba people to find strategies that would better “heal” these historically sedimented problems still operative today.

The Kaggaba finished that book and titled it “Shikwakala, El Crujido de la Madre Tierra”. The RKMA published in 2018 as its own collective property, with Yanelia and myself as authors (Mestre and Rawitscher 2018). ‘Shikwakala’ means the form of the Law of Origin embedded in the territory and the sounds territory makes as it accommodates to articulate with changing circumstances and new elements. I had finally finished my agreement with the OGT to write the book. I could also use the sections of the book that I physically wrote, as material for my dissertation, especially the historical sections.

To write this dissertation, I incorporated many of the histories by the Mamos we collected for the book Shikwakala. The dissertation links those together in new ways and contributes with new theoretical perspectives. I added new chapters based on additional historical material, citations of available documents and some mentions of public events or publicly shared knowledge. I also included events from my field notes from early research to situate the reader with speech frames central to Kaggaba practices of reciprocity and healing as embodied practice.

I try to keep in mind Stanley Brandes’ singular capacity to crisply recreate lived ethnographic moments leaving lasting impressions in the readers mind, and then bring those moments to wider social processes. Brandes describes community networks in urban settings and moves through “micro level social processes placed in relief through detailed field investigation ...within a wider socioeconomic context”, and then shows how those “encompassing socioeconomic forces” shape patterns of behavior (Brandes 2002a). Or in his work on how the Day of the Dead, as apparently an indigenous ritual, transforms into a celebration that is a fundamental expression of Mexican national identity (Brandes 2006), (Brandes 1998, 259), (Brandes 1997) through practices of embodiment and commodification in globalized networks (Brandes 2002b).

For Shikwakala, we worked with mamos who are specialized in passing down memories about how the Kaggaba defended themselves or suffered from oppression of non-indigenous people<sup>9</sup>. Writing that book involved directed interviews with Mamos and Sakas from several ezuamas in Kaggaba territory who narrate “histories” that could be shared in general, of how the Kaggaba resisted violence over the generations.

Most of the “stories” or “histories” that the Mamos and Sakas narrated for the historical section of the book Shikwakala are those they clearly distinguish as ones that physically took place in the past. Evidently, they can transform over time and narrative context.

These histories are also situated within the spiritual principles of the Kaggaba people. At one level, when a Mamo or Saka learns and recites a story, he or she situates themselves at the level of “Sè”, meaning the world of spiritual principles where that story took place. The narrators

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<sup>9</sup> For the book Shikwakala, during the course of the meetings and activities for that project, as the RKMA Kaggaba team, we would ask the mamos to tell these histories, and recorded them. The RKMA Kaggaba work team translated them as closely as possible into Spanish, for the book. In this dissertation I cite some of that material and the RKMA agreed I could do that.

embody those spiritual people and the original situations, bringing those principles to life in the present.

They transpose their listeners into the same participation frames of *Se*, the spirit. When a Mamo or Saka presents a story, he or she is embodying it, transmuting the spiritual principles contained in territory into words, as one and the same thing. The Kaggaba mamos and Sakas are originally trained for years in the darkness of caves or special *nujue* to be in more direct communication, contiguity, with those spiritual principles embedded in territory. Through this embodied relation of practice, territory, principles and words, many elders from the Sierra Nevada remember in detail innumerable histories, which can last for hours or even days.

The Kaggaba mama are mostly not very aware of the specific historical contexts of Colombia in which the events they narrate took place. However, many events and details from the histories the mamos narrate are specific enough to relate with frames of reference from Colombian or Colonial history. I could show how certain events in Kaggaba memory are key moments of long-term processes of articulation, resistance, and transformation of wider fields of power operative in or around Kaggaba territory during the past to the present.

For that purpose, I did a revision of publications on histories of indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada, and their context, which I cite. I then consulted primary sources, especially the online portions of General Archive of the Nation (Colombia) - AGN, and the Archivo General de Indias in Sevilla - AGI. I found numerous documents from the archives about the indigenous people of the SNSM, especially from the colonial periods, that were useful and have not been cited before.

- The contents of this Dissertation.

One thread that weaves the dissertation together are the practices of the “Law of Origin” that have enabled the Kaggaba to articulate with and survive alongside different historical forms of violence without taking part in them. The focus on the “Law of Origin” as a permanent space that orients most aspects of Kaggaba life and their strategies of resistance becomes increasingly visible over each chapter. The dissertation starts with this Chapter 1, the Introduction, that situates the people, their territory, and the writing. It presents the theoretical orientation of the work, centering around practices of reciprocity as forms of resistance. The chapter locates what I consider to be very useful concepts of reciprocity as forms of communication and transformation of context that include the “spirit”, within linguistic anthropology, theories on violence, articulation and relationally produced identity. It also includes a summary of previous writing on the Sierra Nevada.

The work on practices of resistance starts with Chapter 2, centered on the early colonial period in Kaggaba territory. It focuses on moments of inscription of the indigenous people to “chains of debt” from the “Conquest” founded on violence and then reproduced in colonial *encomiendas*. The debt, or tribute to the King, simultaneously depends on indigenous forms of reciprocity with nature. These enmeshed relationships of reciprocity form the basis of indigenous practices of resistance, and transformation of context that we explore in the rest of the dissertation. Through archival documents, and oral histories we bring to light relationships between present day indigenous peoples and the past. I think that it is the only work of its kind from the colonial period published on the topic, at least on the Sierra Nevada.

Chapter 3 opens to the Kaggaba strategies of resistance and reciprocity based on articulation through hybrid figures, in this case, a Catholic statue of San Pedro. It starts with the Church's invasion and destruction of the Kaggaba ezuamas around 1700. Then it centers around the Kaggaba configuration of strategies of "reverse debt" through which the Kaggaba transform violence generated by the Church, by linking it with assemblages of reciprocity based on the "Law of Origin". Through these strategies of resistance the indigenous people, to some degree can transform and redeploy forms of domination and debt to their advantage.

In Chapter 4 the dissertation addresses concepts of exclusion from the law, and the misrecognition of violence as law. It takes place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the new nation of Colombia dissolves colonial forms of protection of indigenous communities and territory. Waves of settlers fueled by debt peonage and violence, invaded Kaggaba territory under the guise of the "Law of the Police Inspector". The Kaggaba continue to attempt to maintain relationships between the Law of Origin, their communities and territory through the repositioning of debt articulated with that "law" of violence. This implies severe difficulties.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to Kaggaba forms of healing through reciprocity. In this chapter we work with the Kaggaba concepts of healing from a theoretical framework of what I call "articulated assemblages of reciprocity", with attention to Marcel Mauss and "the Gift", that bring together things, territory and people with the "spirit". The Chapter presents diverse instances of healing and transformation amongst the Kaggaba based on their practices of reciprocity. These practices of "healing" are at the heart of resistance to violence, as personal and political forms of transformation of context that we work through in this dissertation.

The focus of Chapter 6, is on healing, reciprocity and indigenous resistance as strategies for transformation of structural violence at political levels. We see how the indigenous peoples of the SNSM start to recognize situations of structural violence and reflect them during the 1960s. They leave behind hybrid figures of resistance like the statue of San Pedro, to directly position and recognize their own "Law of Origin" as a form of law. These are moments when the Kaggaba and the Arhuaco finally threw off the chains of colonial debt and violence, inherited down the centuries, what by then had morphed into an invisible "State of Exclusion", and deplorable levels of violence against these indigenous peoples.

Chapter 7 is based on processes of how the Arhuaco and Kaggaba transform ancestral territory as an unwritten expression of "ancestral law", into written law that would effectively protect indigenous peoples and their territories after the 1970s. It is possible to conceive of ancestral territory, called the Black Line, as expansive interaction frames, based on reciprocity with things, people and the spirit, which also articulate written law within those same assemblages. These are forms of resistance based on reciprocity and healing, embodiment, and continuity. We include specific situations of transformations of ancestral territory into written law.

The conclusion, Chapter 8, draws together principles of healing and reciprocity, around general references to moments of resistance related to the armed violence that enveloped the Sierra Nevada from the 1990s, until about 2005. We address implications of reciprocity as healing, with effects on the rearticulation of the self with context and power in ways that transform divides between violence and life. We also consider practices of reciprocity in the transformations of context and rethinking context. The chapter transitions into what Kaggaba

practices of healing through reciprocity imply for healing as processes shared amongst humanity. It also brings forth the centuries of resistance by the indigenous peoples of the SNSM, based on their ancestral laws and interrelationships with territory, the spirit and people.

### **1.3 Locating reciprocity as violence and healing in anthropology.**

This section of the chapter proposes a theoretical context for understanding reciprocity as situated practices of resistance to violence. The Kaggaba world is totally based on reciprocity. Their practices of resistance and healing, are based on permanent exchanges with territory, nature, people and the spirit as one unified assemblage. This is part of what they loosely translate as, and I call the “Law of Origin”. The indigenous people work through communication with the spirit and responses along its spiritual and material linkages. This perhaps does not sit well with many concepts from the social sciences. However, I think that these indigenous forms of relationship with the world are compatible with theories in anthropology and have much to offer in current debates.

Several areas of anthropology I think come into productive dialogue with indigenous practices of reciprocity. Theories on violence as the inscription of the subject or the “self” into categories of identity or context and power related to social violence and genocide, set the stage. I claim that Indigenous forms of deploying reciprocity are transformative of relationships between self, other, and context, as healing. Marcel Mauss’s work on reciprocity as “total services” links well to Kaggaba practices of reciprocity. From there, concepts from linguistic anthropology, such as embodied participation frameworks bring in reciprocity as the unification of context, with relational production of identity and articulation. I propose the term “articulated assemblies of reciprocity” that focus on the mutual relationships that hold the assembly together, as similar to context. I believe that this helps situate Kaggaba forms of reciprocity that dichotomies between the “self” and the “other” that can transform relationship of violence to healing.

In any case, the Kaggaba have been using practices of reciprocity as healing and relocating violence, for centuries, if not millennium. Their history and experience, stands on its own, apart from any theoretical explanations.

- Recognizing and Misrecognizing Violence.

The indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada were directly subject to forms of violence as misrecognized spaces of terror and inverse debt during the colonial period, as were many other indigenous groups in Colombia. They transformed into diverse expressions of structural violence over the centuries. It was these forms of violence that the indigenous people had to silently confront, and were able to transform, to resist over hundreds of years. We need be somewhat clear what those forms of violence may have been.

Certain concepts of violence that are focused on forms of articulation between the self and the other, or between the self and context, I find especially relevant for work on transformation of violence that we focus on in this dissertation. To start, Michel Foucault distinguishes the primitive violence of the sovereign from power based on governmentality but that also in certain circumstances implies violence. Power opens horizons of possibilities, while “a relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks, it destroys, it cuts off all

possibilities (Foucault 1994b, 341)". Power would be based on that the government of the self "I am saying that 'governmentality' implies the relationship of the self to the self (Foucault 1994d, 300)". The "conduct of conducts" induces mutually constitutive relations as a form of "micro-politics", of daily social relationships and practices.

However, these mutually constructive relationships can also imply violence. Power seen as the government of the self, always implicates subjection within relations of domination and submission. "Symbolic violence" is implicit in social life, being no more than the embodied form of the relation of domination, cause that relation to appear as natural ... the product of the embodiment of the classifications of which her social being is the product (Bourdieu 2001, 35)".

Symbolic violence, is related to the production of categories of identity enabling the individual to participate in the social, as inseparable from the misrecognition of power exercised through "structures of domination" implicit in social relations. The efficacy of social relations is cemented by the magic of collective misrecognition (Bourdieu 1993, 81). Historically sedimented bodily *habitus*, governs our use of space, language, emotion and other daily aspects of practice. These embedded practices would also be at heart the violent alienation of the worker from the means of production, and capitalist theories of value (Taussig 1987), (Taussig 1992), (Meillassoux 1981).

Bourdieu refers to "euphemization" as the misrecognition of the transformation that enables the individual to participate in the social, directly addressing Sigmund Freud's work on censorship of overt interest. The "Freudian analysis of the syntax of dreams and of all private ideologies provides the instruments which are necessary for an understanding of the labour of euphemization and the imposition of form that occurs each time a biological or social drive must come to terms with a social censorship (Bourdieu 1991, 269 n.2)". Censorship is a means towards the fulfillment of underlying human need through the projection of desire towards society.

For Freud the activity of "transposition", or dreamwork, transforms the form of the desire of the ego to be unrecognizable by the super-ego, and thus liberates psychic energy (Freud 1990b, 390-400). The individual projects the self through transposition to articulate with predetermined social positions, that satisfy internal desire, often in the form of slips, jokes, or dreamwork as the symbolic construction of the misrecognition of social relations. From this viewpoint, the social and the psychic exist in a constant interrelation (Freud 1961, 106) of liberation and suppression.

Misrecognition is key to sublimation and the coexistence of the person in the social world. It is not the form of the dream nor the form of the fetish that is of interest, but the form of the transposition of one kind of economy into another: the form of the transformation of desire, the articulation of the ego to the social. In this sense, symbolic power is "that invisible power which can be exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they exercise it (Bourdieu 1993, 164)".

The psychiatrist Piera Aulagnier further develops Freud's "Pleasure Principle" as the imbrication of the satisfaction of desire with violence. She proposes that subjectification is based on the "inscription" of the form of the initial mother-child feeding bond, and the satisfaction of basic desires derived thereof. Satisfying desire and pleasure of the Self are based on the reunification of the object desired ("The Other") and its integration within the relational structure of the Self, and simultaneously invokes the violent rejection of the object capable of arousing desire (Aulagnier 2001, 5-8). The inscription of the relation of The Other to the Self occurs through the

projection of image of the self in the form of a “pictogram”. The pictogram is similar to the “symbolic” as described by Ernst Cassirer (1957) and is based on a set of cultural and linguistic categories through which the self is represented and located, often in relation to kinship or other categories of social identity (Aulagnier 2001, 121-122). From the moment of birth, violence and life form part of the same process.

The “mother” requires the confirmation that she has successfully satisfied the desire of the child and given her or him pleasure, as mutually confirmed through the reciprocal gaze (125). It is at this moment that the fundamental violence of interpretation occurs. The child must submit the self to the mother’s projection of herself as projected through feeding. The mother becomes the “word bearer” as the embodiment of the law (72). The child is inextricably interpellated into a preconceived subject position in the world through the mother’s interpretation of the symbolic.

Aulagnier attempts to show how the moment of *inscription* of authority is reproduced at a social level. Symptoms of violence incorporate articulation between the self and social categories, the violence of being inserted into a predefined subject position. The self is constantly redefined in terms of the ambivalent projection of an “Other” at the heart of a confusion between love or rejection of the other. The “symbolic” “frames the space of the imaginary” based on a set of cultural and linguistic categories through which the self is represented and located in categories of social identity (Aulagnier 2001, 121-2).

It is a paradox. Continual processes of censorship and misrecognition of the self that need the relation with the other to exist, transposed on external categories of identity as violence applied to destroy a perception of authoritarian other. The inscription of life as a form of violent interpellation, and the rejection of that same moment of inscription is also the same moment of creation of bonds of reciprocity without which social life would be possible. These distinctions between the articulation of social “Power and the Self” (Mageo and Knauff 2022) are often seen as the cause of many forms of socially related violence.

- The Heart of Darkness.

The paradox of violence as the “self” created out of the same the negation of the self, and projected onto the “other” and social categories, is often postulated as the failure of the modern project. Joseph Conrad writes on the “Heart of Darkness” at the center modern project, inseparable from European and American enterprises of global colonization (Conrad 1999, 20-30), (Das and Keinman 2001, 9). The modern self, not liking what it sees in the mirror, attempts to violently eliminate that same self, but projected as the “savage” in the outside world, instead of recognizing and healing the terror within the self. Michael Taussig (1987) calls that the “Space of Terror”, space of atrocities, as rubber traders in the Peruvian and Colombian jungles of the early 1900s torture the indigenous rubber collectors upon whom their own riches depended.

Taussig explains the problem was not the economics of commodity production, but fetishized social relations through debt peonage and terror. “This reciprocating yet distorting mimesis has been and continues to be of great importance in the construction of colonial culture – *the colonial mirror* which reflects back onto the colonists the barbarity of their own social relations, but as imputed to the savage or evil figures they yearn to colonize” (Taussig 1987, 97).

Writing from pre-Nazi Germany, Carl Schmitt proposes that all forms of politics, and power, are based on a similar “friend and enemy” distinction, where the enemy or stranger is excepted from the protection of law through “the real possibility of physical killing (Schmitt 1996, 33). Associations along the friend enemy distinction can be of “religious, national, economic or of another kind, and can effect at different times different coalitions and separations (ibid 38)”. In this sense, politics and power reproduce that divide between self and other. Alexander Hinton agrees that most forms of direct or overt political violence, including “terrorism, ethnic conflict, torture, oppression, war and genocide tend to blend amongst each other”.as the “intention to annihilate ‘the other’ (2002a, 6)”. Processes of genocide or other forms of violence almost always include reshaping the religious, ethnic, economic, political, etc. boundaries along which the concrete political representation of the included people and the exclusion of the “other” has been constituted (Fein 1990), (Kuper 1994), (Hinton 2002b). Many spaces of violence seem to share that paradox.

The Jewish Holocaust was an extreme of these processes of misrecognition of violence and elimination of the other, the desire for cleansing to extirpate the “weeds” from the social landscape (Baumann 1989)<sup>10</sup>. The violence of the “othering” processes that the Nazi genocide unleashed were not entirely visible, or recognized amongst even some of its direct participants. The “banality of evil” often goes unseen, unrecognized, normalized. In this fashion, participants both misrecognize and are alienated from the consequences of their violent actions (Arendt 1963). As Arendt (1968) and Primo Levi in the “Gray Zone” remind us, the recognition and decision to not commit or participate in a violent act ultimately rests in the conscience of each potential perpetrator regardless of the normalization or banalization of that violence.

For Levi, and Agamben (1999), the Lager camps were the epitome of the reduction of the self to a state of bare life, in which the oppressor “wants to tame you, extinguish any spark of dignity that he (the oppressor) has lost and you perhaps still preserve (Levi 1989, 41)”. The Jewish SK squads, the Nazi forced to send their fellow Jews to the gas chambers, “represented an attempt to shift onto others, -specifically the victims – the burden of guilt so that even they were deprived of the solace of innocence (Levi 1989, 53)”. The extreme misrecognition of violence that shifts guilt and responsibility to others, is reproduced in many schemes of violence including those against the Kaggaba as we shall see later.

Even when immersed in this death space, the prisoners in the concentration camps developed sets of social practices and hierarchies amongst themselves. The situation of the Musselman operators of the gas chambers renders visible their ongoing desire to survive and their “othering” of their fellow Jews sent to death, as a final misrecognition on the brink of death (Borowski 1967). The ability to retain life, hope, was reflected as the creation of social categories of status and the illusion of within the camp, however meager they may have been (Levi 1989, 41). Life as a nebulous zone between daily activity and a permanent misrecognition of surrounding contexts of terror, enables the day-to-day hope for existence (Taussig 1992, 35)”.

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<sup>10</sup> cited in (Hinton 2002a, 14).

The example of human and collective suffering in the Holocaust has not been enough to avert future genocides (Langer 1997). The same ideologies and practices of “othering” and social cleaning or “limpieza” (Suarez-Orozco 1987) utilized in the Nazi period were commonly applied to indigenous peoples in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and continue to appear in conflicts around the globe, varying in terms of the historical relations of production involved, masked by social projects and missions to improve society.

The examples abound. Genocide against the indigenous and Afro-American people in the United States and violence in Bosnia along ethnic divisions and territorial deployment of the body and reproduction (Bringa 2002), (Olujic 1988), (Denitch 1994). This pattern of “cleansing” another group from participation in forms of power, usually along political, class lines or ethnic lines reemerges all over Central and South America<sup>11</sup>. Violence can be seen as inherent in modern states of Latin America, fueled by unequal power relations with dominant countries like the United States (Scheper-Hughes 2015, 268).

The indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta have been constantly exposed to these situations of extreme violence and death spaces, as silent genocides that have most often gone unrecognized<sup>12</sup>. Forms of politically and socially motivated armed violence in Colombia which the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada were exposed to over at least the last century reproduces these same forms of exclusion, domination and misrecognition. Since its inception as a Republic after the 1820s Colombia has passed through innumerable civil wars and cycles of violence (Palacios 2006). This tendency, became especially acute during the period called “La Violencia” a bloody conflict between the members of the Conservative and the Liberal parties, lasting from about 1940 and until 1955 (Sanchez 1982) (Oquist 1978) (Pecaut 1976).

A now “classic” study of that time (Guzmán, Fals Borda and Umaña 1980) shows how techniques of corporal violence on “the other”, became more frequent and tacitly accepted as language and method of transforming social, economic and personal relationships in Colombia (Uribe 1990). By the 1980s mechanisms of terror were increasingly used by multiple insurgent organizations to reconfigure social landscapes in Colombia. The armed guerilla groups fought the State based armed forces, alongside growing numbers of paramilitary organizations, all vying for power, money, recognition and territory (Franco 1999). They were additionally fueled by drug trafficking, linking conflict to networks of globalized exchange operating along the gray zones of legitimacy (Sassen 2002a) (Tokatlain 2000). Clear political boundaries were falling away, to be replaced by direct and everyday violence associated with the exercise of informal versions of law.

Political “violence “has now receded significantly in most countries of the continent, ”while other forms of violence (e.g., interpersonal violence, drug-related violence, domestic abuse, and sexual assault) have multiplied to such an extent that largely unchecked brutality appears to be besieging many of the newly established democracies in the region” (Kilanski and Auyero 2015, 6)<sup>13</sup>, (Davis 2018). By the 1990s Colombia had become one of the most violent countries in the

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<sup>11</sup> See (Green 1995), (Robben 2000), (Manz 2004) (Hale 1994) (Hale 2006) (Warren 1993) (Falla 1978).

<sup>12</sup> See especially Chapter 6 in this dissertation.

<sup>13</sup> Citing amongst others (Arias, Goldstein and eds 2010).



world. Hundreds of books and papers have been written on the topic, (Arocha, Cubides and Jimeno 1998), (Camacho 2000) attempting to find the solution to violence that has caused so much pain in the country (Gutiérrez Sanín 2014).

Around 1999, unable to leave Bogota due to that situation, I decided to undertake an ethnography on kidnapping, a practice mostly perpetrated by the guerrillas. Key to kidnapping as a tool of war was the creation of endless chains of debt, articulated through the body of the victim, transforming social position. symbolic capital, collapsing entire fields of power. These would be what I now call in this dissertation, relationships of reverse reciprocity founded on violence (Rawitscher 2004).

Despite opening a window on such practices of violence, I abandoned the whole thing and decided to work with communities who based their practices on nourishing life, like the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada. As Nancy Scheper Hughes observed, the story about banditry and death squads in democratic Brazil is a story that has no moral, and a story that has no end.... But other things have changed for the better (Scheper-Hughes 2015, 297)". Nancy recently found that child mortality had diminished in northern Brazil, perhaps in part thanks to her work. Likewise, the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada have been working on strategies of non-violence during centuries, which offer new perspectives on transformation of violence.

#### - Violence, Healing and Reciprocity\_

During this dissertation I explore practices of reciprocity as forms of law, communication, politics and healing. The Kaggaba have been resisting participation in forms of violence for hundreds of years. I argue that they do that through wide reaching forms of what they call "healing" the relationships between the "self", the other and their forms of articulation with categories of social identity, reconfiguring spaces of terror into spaces of healing. Reciprocity is at the heart of it. I propose, that the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada reconfigure forms of articulation between self and context through the deployment of a refined set of practices of reciprocity. I also propose that this is related to those moments of invisible euphemized inscription.

Practices of reciprocity<sup>14</sup> is a concept that I develop throughout this dissertation, as fundamental to generating forms of articulation between the self and other that sidestep the paradox of the moment of inscription of authority on the self, as "violence". I start from Marcel Mauss' work on reciprocity, "The Gift" (2002). He supposes that practices of reciprocity surpass mere material exchange. They link together people, things and the spirit in a wide assembly beyond the material that ties together, body, space, things and the spirit. Mauss included as part of reciprocity the "spiritual ties between things" with reciprocity as a "constant exchange between spiritual matter (Mauss 2002, 18)".

The Kaggaba people might agree with Mauss' appreciations. They base almost all their practices on forms of reciprocity with the land, people and things, all connected with "the spirit". Their practices involve spiritually "paying debts" with the origin of life at a spiritual level, giving back

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<sup>14</sup> See also page 148 of this Dissertation.

to the spirit. This exchange with the spirit gives things back, or has effects in the other elements of the assemblage of reciprocity, as Mauss also implies. Likewise, according to Mauss, reciprocity also includes the idea of “Law”. Law in the sense of the norms or codes necessary to keep participating in and protecting or promoting the perpetuation of that very same assemblage of reciprocity.

Here I would like to introduce the term “articulated assemblages of reciprocity”. Donald Moore talks of “articulated assemblages”, as “mixtures of livelihoods, landscape, and environmental resources as well as ancestral spirits, rainmaking territory, and political rule (D. Moore 2005, 25). At least in the Kaggaba world, all those elements exist in relationships of mutual exchange. Here we can talk of interrelations between the subject and context, almost meshing together as a unity. At an environmental level that sense of unity includes “A reciprocity of means exists between humans and their environments that is tacit but fundamental to the survival of our species” as our obligations to the plants and ecosystems that we form part of (Pooley 2023, 175). People exist through reciprocity with their environment.

Gift giving or exchange implies participating in a **chain of debt relations**. These chains of debt, or assemblages of reciprocity are bound to the origin of the gift, as an original exchange. Participation in assemblages of reciprocity bind a person to that debt system, and to its spiritual origins. Here I draw in Nietzsche’s concept of ‘legal obligations’ (Nietzsche 1996, 47). The law finds its origin in a long chain of debt relations leading back to an authoritarian founding father the original gift giver. That original gift can involve the “guilt” of having rejected the original father. Reciprocity keeps paying back that cycle of debt and violence. Here we get back to the original moment of “inscription” between the mother and child, of creating the “self” and “other” can either be a process of healing and recognizing of sharing, or of negation and violence.

In that sense I propose the term “reverse debt” or “reverse reciprocity”. The original debt is based on the origin life itself, on the original imprint from the mother, and forms of reciprocity that give back to it, that make life flourish. To the contrary, “**chains of reverse debt**” have their origins in relationships of reciprocity with an original debt based on violence, of sapping out life and paying back to perpetuate that violence. Here lies the power or recognition in the fleeting, euphemized, moments of articulation of the self to context, as attentiveness to the origin of assemblages of reciprocity within with a person participates.

To understand violence through the lens of reciprocity a few other authors have also based their work on combining Mauss’s gift giving, and Marx’s “primitive accumulation”. For example, in drug economies in the United States, “value can be extracted destructively from the human body in both the drug economy and in the moral economy of assistive violence depleting the nonrenewable resources of organic life and health” (Karandinos, et al. 2015, 68, 45). Structural violence runs along globalized relations of exchange, through the extraction of wealth from the human body amongst Mexican migrants and fruit production in the United States (Holmes 2023). These practices of extractive reciprocity, or what I call “reverse debt” are a driving factor in the centuries of violence exerted upon the Kaggaba tying together body, spirit and oppression. They are forms of violence that seep “into the common sense of.... generating social capital and

reaffirming fraught kinship bonds through solidarity with violence (Karandinos, et al. 2015, 68)<sup>15</sup>. Obtaining and maintaining a hold over someone is based on reciprocity, with “gifts or debts ..., obligations created and maintained by exchange, in short overt (physical or economic) violence or symbolic violence - censored, euphemized i.e. unrecognizable socially recognized violence (Bourdieu 1977, 191)”. However, life requires reciprocity, so at what point could we posit that exchange becomes violence? Recognition of violence is one of the questions that we will develop in this dissertation, as, as central part of healing.

The term “Assemblages” allows us to take into account elements that include territory, nature, people and language all held together through practices of reciprocity, that include reciprocity with the spirit. Assemblages based on reciprocity start to form a life of their own. The Kaggaba depend on these relationships of reciprocity to live in exchange with elements of nature, and they clearly include the spirit, as the fundamental element in all forms of reciprocity. The Kaggaba also assume that these forms of reciprocity entail communication with the spirit and responses from it, resulting to transformations of things and context.

I propose that certain indigenous forms of resistance to violence in the Sierra Nevada incorporate practices of reciprocity that transform forms of articulation between the self and external context. The use of the term “articulation” brings with it linkages of self to these wider assemblies as key sites of transformation of subjectivity. It considers the transformation of those assemblies themselves in which the person, and embodied practice assumes the nature of whatever holds those assemblies together and becomes part those assemblages.

These are expansive claims. They are a useful way of conceptualizing reciprocity. The term “articulated assemblages of reciprocity” enables us to understand Kaggaba practices of transformation of context, through theories from the social sciences that get closer to what would constitute the law of origin based on the reciprocity of spirit. During the rest of this dissertation, I will develop these concepts alongside histories of resistance to violence.

- “Articulated Assemblies of Reciprocity”: Communicative Practice and the “Spirit”.

Certain concepts of “Articulation” are intimately related to the production of meaning and subjectivity as relationally produced identity. Stuart Hall (2002 [1980]) writes against social or economic forces as determinist, emphasizing forms of creation of identity that are relative, and transformative within social relations of production as processes. Based on Marx, in his “1857 Introduction to the German Ideology”, production and consumption are effectively part of the same process in which “a definite [form of] production thus determines the [forms of] consumption, distribution, exchange and also the *mutual relations between these various elements* (Marx 1998, 15)”.

Hall proposes the term “articulation” to study the forms of the “mutual relations”, as the locus points between the elements united through the “circuits of the process” (Hall 1974, 144), that articulate representation and contiguity, practices and determination. Hall refers to the transformation of these social categories of representation as “rituals and practices [that] always

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<sup>15</sup> (Karandinos, et al. 2015, 68) talk of the “rider” or drug seller who extracts wealth from life of a drug user at the “expense of violated bodies in unequal “moral economies”. See also (Bourgois, et al. 2021, 270).

occur in social sites, linked with social apparatuses (Hall 1985, 99)". It is through articulation that the self is situated in "inscribed" within the assemblages or context, as a juncture key to our study of violence and healing.

Stuart Hall evokes the circuit of production, representation and consumption as moments in a circuit of production of meaning that is transformative and at once permanent (Hall 1999, 224). These circuits of consumption are based on exchange and reciprocity articulated in a way that reinforces, or alternatively can weaken, the relationships between each of its elements.

The concept of social relations of production is also very useful in this dissertation to refer to Kaggaba relations of production, based on assemblages of reciprocity with nature, territory and the spirit. The elements of the assemblages of the relations of social production may change over time, but certain aspects of the form of the articulation in those assemblages with territory can remain the same. This is important for the Kaggaba who claim that their identity is based on unchanging universal principles, but at the same time is transformative.

Hall applies his work to analyze forms of articulations between elements in the relations of production. He illuminates how particular forms of social positioning, especially race and gender, are constituted, represented, practiced, reproduced and consumed, deployed as strategies of oppression or liberation. Many authors have developed Hall's work to recognize forms of situated 'articulation' and deployment of identity and power as the "politics of recognition" and the transformation of relationships of domination (Moore, Kosek and Pandian eds 2003) ; Hale (2002), Povinelli (2002); Hess (2000); Gilroy (2000). Tania Murray Li (2000) coins the famous term "Tribal Slot" as the situated deployment of indigenous identity.

I think that work from the field of linguistics as communicative practice provides an important framework for understanding "articulated assemblages of reciprocity". It allows us to address processes of communication and transformation of context, in ways commensurate with the claims of the Kaggaba and many indigenous peoples around the world, that are related to relationships of exchange with the spirit and territory, and the results of reciprocity.

One of the challenges of work based on communicative practice is discerning forms of articulation of context with the self. Goffman's concepts of speech frames and facework, attend the divide between the self and the represented self thus enabling articulation of the person within wider participation frameworks. Goffman puts it this way: The presence of an 'I' in any role within a framework always requires "a 'me' that tries to incorporate its 'I' [and] requires another "I" to do so...a double distance is produced, for presumably some part of us unconditionally stands behind our utterance (Goffman 1983, 148)". An irreducible or essential identity of the speaker may exist, but behind the second 'I', and it is precisely that "double distance", which allows the participant role to be constantly negotiated within a speech framework.

Although Goffman rarely mentions it, his framework analysis meshes well with articulation as psychological concepts based on euphemization and inscription of the self. The double distances of the "I" and the "me" evoke the Freudian ego and superego along the path to the social. Goffman describes "Facework" as a social ritual that attempts to obtain consistency between the interrelated representation of social self with an inner self. To maintain face, the speaker must project an image of self or though the "me" "that is internally consistent, that is supported by

judgments and evidence conveyed by other participants (Goffman 1974a, 223)". The face, or the social presentation, of the speaker depends on situating that "me" as a mask in a framework or interactive setting, with others to take on a social identity in a range of possibilities available in intersecting contexts. Goffman suggests that a face is "only on loan ... from society (Ibid: 225)", and thus effectively is wrapped up in an interplay of reciprocal, or non-reciprocal social exchanges, embedded and forming part of wider fields of social interrelations, and articulated with the "I" through the "me".

Goffman points to the paradox of the human condition, in which "the person becomes a kind of social construct, built up not from inner psychic properties but on moral rules impressed ... from without (1974a, 246)". In not so many words, Goffman mentions that satisfaction of a person depends on the fulfillment, or the lack of fulfillment and corresponding anxiety, of the emotional expectations of social construction of face: "he cathects his face" (Goffman 1974a, 222). The social games of facework can become "a catharsis for anxieties (Goffman 1956, 7)". The maintenance of ritual equilibrium and the restoration of an acceptable face of all participants involved is part of the game.

In relationships between face, self and articulation with social categories as cathartic. the actor must euphemize, misrecognize or censor their actions to satisfy desire, fundamentally related to projection of the self though social categories of identity. Speech frameworks invoke the magic of censorship, of the fetish that both enables participation in the social and misrecognition of fundamental non reciprocal relations of violence.

Facework, is based on practices of indexical reference from which meaning is created and emerges from the intersection of fields of reference. At the most basic level, the "I" of Goffman is always an indexical reference, a socially constituted mask, of the "me" that indexes the self to positions in society. It is from here on out that wider frames and contexts can be articulated though situated practices of communication. Context grounds indexical relationships (Hanks 2006) and includes the environment, territory, values and belief structures, kinship systems and any other in which the deictic field is embedded (Hanks 2006).

I propose that creation of meaning based on indexicality (Peirce 1955) is part of assemblages of reciprocity. The participant constitutes the self though articulation along contiguous relationships, a sort of mimesis, without having to describe or define. Codeswitching, pointing, shifts in stance, tone, footwork are forms of articulation with different contexts based on indexicality, of pointing out those contexts without defining. Duranti (1997, 201-10) reviews work on relations of expanded contiguity that form referential grounds of indexicality. The grounds of reference can include and link fields that are difficult to define, for instance "spiritual" grounds, but through practices of indexicality become manifest or linked to the self.

Indexical practice through embodiment is fundamental to articulation of the self with context. The work of Merleau-Ponty (1962 ), (Hanks 2000, 20), emphasizes body posture that engages expanded corporeal and social fields, through empathy, or embodied "reciprocity of perspectives". The idea of *Prise de conscience* as perception and the relation between awareness of self and engagement with the world, enables the person to assume certain "posture" as one of many that an actor could adopt in a potential situation, opening forms of articulation with myriad horizons of possibility. Diverse referential grounds become available through

relationships of contiguity, or proximity (Hanks 1996, 138, 257). Likewise, practices of embodiment as *habitus*<sup>16</sup> link the body, and localized speech frames into wider “fields”, and contexts (Hanks 2005a) (Hanks 2006).

From there we can postulate relationships of shared embodiment with those undefinable referential grounds. Drawing from Marcel Mauss in his essay on the person (1985), Duranti suggests that “speakers do not just pretend to be different characters, they become and are treated as if they were those characters (Duranti 1997, 297)”. They embody those roles reflected in context. Not only do embodied practices of indexical reference render visible or articulate diverse referential grounds, they constitute nodes of articulation.

From this viewpoint it is difficult to separate the self from context. The phenomenological and “intersubjective constitution of meaning through that subjective experience [bodily experience] (Csordas 2002, 246)” constitutes the unification between body and shared context which Csordas calls “**consubjectivity**” (219). Hanks develops the similar idea of “**complicity**” for instance in shaman - patient interactions embodied through shared grounds of reference. “Complicity” can interrelate embodiment, intentionality, relevance, context and the spiritual.

At the level of assemblages of reciprocity, specific interaction frames start to lose relevance, and merge with context. Hanks proposes the concept of a wider “**intersperspectival** space consisting of that which is mutual, reciprocal or distributed among participants. It is within this total range of possibilities that action is centered and that decenterings take place” (Hanks 1990, 200). interrelated forms of production of context and identity. Shared “intersperspectival” spaces involve reciprocity, and exchange. As Hanks observes, “Reciprocity is one of the logical prerequisites of indexical **transposition** (Hanks 1996, 258)”. Analogous to “assemblages of reciprocity”, the term “Interperceptual space” implies a unification that transcends and incorporates individual participants and elements into the assemblage. At the same time, framework analysis is useful in understanding grounded relationships between self and context.

Hanks has called for an “emancipatory pragmatics” (Hanks and Sachiko 2019). He proposes the need for “rethinking context”, as based on “theory of contextual interdependence, alternative to our more familiar ones, and which speaks directly to what we commonly call ‘situatedness, indexicality, co-presence, and context.... Indeed, the search is for a level of nonseparation that is ontologically prior to the subject-object distinction. (2019, 64)”.

Hanks gives example from of traditional Japanese space<sup>17</sup>, “ba”, similar to the indigenous intersperspectival spaces of healing and communicating we have described. It is a holistic context

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<sup>16</sup> Bourdieu defines the field as “the space of positions and the space of position-takings [*prises de position*] in which they are expressed (Bourdieu 1993, 30).

<sup>17</sup> Other writing on “traditional” or ancestral concepts of space in Japan repeat the same ideas. “Ma” means space, as “identical with the events or phenomena occurring in it, space as recognized in its relation to time-flow”. It transcends physical space, and “takes us to a boundary situation at the edge of thinking”. Definition of bounded space or identity takes place in “moments of No action” of universal thought that close back into action and definition and are always articulated to the self, as “the light that shows through the gaps in those intervals” (Pilgrim 1986, 256). I propose that the processes of healing take place in those static and invisible moments of articulation which for instance the Kaggaba recognize in moments of articulation between the self and other. Hanks reminds us that “the deictic field is not merely a physical space, but an emergent relation in which each verbal brush stroke, each improvisation, adjusts to and alters the context it is presumed to represent (2019, 67)”.

in which, “the creation of the objects and of the subject who denotes them, [occurs] simultaneously and interdependently. From this interaction, the speaker as self emerges in real time”. Both forms of space bring the individuated “I” embedded through a series of articulations into an “intersubjective” space” (Hanks and Sachiko 2019, 66) as “non-separation”. This wider space is based on “reciprocity of perspectives”, “corporeally mediated co-presence”, “absolute nothingness” as a unity, all leading to relational spaces of interaction. Hanks leaves the idea open for development.

I think that these concepts bring us closer to Kaggaba practices of reciprocity as forms of communication. These wider concepts of interspectival space include the possibly of elements that are not easily definable, like “the spiritual” within the assemblages of communicative practice, or the role of the “non-human” communicative agency. But those concepts of linguistic analysis were not probably not intended for those purposes. They almost never specifically say that they incorporate spaces of healing based on the spirit in expanded spaces of articulation, but they do bring us to that boundary.

Michael Taussig recently reflects on that boundary as “sameness”. “Are not these analogies alive with the reciprocating tension of the gift that binds them and endows them with empathetic force? (Taussig 2020). The art of mimesis, brings people face to face in exchanges to embody those principles, without necessarily recognizing them. Taussig calls this *the “bodily unconscious, in which the body came to mean your body, and the body of the world”*. “It is not that the bodily unconscious becomes conscious or even partially conscious, for it could not function unless it remains unconscious” (Taussig 2020). Mimesis is reciprocity, magic that works through apparent similarity.

An important element of interspectival space is territory and helps to work through these questions. Amongst the Kaggaba, territory embeds the spiritual principles of origin and the fundamental forms of reciprocity with life, as the “codes” in “sacred sites” in the form of original “people”. The human body, community and nature all form part of this articulated unified circuit of reciprocity with territory and its “spiritual “principles”, in of those referential grounds.

The term “Differential space”, is a useful concept to conceive of territory as a multifaceted ground of reference as a practice based and contingent space of social reproduction mediated through the body (Lefebvre 1991 [1974], 52) This conception of space fits with Hall’s concept of articulation and bodily mediated speech production frameworks, it is possible to see the body as a place in a network of relations (or space) “that recognizes the *corporeality of vision and reaches out, from one body to another*” (Gregory 1993, 416) see also (Hart 2006). Strathern also shakes up the idea of “relationships” and exchanges to propose “flows’ in “domains” that encompass and surpasses divides between subject and object, and transcend the relationships between constituent things (Strathern 2018).

Massey refers to the “Anthropocene”, as constituted through relationships between the biophysical, landscapes, the social, and working from that perspective requires new methods of

research” (Massey 2009, 16)<sup>18</sup>. The methods that I use in this dissertation, incorporate that wider view of space, social relations, power, the biophysical and landscapes. The indigenous peoples of the SNSM include “sacred sites”, and reciprocity as to the assemblage of the environment, rivers, forests, etc.. Ancestral territory is both fixed with limits and definable spaces, and far beyond to the universe along its four cardinal points.

These senses of space are analogous to the Kaggaba concept of territory as a mesh of “sacred sites”, places of production and intersection of life and spiritual principles embedded in the strata of wider fabrics and assemblages of reciprocity. the Kaggaba prefer the term “Sacred spaces” which emphasize unbounded interrelated space and located place as part of the same. In this view, place is defined as interconnected nodes, and not necessarily fixed territories, which fits in with Kaggaba notions of space and place as determinate and at once unbounded, both discrete and related to the whole<sup>19</sup>.

This also implies that any reconfiguration of place and its form of articulation to space transforms the total. Kaggaba practices of reciprocity are clearly based on the idea that reciprocity that includes the spirit produces transformations in context, responses from assemblages of reciprocity. Kaggaba ancestral practices, for instance, those of spiritual “payments” – *Aluna anguashi* – giving back spirit to territory, to the assemblages, articulates with redeployments of space and place within expanded fields of articulated assemblages of territory and can create responses.

In this sense, the “grounds of reference” as assemblage of reciprocity, wide interspectival spaces, expands the possibilities of production of meaning, communication, and response. In the Kaggaba perspective, territory itself adopts agency, or subjectivity, linked to the human body, as a sentient being and part of communicative systems. The spiritual mothers and fathers, the sacred sites emit messages, are readable in “*aluna*”, in thought. They are often evidenced through indexical tokens emitted in nature like thunderclaps, animal calls and other events which index the repositioning of elements and relationships within this wide-ranging assemblage of reciprocity, as responses in the assemblage of territory, people and things, produced as part of specific practices of reciprocity.

I am implying that this is part of another form of communication that transpires through assemblages of reciprocity with the spirit in which a gift to the spirit can produce the return of the gift in other forms, mediated by the assemblage itself. In this sense, communicative practice would include other “channels” or codes, that include spiritual communication from territory, which the Kaggaba work through, what they call the “language of the mother”.

Dell Hymes takes up the issue, and cites several instances of communicative practices between persons, mostly indigenous, and inanimate objects like stones. He considers those kinds of events to be a “triggering of response” and questionable as “communicative events”. For him, they lack certain key characteristics of communication, including intentionality and are not generally verifiable, requiring specialists for their interpretation (Hymes 1977, 12-15).

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<sup>18</sup> See also interconnected focus in “Critical Physical Geography” (Biermann, Elley and Lave 2020).

<sup>19</sup> Sounds and positivism.



More recently other linguistic anthropologists, like Carlos Severi, reject the idea of agency of non-human entities in logics of communication. He explains that the “attribution of speech to an object, even when it has no morphological impact on language, produces a fictive speaker. As such, it transforms the field of verbal interaction and the speech acts that occur within it (2018, 124)”. For him, this is a “game” of human creation.

However, communication at spiritual levels or with inanimate objects has accompanied humanity for who knows how long and has also accompanied anthropology since its inception. The Kaggaba are clear that elements of territory like rocks and sacred sites are alive and can communicate, the spirit can communicate. These practices amongst the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada are key forms of cultural resistance, of healing, and to human existence. These communicative practices, as transformation of context, and of the relationship of the self to context work is crucial to Kaggaba practices of reciprocity and the Law of Origin. We develop that topic throughout this dissertation, especially in the last two chapters.

It becomes possible to think of moments of reciprocity as fundamental to the processes of inscription and re-inscription of the self in the social order as part of transforming violence and healing. These are points, or moments of articulation silenced by euphemization that make them the difficult to perceive. I propose that Kaggaba strategies of articulation of the “subject” with fields of power or categories of identity, or the “other” are key to recognizing and reconfiguring processes of violence.

This kind of communication of the spirit in wide assemblages and is constantly referenced in anthropological literature. Povinelli tells of the Australian Belyuen Peoples’ relationship with, “Dreaming mandate” or “dreaming’s beings”, where dreaming sites are similar to the “sacred places” in the Sierra Nevada. “Dreaming mandate provides all humans, animals, and objects with the potential to act as an agent, all events may be a result of a Dreaming’s, animals, or objects subjective intentionality” (E. Povinelli 1995, 509). Her later work shows how these relationships like the dreaming mandate can move into the political and comprise forms of governance and power (E. Povinelli 2016), as is the case for the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada.

“Healing Talk” at Navajo healing ceremonies emphasizes that the healer “contacts” spiritual beings. Healing takes place in an expanded space of interrelation, also deployed, like the Kaggaba do, around on the four cardinal directions as a unified and unbounded space, as “time out of time” (Wilson and Csordas 2003, 320). “Healing practices assume that the ‘environment’ acts upon the body, and vice versa in non-mechanistic ways, experiential ways (Ibid, 327)”. For Navajo healers this dimension of “spiritual” healing is different but related to the physical body, based on reconfiguring the relationship of the patient to wider space through song, prayer, and concentration. Similar communicative practices are alive amongst many indigenous peoples around North America (Carroll, Cressler and Bett 2019).

The authors of “Navajo healing” suggest that science and philosophy are unable to conceive of “manipulation of spirits” because of sciences’ inability to transcend space and bodies in non-reductive and non-dualist ways (Wilson and Csordas 2003, 328)”. Regardless if scientifically provable or if definable as communication events, this kind of healing becomes manifest through expanded spaces of interaction, and reciprocity that creates real effects and transformations of people and context.

Some anthropologists for instance, Eduardo Kohn, take up the possibility that “spirits are real”, moving deeper into non-human communications with humans. Kohn’s work on indigenous peoples in Ecuador, brings him to focus “on the problem of how to safely and successfully communicate with the many kinds of beings that people the cosmos (Kohn 2013, 18-19)”. His work brings in that possibility, asking “How should we think the relation that we, humans, maintain with the world that extends beyond ourselves (Kohn 2022, 381)”. From that perspective, semiotics are not limited to the human. Other recent research at UC Berkeley takes indigenous objects as living, with agency, and forming part of circuits of reciprocity (Smith 2016). Especially relevant is Marisol De la Cadena work on Andean “Earth beings” (2015 ). Mountains have agency and participate in assemblages or what she calls “a composition” of human and non-human interactions, blurring the “distinction between humans and nature”, and opening wider senses of collectivity and collaboration. In Colombia, some anthropologists have been attentive to practices of human communication with non-human entities in indigenous communities, for decades, for instance (Ruiz-Serna and Del Cairo 2022).

My dissertation contributes to this dialogue on expanded notions of communication through reciprocity and non-human agency. I accept these practices of the indigenous peoples I work with and posit that anthropological theory can articulate meaningfully with Kaggaba communicative practices and the world of spirit. Here, communication along assemblages of reciprocity, through gift giving and receiving with the spirit and can produce material results. We can stand back and reflect, or as Marisol de la Cadena recommends “Slowing down our knowing habits *not only* indicates a potential emergence that could challenge what we know and the ways we know it, and even suggest the impossibility of our knowing, without such impossibility canceling the emergence (2018, 31)”.

I think that the theoretical considerations I have presented here are useful to situate the reader within Kaggaba practices of resistance and healing. The theoretical perspectives presented here, place in perspective forms of lived relationships, that transcend space and place. The Kaggaba as a people, and at the personal level, base their lived processes on relationships and communication with expanded territorial and interrelated concepts of body, the spirit and healing. This is clear to themselves, and to people who share lived and collective experience with the four peoples of the SNSM. These practices are passed down generations of indigenous peoples as a practical and effective ways to live and interrelate with the world.

Likewise, the histories of resistance to violence and maintaining identity as indigenous peoples, in this dissertation are based on the unity between people, territory and the “principles of origin” that include the spirit and healing. This dissertation is foremost a history of how the Kaggaba and other indigenous peoples in the Sierra Nevada have been able to survive and maintain their identity since the arrival of the Spanish to their coasts. For over 500 years the Kaggaba, their communities and Mamos have found strategies to maintain their Identity, territory and practices in the midst of the “affectations”. This has been no small feat, and has required bravery and courage to keep on with their “lucha”, the “struggle”, to get where they are today.

#### 1.4 The “Law of Origin”, “Affectations” and “Nature”.

It is important to define how some key concepts and terms are used in the dissertation.

**The Law of Origin:** This dissertation frequently uses that term as do many Kaggaba leaders and authorities, when talking in Spanish. However, it has no direct translation in Kogian language. The “Mother Document” of the 1500 Black Line Decree described the “Law of Origin” simply, as “the invisible spiritual origin constituted in the order of our ancestral territory, that gives us the knowledge of how to (CTC 2015, 9)”... “protect and care for the organization of every aspect of nature, including the sea, the mountains, the crops, the air, the sun, communities,... animals, and our own governance (35)”. These are cared for though the “actual manifestation of reciprocity, in which health, equilibrium and protection all mutually depend on the compliance with the organization, function and management of each one (35)”.

Many indigenous people use that term. I asked a mamó friend Mamó Luis Noevita, one evening if he could explain the Kaggaba’s use of “Ley de Origen”. Mamó Luis, echoed what almost all Kaggaba say. The Law of Origin is “Se Aluna”, the principles of the spirit that care for the origin of the spirit, and the sharing of that same spirit.

Mamó Luis put it this way, based on Kaggaba examples. The spirit of origin, “*Se Aluna*” is embodied in a Tayrona clay pot filled with tumas<sup>20</sup>, that link with each aspect of the spirit, of life with all the spiritual mothers and fathers, that exist in the world”. Those crystals are the seed of origin for everything. “We are all the children of that spirit, and that spirit is our children”. “We are all born from that origin, like a corn seed germinates in the soil”. Kaggaba practices of Law of Origin are embedded in territory.

The Kaggaba Mamos and Sakas, authorities, and most people know how to take care of that spirit. Mamó Luis explained that the “Law of Origin” is healed, by “caring for her as she cares for us”. It is an exchange, of reciprocity with the spirit of life. The indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada have many techniques of articulation with the spirit and practices of reciprocity that include the use of objects, especially Tayrona objects – *sewa*, that connect to the spirit, music, dance, concentration, articulation with territory, and others that facilitate these practices of reciprocity. The indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada are clear that their practices of the Law of Origin have revolved around healing those connections to life during millennia.

In that sense the Law of Origin is a law of reciprocity that includes the spirit, and is based of forms of care, as we mentioned in this introduction. It encompasses the rules of care, or exchange with the origin of life. That exchange permeates all the material and spiritual aspects of what I call the assemblage of reciprocity, of territory, people, spirit and things held together by reciprocity as forms of care.

The Law of Origin is not something innate only to the Sierra Nevada. Many indigenous peoples around the world have their own expressions of that, as forms of care, as do we all. During this dissertation we explore different facets of the law of Origin as reciprocity and healing deployed by the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada.

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<sup>20</sup> Tayrona quartz beads

**Affectations:** For the Kaggaba, Law of Origin is directly related to the concept of “affectations”. Many Kaggaba leaders in the OGT especially started to commonly use that word in Spanish, after a Colombian Constitutional Court sentence recognized that the capacity for "Cultural or physical Survival" of many indigenous peoples in Colombia had been “differentially affected”, by the waves of Colombian armed violence between 1991 to 2005 (2009). The Court required each one of those indigenous Peoples, to write a document on how their capacity for survival had been affected by armed violence and to present the measures needed to repair those damages. I participated in that work as part of the OGT team (CIT 2011).

At one community meeting with the Mamos and authorities from the Palomino Valley, I asked if they thought we should explain what they meant by “affectation”. It took an entire night of consultation and discussion. The next morning the younger leaders summarized what they had concluded with their elders. “*Zheishinishigatuca*” means “what has been happening” or “what has happened” to the relationship with a principle of Origin, and its material expression. For example, when a spring starts to unexpectedly dry out, this is because the principle of origin of water, the mother of that spring has been affected, and the same principle in people and in everything else was also affected. It goes together.



Figure 3 Kagaba Mamos in Pueblo Viejo Photo by Peter Rawitscher

Another aspect of “affectation” would be “*Zelane*” or “what we have lost” in our relationship to the origin, and the conflict or pain associated with losing that capacity of care. If a Mama was to lose one of the masks that he dances with, that would interfere with his capacity to work in the spiritual world, and the violence, instability and pain from that loss, also affects the principles of origin. In conclusion for the Kaggaba the main affectations of armed violence were “those things that would impede

the practice of the Law of Origin at the spiritual level and in the land itself as the manifestation of all living principles of the Law of Origin (CIT 2011)”.

**“Nature”:** The boundaries between the human and nature, and the ways of creating knowledge of nature can be reworked in different contexts embedded in place and are historically deployed, often reflected in landscape and practice (Raffles 2002). The Kaggaba always conflate nature to the spirit as a part of the whole assemblage of the Law of Origin. It is part of people and we care for it as we depend in its care. Nature exists inside, beyond and in relation with ourselves.

## 1.5 Anthropological Genealogies of the Sierra Nevada.

### - Searching for the Tayrona.

This dissertation on the history of Kaggaba resistance to violence as healing, inevitably forms part of and is informed by a lineage of written ethnographic and historical descriptions of the indigenous peoples of the SNSM. Here we present a genealogy of this work and a history of some ways that the Kaggaba and the other indigenous people have been represented.

What I am especially interested in this section are some of the ways the Kaggaba and the others of the SNSM have been represented as an indigenous people since the Spanish conquest. Tracing relationships between the present-day indigenous people and their “Tayrona” origins has been a favorite topic in writing on the Sierra Nevada for centuries, a “historic-cultural continuum” between the present-day indigenous people with the Tayrona (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 60). As early as 1688, the historian and Bishop Fernandez de Piedrahita started speculation on who the original inhabitants of the Sierra Nevada might have been, calling them the “Nation of the Tayrona” (Bischof 1982, 77, 83).

Most authors are aware that the word “Tayrona” is a very generalized term. When they first arrived, the Spanish were impressed by the people living the Tairona populated valleys of the SNSM for their elaborate gold, ceramics, textiles and stone terraced towns and paths, and their armed resistance to invasion. The Spanish when they entered the valleys of Tairona, found them as “most fertile and with the most people of these parts of the Indies, dressed people and with great care in their clothing and things that most of them are carved from quarry, towns seen by the soldiers who went on that expedition, of two thousand and five hundred neighbors...”<sup>21</sup>.

According to Spanish chronicler Antonio de Herrera, “Tairona” was initially used to refer to a specific population, the “Tairós”. It was difficult for the Spanish to distinguish between one or another indigenous group, but most were apparently interrelated. Around the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the term “tairona” became generalized in archive documents to refer to indigenous populations living around the northern and western flanks of the Sierra Nevada upon the arrival of the Spanish (Reichel Dolmatoff 1953, 18) (Cadavid Camargo and Herrera de Turbay 1985, 14).

Reichel Dolmatoff and later Bischof claim to be the first to do a more “systematic study” (Bischof 1982, 77) of who the Tayrona might have been and their relationship to present day Sierra Nevada peoples. They established a basic narrative of the origins of the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada, from the moment of the so called “Contact period” with the Spanish, and their possible transformations through the colonial period (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 60).

RD concludes that the Kaggaba are part of a shared system of lineages all interrelated with the Tairona, over a territory that extended from at least Rio Frio to the eastern slopes of the mountain around the Rio Rancheria (Reichel Dolmatoff 1953, 35). The higher mountain areas were especially occupied by Tairona speaking lineages, from which the present day Kaggaba descend (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 60). The Kaggaba share “tayrona” traditions, language and objects with those lineages (Reichel Dolmatoff 1949/50, 276-7, 284). The Kaggaba say they are

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<sup>21</sup> (Langebaek 2007, 32) Transcription “La población de Tayrona en 1571”, AIS, Patronato, 29, in which captains and neighbors of Santa Marta describe the situation in the Sierra to the Procurador of Santa Marta, Gonzalo de Vega, in 1571.

the “in-laws” of the Tayrona, marrying into their lineages, and as such evidently form part of those same traditions and lineages.

RD affirms that present day indigenous groups are descendants of the Tayrona groups but what happened during the colonial period is not very clear, especially given that no written information exists about those processes. He speculates that “During the 17th century, the indigenous groups were of the SNSM probably reorganized themselves and through a process of absorption ... as the current *Kogi* tribe. It does not appear that the Spanish had traveled the northern and western slopes of the Sierra Nevada during this time, nor that the missionaries had made contact with them. .... After a hundred years of peace, they appear as the *Aruaco*; somewhat transformed and sometimes almost irreconcilable, but still consolidated around and continuing their old culture (Reichel Dolmatoff 1953, 62)”, (Reichel Dolmatoff 1949/50, 25). Some authors, mostly archaeologists repeatedly reproduce this same quote to assert that present day indigenous peoples are new ‘tribes’ formed during the early and mid-colonial period, thus unrelated to the Tayrona. However, this is not what Reichel Dolmatoff was trying to say.

RD observed that while the arrival of the Spanish did generate changes in social, economic and material aspects of the “cultures” of the existing indigenous peoples in the Sierra, this does not mean they are different peoples from those of the past. For instance, they no longer produce the Tayrona technologies, but still use them. He concludes that “there are well-defined parallels with the indigenous culture of the 16th century and that of the current tribes of the Sierra Nevada and in no way do we find contradictions between the descriptions of the past culture and that of today (Reichel Dolmatoff 1953, 47)”.

By 1600 the Tairona dropped out from Spanish view. This does not mean that they had disappeared, but it was how the Spanish referred to them. The Spanish were unable to differentiate between ethnic groups or “tribes”. This inability continued right up to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when travelers to the mountain still called all the indigenous groups they encountered “aruacos”. We see that written distinction between specific indigenous groups in the Sierra only started to emerge alongside the study of indigenous peoples around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for instance by (Reclus 1992, 222), (Celedón 1886, x). Later, the French explorer Le Brettes traveled around the Sierra Nevada between 1891 – 1895 (De Brettes 2017 (1898), 223). He distinguished between three groups of “aruacos” classified by territories and languages: the Bintukua (Arhuaco), Goamaca (Wiwa) and the “Arhouaques-Kaggabas”<sup>22</sup>, with their territory extending along the north flank of the Sierra Nevada (De Brettes 1903, 352). Even during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century anthropologists still mention the “Kagaba-Arhuacos” (Mason 1938, XVIII).

De Brettes set himself apart from his fellow travel writers, by compiling a basic typology for the collection of information on the Kaggaba that other ethnographers would emulate over the next few decades, including RD. He used categories like “Moral Sentiment”, “Religion”, “Industry” etc. (De Brettes 1903). He also states that he traced the Tayrona origins of the Kaggaba and the other indigenous peoples of the SNSM based on Spanish documents, indigenous oral testimonies, and archeology (Niño Vargas 2015, 67).

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<sup>22</sup> These are the same present day indigenous groups in the Sierra, except the Kankuamo.

Konrad Theodore Pruess wrote the first ethnography recognized as such, on the indigenous people of the Sierra. He specifically came to Colombia to research indigenous people, and in the SNSM did his fieldwork with the Kaggaba from 1914-15<sup>23</sup>. Pruess set out to find the essence of the indigenous soul. The “Kágaba tribe has remained in their mountains in a certain sense, as a natural monument to ancient times”. Not only their geographical isolation but the “totality of their social life up until today” is based on the fact that “everything is fused as one by their conception of the Universal Mother” and passed down from the first Kagaba priests and carriers of the “culture”, fitting in what I call assemblages of reciprocity articulated with the spirit.

He tries to present the Kaggaba spirit not by describing it, but by recording their songs and music, taking photographs of their sacred objects and transcribing their myths. He put together one of the most extensive descriptions of the Kaggaba to date including lineages and relationships to the “Original” mothers and fathers, genealogies, dances and other “social” and “religious” practices. He also concludes that the Tairona had close family ties to the Kagaba and that the Mama still speak the Tairona language (Pruess 1993, Vol II: 17, 18, 66).

The next and most well-known ethnographer of the Kággaba, is Gerardo Reichel Dolmatoff. He started fieldwork in the mid 1940’s and wrote a series of now classic ethnographies, the most famous of which he published in 1950 (Reichel Dolmatoff 1949/50). He continued to write on the Kaggaba for decades. Like Pruess he presented the Kaggaba through static categories of identity, related to their spiritual origin.

RD referred to the Kaggaba as the “Kogi Tribe”. On his initial visit to the Kágaba around the year 1946, RD claimed that “Kogi” is the term that the Kaggaba utilize to describe themselves, as the people of the Jaguar (Reichel Dolmatoff 1949/50, 266). However, the anthropologist Milciades Chaves, who accompanied RD, noted that although “in several interviews the “Kogi” have referred to themselves as such, we prefer to use the term Kágaba because some researchers of this culture have referred to them with that name, which in their language means people (Chaves, 1947, p. 423)”. Despite that, Reichel Dolmatoff adopts the name “Kogi”, and which becomes generalized thereafter in most references to the Kágaba, now usually written as “Kogui”.

I inquired about this with several Kaggaba leaders. Everyone was clear that they do not refer to themselves as “Kogui”, but as Kággaba. Kogui is the word that “white people” use, and the Kaggaba have just had to accept it. “Nazan kaggaba” means “we Kaggaba”. It comes from the root *Kaguba* meaning “the spiritual origin” of living things, especially plants. The Kággaba people are those who work from the original principles of life. Kogui was the name of a fiercer related lineage who would come and attack the Kaggaba, posing as false authorities. The Kaggaba learned to speak the language of the Kogui, called “Kogian”. Arregoces Conchacala was clear that the use of the term Kogui was a mistake, and we should try to reclaim the word Kaggaba<sup>24</sup>, so I use it here, except in textual citations.

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<sup>23</sup> Pruess was also probably the first who would name the Kaggaba as a discrete “tribe”.

<sup>24</sup> Kogi, alternatively written as Kogui, also refers to the dark unrecognized side of the self, the corruption of authority, the misrecognition of violence”,

The study of Archeology forms another facet of the construction of written history of the Tayrona, linking or delinking present day indigenous peoples in the Sierra Nevada from their past. We mention some of its lines of thought. Present day archeology in the Sierra Nevada area grew out of a symbiosis about 150 years ago of explorers, and archeologist- ethnographers most of whom were also collectors of objects from the indigenous peoples for museums (Perry 2012, 65). By the 1880's explorers like De Bretts were doing a lot of digging of Tayrona sites. The early archaeologists dug out and extracted basically as many objects and funeral urns as they possibly could, especially along the coast between Santa Marta and Riohacha, developing sizable collections to be shipped back home to places like the University of Pennsylvania, or Chicago and other museums in Europe, where they still are stored.

Signs of the "tayrona" towns that Castellanos and other Spanish chroniclers described in 1570 are still visible in today's landscape of the SNSM. Many of the "Tayrona" sectors of the Sierra Nevada still have their Tayrona stone terraced towns, connected with networks of stone lined paths, now mostly in ruins, eroded, and hidden under forests. After treasure hunters looted them of their gold, ceramics and stonework, a number of research institutes and private foundations, restored areas of a few of these towns, especially "Ciudad Perdida" and "Pueblito" which have been declared as Cultural Patrimony of the Nation and are famous tourist sites. Especially Ciudad Perdida contributes to the image of the ethnically diverse and culturally rich Colombian Nation.

The indigenous peoples in Sierra Nevada do not see archaeology as a form of studying the past, but as the destruction of their sacred places, of principles of origin embedded in territory with their Tayrona object like stone beads, and gold objects. The Kaggaba have used those same objects for many centuries as part of their "spiritual payments" to the mothers and fathers at each sacred site.

One of those archeologist-anthropologist collectors, was Gregory Mason. He explained that one of the reasons he had come from the University of Southern California in the 1940s, was to study the Tayrona, "Where had all the fierce Tayrona warriors gone? No one has ever learned (Mason 1940, 168)". He went up to visit the "Kagaba Arhuaco" people to find possible connections and found numerous examples. For instance, the Kaggaba inherited from the Tayrona a relationship between petroglyphs, water sources and "water worship" (Mason 1940, 317) . He found the Kagaba still used Tayrona masks handed down over long generations of Mamos, (Mason 1940, 261, 277, 324,), encountered stonework in Kaggaba areas which he thinks they built with Tayrona supervision and in exchange for protection.

Gregory Mason also excavated endless numbers of Tayrona ringed sites, especially along the Caribbean coast. He seemed acutely aware of the relationship between what he dug and what he was doing. When in Kaggaba territory he observed that the Kagaba would prohibit anyone from disturbing the funeral urns buried there (Mason 1940, 283), although he admits he would have liked to. Back down at the beach, after digging out so many burial vessels, he finally lamented that "Unarchaeological though it is, I must confess that I don't like groping around up to my elbows in cream-like mud to get the remains of high priests out of burial jars. I savor the job even less when the slimy crumbly bits that come up in my hand prove to be the bones of children (Mason 1940, 221)".



Reichel-Dolmatoff also did extensive archaeology around the coast (G. Reichel-Dolmatoff 1954). He was also aware of the great disdain the Kaggaba have for archeology, and hid his digging from them. He mentions that “archaeological objects were treated with reverence and when a man would pick up a monolithic axe, sound plates, staffs of authority or whistles, he would immediately begin to dance. Although these objects came from our excavations, carried out outside the Kógi territory, we had to deny that, since for them this activity represents a sacrilege (Reichel Dolmatoff 1949/50, 295)”.

The Kaggaba had recommended to RD that he rebury those objects. They continue to recommend doing the same thing today or giving them back to the Mamos for use in dancing and spiritual work. The indigenous people of the SNSM are trying to recover at least some of the thousands of Tayrona objects that landed in museums and collections around the world, to return them their places, but with very little success. Almost no museums want to let them go (Sabel Coba and Rawitscher 2024).

Meanwhile, archeological research has developed a relatively clear picture of the prehistoric phases of the Sierra Nevada. Evidence of the first human settlements is found near estuaries and coastal lagoons, (Caycedo and Bonzani 2014), (Reichel Dolmatoff and Dusan 1956), where the earliest pottery and agriculture emerged around 4,000- or 5,000-years B.C. The first stone house terraces appear in coastal settlements (Langebaek Rueda 1987, 84) dating from 500 B.C. in the Gaira and Cinto bays<sup>25</sup>. The first settlements with ceramic and goldwork appear during the “Neguanje” period from 200 AC to 900 AC (Oyuela Caycedo 1985, 10).

The Tayrona “Classic” period initiates around 900 AC lasting after the Spanish arrived until about 1600 AD. It is associated with a distinct “tayrona” style of gold and ceramic figures (Oyuela Caycedo 1985) (Langebaek Rueda 1987) (Dever 2007). (Oyuela Caycedo 2005, 141), and large ringed terrace “nucleated” town sites. What archeologists call Tayrona “nucleated” settlements start to appear all around the coast and mountains of the northern and western parts of the Sierra connected through an extensive network of stone paths with at least 250 of these settlements distributed around thousands of square kilometers (Cadavid Camargo and Herrera de Turbay 1985), (Langebaek 2018). The Kaggaba still live on many of these town or house sites, and recognize and use some of their place names in the language of the Tayrona. Many of them happen to be the same “Pueblos”, towns, the Spanish mention in colonial encomienda documents, we research in the Chapter 2.

- Essentialist constructions and deconstructions of Indigenous Identity.

Some archeologists demonstrate the links between Tayrona and present-day indigenous peoples. For instance, Oyuela estimated the age of some Kaggaba ezuamas based on lineages of 39 generations of constant Kaggaba occupation that their mamos narrated to Preus, thus dating from at least 800 – 1250 AD. He and his colleague Fisher then do radiocarbon dating on the Tayrona masks which Pruess took from the Kaggaba mama, who had used them for about that

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<sup>25</sup> See for instance (Oyuela-Caycedo and Bonzani 2005, 146) , (Oyuela Caycedo 1989) (Oyuela Caycedo 1987b) (Oyuela Caycedo 1985, 138), (G. Reichel-Dolmatoff 1974), (Dever 2007) (Oyuela Caycedo 1987b, 42).

many generations for dancing in the Ezuama of Noavaka and brought back to the Berlin Ethnological Museum. The date was 1378 to 1467AD (Oyuela Caycedo and Fischer 2006). Evidently these ezuamas date from pre-Columbian times as to many of the mamo's continuously used Tayrona objects.

Oyuela concludes that while significant changes at the level of material culture and economy occurred, the Kaggaba still carry on many of the same religious practices (Oyuela Caycedo 1986a), (Oyuela Caycedo 1998) The religious practices of the Kágaba/Kogui have their roots extending to pre-Hispanic times....Although...it is expressed in a different way, it preserves many elements of the Tairona religious complex (Oyuela Caycedo 2005, 146)".

A specific group of archeologists and few anthropologists feel differently. One of the most vocal, Carl Langebaek, rejects the "idea of an extraordinary case of cultural continuity between the current indigenous people of the region, especially the Kogi, and the ancient Tairona (Langebaek 2017, 27)". He claims the "societies that currently occupy the Sierra Nevada are basically the result of the interaction of pre-Hispanic societies with a colonial economy that began in the 16th century and continues to the present day". In 1578, they were "already completely transformed by the Conquest (Langebaek 2007, 40)". He uses those claims to argue that the present-day indigenous peoples are disassociated from their Tayrona past, which is totally unfounded in reality, as I also show in Chapter 2. Such trains of thought tend to be deployed by certain archeologists for whom recognizing present day indigenous links to territory, objects and the past is not convenient when excavating Tayrona sites.

Those arguments unexpectedly bring us back to the Stuart Hall's concepts of relationally constructed identity, the Jewish holocaust and violence. The topic of identity as a relational construct had become a debate upon the advent of the new 1991 Constitution of Colombia and the rights it assigned to indigenous people identified as such. A group of anthropologists and archeologists start criticizing Reichel Dolmatoff and his ethnographies as having produced the "strategic essentialization" of the Kaggaba, as the idealized and romanticized image of an indigenous group morally superior to others (C. A. Uribe Tobón 2017, 57)". From this perspective, RD had created the Kaggaba as the "ecological Indian, practically untainted by pre-Hispanic traditions (Langebaek 2017, 25)", to construct a "Kogui culture" from an "image of the holistic, harmonious universe, in balance with the environment,... in a certain way timeless and ahistorical (Serje de la Ossa 2008, 14)".

These authors claimed that RD's idealistic writings on the pristine 'Kogui' and other indigenous groups of Colombia, had permeated national discourse, to become accepted at face value by "liberal" idealistic academics. The indigenous people could now be recognized as those with the "first entitlement to territoriality in the Country" (Langebaek 2017, 29)" and other rights embodied in the new Constitution. Such artificially, or relationally constructed forms of indigenous identity, as configurations of the "savage slot" would unfairly work to the detriment of the remainder of the Colombian population (C. A. Uribe Tobón 2017), (Bocarejo 2009).

Then the debate took a turn for the worse. Oyuela-Caycedo, one of RD's greatest supporters, in 2012 discovered that RD had hidden previous affiliations with the Nazi party. This news accidentally came to light a number of years after RD's death and was quite a shock for his colleagues especially since he was considered the "father of anthropology" in Colombia. The

public narrative up to then was that RD was an Austrian who had escaped, joined the French Resistance in 1936, and then was sent to Colombia in 1939 to run the local delegation of “Francia Libre”. Oyuela found in fact that he was an avid and violent participant in the early Nazi party of German and Austria (Oyuela Caycedo 2012), although apparently RD had abandoned the Nazis out of conscientiousness, and did not commit war crimes against the Jews (Lomnitz 2017).

Why he never told the story of his Nazi affiliations is publicly unknown. It has been subject of speculation amongst Colombian anthropologists especially since it might have affected his motives for working with indigenous people (Drekonja Kornat 2017). Langebaek emphasizes the possible relationship of RD’s ethnographies to a “mixture of nationalism, purities and virtues of peoples that should be chilling (Langebaek 2017, 31)”. He concludes that while it is difficult to find direct links between RD’s writing and Nazi ideology, his background problematizes his work deploying indigenous identity as linked to “pure” pre-Hispanic categories as perhaps a reflection of RDs own occult search for a purity of race.

Other anthropologists, go through ranges of possibilities. One is that RD sought out an idealized view of the indigenous people of Colombia part of a personal process of healing his tortured past (Lomnitz 2017). According to that line of thought, RD had recognized the Nazi movement for what it was and the perverseness of his participation in it, and left (Drekonja Kornat 2017). Along that same reasoning, I think that RD might have recognized in the Kaggaba their centuries long resistance against the silent processes of near genocidal violence against them, and their capacity of resilience and healing.

My family also has a similar history, that resonates with RD, albeit the inverse. My grandfather Felix Rawitscher was a German Jew, a professor at the University of Freiburg in the early 1930s. He and my grandmother, like RD, had the clarity to recognize the impending violence, and left Germany with their family in time. Otherwise, we would not be here today, the difference being that they did not participate in that violence<sup>26</sup>. What happened to my Jewish family during the Holocaust and to the Kaggaba over the last couple of centuries is very similar, and they both recognized the imminent problems. That is part of why I am writing this dissertation. These processes of social violence need to be recognized and left behind. I think that RDs moments of personal recognition, escape from Germany and work with the indigenous people are very well part of a process of healing.

It is also possible that RD was consciously trying to give something back to the indigenous people he was working with. Certainly he did see the Kaggaba’s deep relationship with territory and the spirit as did Preuss before him. His writing on the importance of the Kaggaba people was a contribution to indigenous rights at a time when indigenous people were being brutally treated in Colombia. Even, Langebaek admits, “the impact of his (RD's) work... having given value to the indigenous communities was greater than that of many activists, and this is particularly valuable at a time when in many parts of the country indigenous people were not only stripped of their culture but physically eliminated, as still occurs today (2017, 32)”.

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<sup>26</sup> Felix Rawitscher emigrated to Brazil and continued his work as an academic in exile at the Department of Botany in the University of Sao Paulo (Ferri 1958).

Evidently, the projection of indigenous identity linked and naturalized with territory, nature and pre-Columbian pasts, as a relationally constructed “tribal slot” has political ramifications. Deployments of the indigenous people of the SNSM as the “Indio Ecológico” (Ulloa 2004), have contributed to indigenous people gaining traction within neoliberal regimes of governmentality through constructions of collective identity (Ulloa 2011, 100). Grounded forms of representation, the “luchas” of communities, indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples are key to maintaining identity and territory in the face of homogenizing processes of globalization (Escobar 2014, 76).

At the same time, categories of identity, as relationally produced, are not detached from grounded historical processes. Nor is it that Reichel Dolmatoff invented those concepts of the Kaggaba related to the spirit. They emerge precisely because the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada have profound relationships with territory, nature and the spirit they have maintained since the times of the Tayrona. The paradox that Langebaek presents of indigenous people as historically decontextualized and relationally produced, versus RDs hypothetical view of the indigenous people as rooted in the Tayrona past, are inseparable facets of the same movement. Forms of relationally produced identity are both transformative, and arise out of historically grounded processes.

## **2.0 Colonial Inscriptions of Kaggaba territory: debt, violence and the Encomienda.**

This chapter traces out forms through indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada were subject to initial moments of inscription of violence under Spanish domination. The Spanish conquest was immediately intermeshed with the establishment of the encomienda, subjugating the indigenous people to long-lasting networks of debt, structural oppression, and also of resistance that still remain today. These are moments of inscription of relations of debt imposed by domination and violence, what I can “chains of reverse debt”.

It focuses on ways in which the Spanish encomienda system articulated the indigenous people into a system of debt as assemblages of reciprocity based on violence and submission, indebting the indigenous people to the Spanish crown, in exchange for their lives. We could say that the encomienda constantly returns to an original Nietzschean moment of suffering and guilt, leading back to an authoritarian founding father built from the relation of the creditor and debtor.

Through the historical moments portrayed here, is possible to render visible those forms of structural violence that started to affect the indigenous people from colonial period, almost up to now. At the same time, we see how the indigenous people are able to transform and resist that violence along the articulations of reciprocity itself, as strategies through which they managed to survive based on adherence to indigenous “Natural Law”.

Michael Taussig observes “The creation of colonial reality that occurred in the New World will remain a subject of immense curiosity and study – A New World where the Indian and African *irracionales* became complacent to the reason of a small number of white Christians” (Taussig 1987, 5). That is only partially true. The better part of the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada did not become complacent to the “Christians”. Taussig is also right. The creation of colonial realities is buried under layers of writing, and misrecognition of the relationships between the Spanish and indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada.

This sliver of colonial history about Kaggaba territory during the colonial period illuminates much broader strategies of indigenous resistance and reciprocity. We see people and places from the documents of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century encomiendas, directly connected with the Kaggaba of today. Very little has been written about this period in the Sierra Nevada, or about the encomienda, and much less in relation to the indigenous people of today.

This chapter starts to fill in those gaps in the history of indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada. It is based on Kaggaba memory, and books and articles that provide a general context of the encomiendas in the Nueva Granada de Santa Fe, in the Province of Santa Marta alongside a critical reading of archival documents I unearthed that describe the encomiendas in Kaggaba territory. The result, which I present here is probably the only work that exists on the encomienda period in indigenous areas of the Sierra Nevada.

### **2.1 The Spanish Sword Arrives in the Sierra Nevada.**

Around the year 1498 the Spanish started to navigate the northern coasts of South America including those of the Sierra Nevada. Rodrigo de Bastidas apparently was the first reach the area of Santa Marta, when he landed at the Bay of Cinto in 1501 trading for gold and pearls with the “Indians” he encountered along the coast. The Spanish continued these kinds of encounters

without along the coast, without being able to establish any permanent town, confronted by overwhelming indigenous armed resistance. In 1510 Rodrigo Hernandez de Colmenares arrived near the Gaira River, where the indigenous people there attacked his landing party and killed almost all<sup>27</sup>. In 1514 as an attempt to create permanent settlements, the King named Pedrarias Davila as Governor of the Province of Santa Marta. He landed in the bay of Santa Marta, where he made incursions several leagues into the countryside looking for gold and mines. A few days later after losing several battles with the “indios” he returned to sea.

In 1525 Rodrigo de Bastidas founded Santa Marta as the first permanent Spanish settlement in South America. Rodrigo Alvarez Palomino, would later take over as Lieutenant Governor, and organized several incursions up the Sierra Nevada. He “pacified” numerous indigenous populations, and apparently remained on friendly terms and traded with the native Tayrona over the next few years (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 16).

This changed after 1528. The new governor of Santa Marta, Garcia Lerma (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 18) launched a general military campaign to plunder the indigenous people (Mendoza Ramos 2009), control and subject them to the encomienda system. During the remainder of the XVI century, Spanish military expeditions continued to cross the SNSM until about 1580. They ransacked and destroyed many Tayrona towns and settlements, accompanied with dogs, and oftentimes African slaves, in search of gold, which they would find strewn around the abandoned indigenous towns, while they took slaves, prisoners, killed and tortured.

During their ransacking of the Sierra, the Spanish also destroyed many Kaggaba ezuamas, and stole the masks and gold objects the mamos used to dance with and do their work to organize their territory. We asked several mamos if they knew anything of the first times the Spanish came to their territory. Mamo Bernardo Simungama of the Ezuama of Ableinzhi, when we were visiting his Ezuama with a commission from the OGT for the book Shikwalaka, narrated the following story passed down by previous generations of mamos in his Ezuama.

It was in the Ezuama of Mokuaka, next to the Ableinzhi, probably at the end of June. The Mama were dancing Kualama, for the harvests, with all types of masks and gold objects. The Kaggaba authorities had brought food from all over the territory so that they could heal it, the rain, land and all of nature. They had been dancing for nine days and nights. The last night the Mama were very tired. They put their masks, gold pendants, feather crowns and dresses in their palm woven baskets, but they left them in the nujue and didn't hide them in the caves of the forest like usual.

That afternoon an elderly Saka, began to have premonitions that dangerous and strange people might come to the ezuama. She went to the nujue where the Mama were sleeping and warned them, counseled them. “You must take those masks out of the Nujue, and hide them away in their places so they don't get lost. If those masks get stolen, we will lose all our knowledge. The Mamos consulted what she said, and concluded, “No, this old lady is wrong. She only wants to earn a meal. It is

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<sup>27</sup> Pedrarias Dávila arrived to the area of Santa Marta in 1514 with orders to take possession of the territory he traveled through, (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 3)

true that people are coming for a visit, but from Taganga to bring us Julda<sup>28</sup>, so we can finish our *kwalama* for the lower lands. The Saka repeated her warnings, but the Mama didn't pay attention, and left their gold pieces in the *nujue*.

Now that no one had wanted to listen to her, at sunset the Saka hid herself in a dense thicket of *Musukulda* vines. That same night the Spanish arrived, armed with their swords and lances. They blocked the paths from the Ezuama, went in, and killed all the people. *Maku Mamankua* (the head Mamo, or Cacique), was in the *nujue*. When he heard what was happening, he disguised himself like a Spaniard, putting a round basket over his head and a draping a long cloth behind him to cover himself up. He started shouting like the invaders "Carajo, Carajo". He hid a *mochila* under his cape with a few gold pieces that he managed to pull together, and ran. But the Spanish saw him and went after him. They tried to get him with their swords, but only managed to cut his *mochila*, and stopped to pick up the gold. That's how *Mamankua* was able to escape. He hid in a cave and nothing happened to him.

The next morning, he returned to Mokuaka. All the people were hacked into pieces. The Spanish had taken the gold that the Mamas used for the dancing, and had left only the wooden masks. The other person still alive was the old Saka who had now exited her vine thicket. Maku Mamankua lamented, "If only we had listened to her, none of this would have happened". Then Mamankua buried all the dead with the help of the people from the nearby ezuamas of Zhaika and Matugaka. The Spanish had gone past those ezuamas without seeing them.

But the Spanish had entered almost all the rest of the Ezuamas. In the Ezuama of *Inzhishaka*, they killed everyone, even Maku Lamama, and stole all the gold and the masks the Mamas were dancing with. The same thing happened in Kuamaka. Wherever the Spanish went, they killed everyone. They only left the younger men and women to carry their things, who when they felt like it, they raped and killed, leaving them along the path<sup>29</sup>.

This was a rather depressing story. Mamo Bernardo did not want to talk any more about it. The actual date of this invasion of the Ezuama of *Mokuaka* that Mamo Bernardo talks about is impossible to know. It could have been one of the first expeditions Lesmes organized around 1534, or one of the last Spanish incursions in the Sierra in the 1590s. Regardless, Mamo Bernardo's story pretty much describes what the Spanish did all over the Sierra: entering indigenous settlements, stealing gold, killing and raping people, later to place the indigenous people under the *encomienda* system to make them pay in gold for their lives.

This story, however much transformed over time, is remarkable in that Mamas have a historical memory of what happened in their ezuamas and to their people during the time of the Conquest. These are the same the same lineages of people who were there when the Spanish arrived.

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<sup>28</sup> Tayrona Crystal beads and other materials the mamos use for spiritual payments. The Tagangueros are a lineage who lived in the town of Taganga, on the coast near Santa Marta, as some of their descendants still do. *Kwalama* means the health of the harvests, animals and the forests and nature in general. Saka is a woman spiritual leader, who advises the Mamos.

<sup>29</sup> Interview *Mama* Bernardo Simungama, *Ezuama Ableinzi*, November 2015. General Archive OGT for book *Shikwakala*.

Mamo Bernardo makes direct reference to his territory through the eyes of the elder Maku or mamo who narrates the story, passed down through his same lineage. Mamo Bernardo is still there, taking care of his Ezuama and receiving spiritual payments from all over Kaggaba territory.

#### - Indigenous Resistance to the Spanish invasion.

The story of the Ezuama of Ableinzhi is also a story of resistance. The premonitions of the Saka advise her of what is to happen and she hides in a vine thicket. The Mamo switches his role and plays a Spaniard in to save himself and still have the story told today. Tayrona did resist Spanish armed domination during much of the first 100 years of the conquest.

It all came to an end by 1600, when the Tayrona united and staged a successful armed rebellion against the city of Santa Marta. The indigenous people “declared their discontent was because of the imposition of laws different from those of their ancestors and that they were going to defend themselves against such vassalage. (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 34-5)”. Worse, the Governor of Santa Marta had prohibited the “pecado nefando”, meaning that the indigenous men could not meet in their ceremonial houses. The alliance was to protect their ancestral law.

The Spanish response was not to be awaited. They brutally killed and tortured almost all the indigenous leaders and Caciques. They had to leave the mountains to live in more controllable “Pueblos de Indios” under the Spanish eye<sup>30</sup>. The indigenous capacity for organized armed response to the Spanish basically disappeared. The Spanish expanded the encomienda system to almost all the indigenous villages around the larger cities. They evangelized the survivors, subjected them to forced labor, and heavy tributes, making the people pay the costs of the war that they had lost (Luna 1993, 27, 65). The devastating effects of the encomienda system are relatively well documented for the areas around the larger cities in the Province especially Santa Marta (Luna 1993) (Navarrete 2005) (Molino Garcia 1976).

However, after the year 1600 the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada even under the encomienda system, resisted domination through non-violent practices. The Spanish were unable to dominate the Sierra Nevada, the encomienda system never fully functioned and Spanish never maintained a permanent presence in most areas of the Sierra.

## **2.2 Gold for life. The Encomienda in the Sierra Nevada as the debt of Conquest.**

### **- The encomienda as the Law of Reverse Debt.**

The Spanish crown employed the encomienda early on, in many of its Colonial Provinces as a way of administering, controlling and extracting wealth from its new indigenous subjects, as was the case for the Province of Santa Marta. The chronicler Pedro de Aguado presents a very good description of the encomienda system as an observer of the conquests and the implementation of encomiendas in Province of Santa Marta during the 1570s. The encomienda is the “name of repartimiento and encomienda, and encomendero, and deposit, and administration of Indians (Aguado 1916 [1568], V1, 89)”. When a Spanish Captain on a military expedition had discovered

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<sup>30</sup> (Langebaek 2007, 59-157) later transcribes the original archive document cited by (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 47)..



and “pacified” a rich indigenous province, he could “designate” those conquered “indios” in sufficient numbers as needed to provide for his sustenance.

Aguado clarifies that these populations of “indios” were temporarily called “repartamientos de fulano”, until the king or his named delegate could validate it as an encomienda officially assigned to an encomendero, as a “‘Merced’ made by the ancient law of the Kings of Castile (Aguado 1916 [1568], Vi, 91)”. The encomienda would be designated by stating the name of each indigenous man - understood to include their wives and children, the number of houses “casas pobladas de visitación” - each house counted for one family, by naming the principal indigenous “lord” – Cacique of the area with a list of all his subjects, or by describing the extent of a territory where the “indios” are located, or the name of their valley (Aguado 1916 [1568], Vi, 90). The encomienda documents we cite further on, include combinations of those designations.

The King would assign the right the encomendero to administer and extract tribute from “tributary Indians”, based also on the indigenous peoples’ payment of the military costs or debts invoked in their own defeat. In compensation the King would assign an encomienda to the encomendero for life, and the right to inherit to his son, daughter or wife for an additional “one life” (Aguado 1916 [1568], V1, 92), which in practice was renewed generation after generation. The indigenous people were subject to the violence of the Spanish conquest through an unending chain of debt which they had to pay in return for their condition of domination.

The encomendero administered the encomienda in the name of the King, and had to comply with several responsibilities. These included collecting the annual tribute or “demora” of 4 to 12 pesos for each tributary “Indian” who appeared in the census and paying the “Fifth Part” of that as tribute to the King, some of whom were exempt, including the caciques, older people, children and others (Molino Garcia 1976, 60-68). The tribute often was in gold, but also paid in harvests, food, manufactured goods, blankets, bags or hammocks, and services rendered to the encomendero, working on his or her garden, house, or taking care of livestock.

The Encomenderos had to respect and comply with the Kings “Leyes de Protección de las Naturales” of 1542 which defended the rights of the indigenous people as subjects of the crown. The encomendero had to take care of the “spiritual and material” needs of the “indios” (Molino Garcia 1976, 135), including the costs of teaching the indigenous communities the Catholic faith. That included paying a catholic priest to indoctrinate each community, and building and maintaining a small church in the larger indigenous towns where the encomienda was located (Mena Garcia 1982, 10-15). The encomendero had to care for the indigenous people, curing them with a medical kit, and giving them seeds, tools or other materials that they might need. The encomendero had to be a “vecino” – a resident-, of the nearest Spanish town and maintain a house there. They could also work through a “mayordomo” as an officially named administrator of Spanish descent, who would give orders to the Caciques, who in turn collected the tribute from their communities (Mena Garcia 1982).

Other protections included the prohibition of the Spanish to enter the territories of each encomienda, except to collect tribute or evangelize, not to mistreat the indigenous people, nor subject them to onerous workloads or punishments and pay the members of the encomienda for work done in excess of the required tributes. In theory, the encomendero only had the right to the tribute produced by the encomienda, but not to its lands nor people (Molino Garcia 1976,

10-13), but often did not respect these prohibitions (Mena Garcia 1982, 24). A constant tension existed between the encomienda as an instrument to produce rent for the King, and the need to defend the basic rights of the indigenous people in the encomienda, so they would not implode under the hardship of producing that rent.

The Spanish administered the encomienda by maintaining the preexisting indigenous forms of government and indigenous forms of creating wealth from the land. The Spanish depended on the indigenous people and African slaves to interrelate with the territory and produce the basic foods, staples and elements the Spanish required to live.

The King sent numerous periodic “visitors” to report on compliance. The local elite in Santa Marta rarely cooperated with those visits, or would refuse them altogether (Luna 1993, 35). Apparently the encomenderos tried to underpay as much as possible their tribute to the king, and were often accused of altering the census numbers they reported to the Governors, and shirking the costs of indoctrination. Corruption was an intimate part of the encomienda, each link along the chains of reciprocity keeping some of the wealth.

The encomenderos in the Province of Santa Marta, were especially onerous, forcing the indigenous people to do almost impossible amounts of work, and subjecting them inhumane punishments and abuse. The encomenderos in fact often visited the indigenous villages, and their Mayordomos and other mestizo populations frequently lived in the same indigenous towns, usurping their lands, and charging excessive tribute. By the year 1700 (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 246), constant abuse, loss of agricultural land and the proliferation of disease and plagues led to the rapid reduction of the indigenous population, the disappearance of many indigenous towns and the dissolution of numerous encomiendas (Luna 1993, 48).

The encomiendas no longer produced much rent and continually abused the laws protecting “Los Naturales” (Mena Garcia 1982, 9), (Molino Garcia 1976, 14-20). In addition, most encomenderos were not interested forming indigenous subjects indoctrinated in the Catholic faith. The monarchy started to phase out the encomienda system around 1700 and place the administration of indigenous territories under the Catholic church. In 1718 the King issued an edict that “incorporated” the encomiendas directly under his administration. Some encomiendas however still subsisted during much of the XVIII century.

- The indigenous people in the Encomiendas of “La Ramada”.

Of all the encomiendas in the rather extensive Province of Santa Marta, I concentrate here on those in the “Jurisdiction of the Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada”, which covers most of present day Kaggaba territory- In 1547 a cedula defined the Jurisdiction of “La Ramada” as extending from the sea up the Tapias and Rancheria rivers to the snow covered peaks of the Sierra Nevada, and then west over the highest ridges of the Sierra Nevada and along to the Don Diego river, and back down to the sea<sup>31</sup>.

That “Jurisdiction” corresponds to the principal territories of the present and past Kaggaba communities. It covers the Ezuama of Mamarongo in the Tapias, Jerez and Rancheria valleys, the

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<sup>31</sup> According to Royal Cedula dated 1547 and 1563 the Jurisdiction of La Ramada started some 8 leagues from the city of Rio de la Hacha bordering along the lands of Mariscal Castellanos de Peñalosa up the Tapias River. (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 176).

Ezuamas of Kuamaka, Ableinzhi, Makutama and Kagueka, in the Cañas and Ancho river valleys, sectors of the Ezuama of Jukumeizhi in the Palomino and Don Diego Rivers, and parts of the Ezuama of Surivaka in the upper Guatapuri Valley. It also includes the present day Wiwa community of Marocaso along the Rancheria River (See Map 3 Encomiendas of the Jurisdiction of the Ramada). From the start of the conquest, and probably well before, a path has connected the town of the Ramada on the sea, with the upland Kaggaba communities, a three day walk.

The Spanish founded the town of the Ramada 1531, where they expected to conquer and subject the indigenous groups in rest of the Jurisdiction of La Ramada. The Governor of Santa Marta, Diego Garcia Lesmes established the first encomiendas there around the year 1535 (Acuña 2007, 34). As a Spanish “town” the Ramada apparently was never very prosperous. In 1583 it was still a very small town with only a scarce 7 or 8 Spanish “vecinos”, who apparently had difficulties controlling the territory and its indigenous towns.

They also had problems with other Spaniards. For instance in 1570, the inhabitants of La Ramada complained that their neighbors in Riohacha and Valledupar, especially the encomendero and soldier Mariscal Castellanos, would send squadrons of black slaves to the Jurisdiction of the Ramada, kidnapping up to 600 ‘natives’, burning their towns, and bringing them to work on the Castellanos’ family farms and pearl fisheries (Bermudez Bermudez 1997, 304 –7), (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 175- 182).

Around the year 1630 the Ramada was dedicated mostly to cattle ranching, and in 1655 it was finally destroyed by pirates and had become “depopulated”. While it was thereafter no longer classified as a Spanish “town”, meaning the seat of a jurisdiction, and encomiendas in la Ramada were managed from Rio de la Hacha. La Ramada subsisted as a village, occupied by a few Spaniards, and escaped black slaves (Borrego Pla 2018, 205-8), to remerge as the town of Dibulla some 200 years later.

- The indigenous people in the Encomiendas of the Ramada.

To describe the encomiendas of the Ramada and its indigenous population, we start with a document from 1578 about “La Ramada”. when King Phillip had required the Governor of Santa Marta to collect information regarding the encomiendas of Santa Marta (Langebaek 2007, 43-4). The informants in that document are the encomenderos of the Ramada<sup>32</sup>. The descriptions they give of the indigenous inhabitants of the encomiendas of the Ramada are very similar to the present day Kaggaba<sup>33</sup> and the other indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada.

The chiefs of the “naturales” of the Ramada are trained in caves for 10 years (Langebaek 2007, 44), just like today's mamos. They use the smoke from frailejon leaves to cure sickness, “leaf which in their language is called ‘donaha’” (Langebaek 2007, 44-5)”, the same leaf the Wiwa call Dumana and use for the same purposes. They use small crystals “some of which the ‘indios’ highly

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<sup>32</sup> Notably one of the 1578 informants, Juan Marscal, later appears in a document as the encomendero of the indigenous town of “Bonga” in the Ramada, which is still a Kaggaba community today. Frailejon is a plant of the paramo of the species *Espeletia*

<sup>33</sup> Karl Langebaek who transcribed the document, (Langebaek 2007, 40), proposes that by this time all connection between the Tayrona and the indigenous peoples in the Ramada had been lost, which is rather difficult to believe

value (46)", to cure all types of disease, just as the indigenous people use the same *Shimana* today. The language that unites all the "indios" is "Atanque" (44), assumably that of the Kankuamo people, which today is similar to Dumana spoken by the Wiwa.

The informants are clear that territory of the Ramada corresponded to the territory of the Tayrona. They observe that all the "naturals" "from this province populated the mountains of the tairona and that tairona in the language of the 'indios' means melting (44)". Today the Kaggaba, explain "Tayrona" means the art of working Tayrona gold. The Kaggaba previously spoke Teyuan, and many of their Mama still do (Reichel Dolmatoff 1949/50, 284-6).

The similarities of the 1578 description of the indigenous populations in the encomiendas of the Ramada and the present day Kaggaba, and Wiwa, Arhuaco and Kankuamo indicate they are the descendants of those same peoples or had a close relationship, as the same indigenous people who the Spanish had attempted to rule under the encomienda system since 1531 in the Ramada.

### **2.3 Cacique Shimata and Kamejuna - The Law of Origin displaced by the law of Blood.**

Before going into histories of the indigenous peoples in the territory of the Ramada in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17 centuries through the lens of encomienda documents, I will present some Kaggaba memory from that time. For the book *Shikwakala* we asked around if there were any Kaggaba mamos who knew histories of how they had been affected by the Spanish after their invasion. Antonio Coronado a Kaggaba from San Antonio, and quite well versed in histories, suggested that Mamo Venancio Morro would be the one.

As part of our work for *Shikwakala* in 2014 we made a two day hike up to the Ezuama of Sugulu, and stopped for the night at Antonio's house in San Antonio. Mamo Venancio walked in during the afternoon, and we sat in Antonio's thatch house, and explained what we were doing. Wouldn't Mamo Venancio know any histories from that time, and be willing to help us? He remained in silence for a while, and then said, that yes he did, but he would have to think about it and would tell us a "history" on our next trip up. He asked us bring him a big bag of dried fish in exchange.

A couple of months later we came through again. We had started off at 1am from the lowland Kaggaba town of Dumingueka to walk in the fresh of the night and arrive San Antonio in the morning to see Mamo Venancio Morro. Antonio asked a neighbor to tell Venancio we had arrived. We sat on the kaldoka, low wooden stools, around Antonio's kitchen fire on the earthen floor. While Venancio Moro told us the story. We gave him the bag of dried fish he had requested, and he set off back to his farm before dusk. Antonio was quite happy, saying that he had already heard the mamos narrate pieces of that history in the *nujue* during weekly community gatherings<sup>34</sup>. The history probably has been transformed somewhat as it passed down the generations, however, according to the mamo, it actually happened. It reflects of the basic concepts of violence, reciprocity and healing that underpin the relationship between the

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<sup>34</sup> Interview a *Mama Venancio Moro*, *Ezuama Ableinzhi*, Nov 2014. OGT, for book. *Shikwakala*.

Spanish administration and the indigenous people developed during the times of the *encomienda*. It is quite long, so I am going to summarize its principal elements.

This history called, **Cacique Shimata and Kamejuna**, is from the time when the Spanish had attempted to govern the Kaggaba in the Sierra by placing them in *encomiendas* under their own “caciques” – Chiefs. Cacique Shimata lived near the lowland Spanish town of Riohacha. He was responsible for governing all the other Caciques up in the Sierra and receive tribute from them for the Spanish. It takes place in Kaggaba territory in the Santa Clara and Rio Ancho River Valleys in the present day Kaggaba towns of Bonga, Bunkuanezhaka (Pueblo Viejo), and the upper Kaggaba *ezuamas*.

It starts in Bunkuanezhaka located two days walk up from the Ramada. Venancio explained that the traditional authorities from that time were originally women. They would organize their communities to live in relationships with nature and the spirit according to the Law of Origin, in permanent coordination with the *mamos* in *Ezuama*. They exercised their authority through education, compliance with the law, and setting a good example. No harsh treatment.

One day a lowland cacique - a *Nañiba*, named Kamejuna visited Cacique Shimata in his *njue* in Riohacha. He wanted to be certified as a Cacique to govern communities in the Sierra. Without Shimata having agreed, Kamejuna went up to Bunkuanezhaka saying that Shimata had named him as the new authority. But, that was a lie. Kamejuna never worked though the spirit and the Law of Origin with the *mamo* from the *ezuama*, he only extracted wealth from the people. He started to abuse the Kaggaba community, force them to pay onerous tribute. He collected all their gold pieces, and when that ran out his authorities would whip them until their blood dripped to the earth, to make them work harder and produce more and more tribute and gold. He worked them to extinction. One day the community escaped down to the river, and disappeared into a cave, into the spiritual entrails of the mountain forever.

A *mamo* called Numsiko from the upper *ezuamas* of Palomino got word of this. He visited Shimata in Riohacha to tell him that Kamejuna was destroying the Law of Origin and by extension, all life in the Sierra. It would all be Shimata’s fault for having allowed that to happen. Shimata admitted his mistake and sent Numsiko back up the mountain, with some of his *Junkuakuwui*<sup>35</sup> authorities with authorization to correct the situation.

On the path back up, Numsiko passed through the town of Bonga, where other lowland *Nañiba* caciques had been beating and torturing the Kaggaba, to make them work and give them tribute. Numsiko confronted them, made them recognize their failure to respect life and then Shimata’s authorities beat them and tossed them to the side of the path, freeing the Kaggaba. Next, he walked up to the town of Bunkuanezhaka. Numsiko confronted Kamejuna, also making him recognize his failure to respect the Law of Origin. Shimata’s authorities had all Kamejuna’s authorities beaten. Then he made them work in the gold pits, which caved in on Kamejuna and his cohort, leaving them buried, face down in the earth, as a spiritual payment to retribute all the damage that he had done to the mother earth.

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<sup>35</sup> Another name for Traditional authorities

At one level this history talks about Kaggaba practices of resistance to violence through practices of reciprocity. The story presents two principal forms of relationship with people and the spirit. One is healing, based on forms of giving back from people to territory and spirit in exchange for their what they give to people, as what I call the Law of Origin. Mamo Bernardo explained that “Our original documents are the documents of the mother written on rocks. That is where the water is, the birds, the people all are. Following that document, the original authorities, who were women, complied with everything in that law so as not to seed problems”. Mamo Shimata, from Riohacha, was responsible for both maintaining this order of community organization based on caring, while harnessing it to produce tribute for the Spanish without destroying it.

Another form of reciprocity brought to the fore in that history is what could be called the “**Law of Kamejuna**”, chains of reverse debt based on violence. Caciques like Kamejuna drain the life from the communities without giving anything back. The communities start to run out of food, fall into ruin, leaving nothing for the encomienda, nor for the Spanish, nor for life itself. Mamo Bernardo explains that “Kamejuna misused authority disguised as the Law of Origin”. Kamejuna, coopted the Law of Origin for extraction of wealth through blood and violence for avarice, personal benefit, and power. Kamejuna exercises this negative “twisted law”. under the guise of, and through the Law of Origin, “which was what brought him to his own end”.

Numsiku restored the Law of Origin, as reciprocity with the spirit. He did that with through direct physical punishment, and making Kamejuna dig his own hole in the mines. Normally the mother earth would have responded, eliminating those practices of violence and reverse debt. Mamo Bernardo warns that the Law of Origin responds to inverse reciprocity, “You might think that it was the mother earth who is getting back at you, but no, it is the person himself who gives things wrongly, and those things are returned to you in the same way<sup>36</sup>”. According to the Kaggaba, these exchanges can generate results expressed through the mother herself, through reciprocity, that expel the people who do not respect the laws of reciprocity with the spirit.

Another way of transforming the situation would be healing. The mamo said this negative behavior “can happen to anybody”, and these manifestations of the “knowledge of Kamejuna” keep reappearing in the encomienda and repeat themselves over the centuries. “So, we always have to be careful about controlling the negative knowledge of Kamejuna in ourselves so it is not put that spirit into practice”. It needs to be permanently recognized, and “spiritually canceled” or given back to the principles of Origin themselves. That is healing. The Kaggaba affirm that these practices of giving and receiving in spirit have enabled them to survive many generations before and after the Spanish arrived.

The story of Cacique Shimata and Kamejuna has very strong historical resonances with the early imposition of the encomienda in Kaggaba territory. Evidently the history took place after the Spanish arrived. We see no Spaniards here, no priests nor mayordomos of the encomienda. The encomienda is run through these new caciques, and Mamo Venancio mentions that they ride horses. We can reasonably assume that this process of imposing new caciques and the “Law of Kamejuna” accompanied the encomiendas in the Ramada after about 1535, until maybe 1700

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<sup>36</sup> Interview Mamo Bernarndo Simungama, Mamo from Ezuama of Ablienchi, in house of Antonio Coronado, February 22 2017, Santa Marta Recording 150212\_001.MP3.

when the Spanish priests or churches arrived on the scene. This account of Kamejuna sets the tone for the remainder of the history of the encomienda and resistance amongst indigenous communities of la Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada that we tell in the rest of the chapter.

#### **2.4 The Encomiendas of La Ramada, 1540 -1682: Caciques, “Pueblos”, debt and domination.**

This section of the chapter renders visible how the encomiendas operated in the territory of La Ramada in relation to the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada. It shows how debt relations both bind the indigenous people to the Spanish colonial hierarchy, and enable them to reposition and transform their relationships with the Spanish. It goes back to moments of the original inscription of the indigenous people into the violent law of debt and domination under the Spanish crown, later normalized in the form of the encomienda other practices of domination.

Along the way, the chapter also describes the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada who populate the encomiendas. We trace through practices and transformations of indigenous deployment of territory and practices of resistance during the time of the encomienda, and their relationships to present day Kaggaba and Wiwa peoples. The moments of far-removed histories, start to show aspects of practices of indigenous resistance based on reciprocity, which I draw together later in the dissertation.

Apart from some general research on encomiendas in the Province of Santa Marta<sup>37</sup>, there is very little published on the encomiendas in the Sierra Nevada nor about La Ramada, and much less on their relationships with the indigenous peoples<sup>38</sup>. The census that Jerónimo de Quero makes of all the encomiendas in the Province of Santa Marta in 1625 is an exception. It lists the names and give short descriptions of each encomienda, including “the 6 encomiendas of La Ramada<sup>39</sup>.”

I located archive documents which describe those encomiendas of the Ramada listed in Queros census, and one more, alongside other documents from that time which refer to the people and places related to La Ramada and the Sierra Nevada. I transcribed the useful portions for the research<sup>40</sup>. To find those documents, I did a detailed search in the online digitalized service at the Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla, and the Archivo General de la Nación de Colombia.

The encomienda documents I found constitute a specific “discourse genre” from the Spanish Colonial period. They are all titled “confirmaciones de encomienda”. They are notary documents through which the Governor of Santa Marta or his delegate assigns a notable Spaniard to the “administration” of an encomienda. Almost in their entirety they discuss legal processes, the

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<sup>37</sup> Lola Luna, in her publications on encomiendas and Resguardos in Santa Marta and Cartagena, cites Census of encomiendas, including Manso y Contreras from the year 1627 (Luna 1993, 37), with general figures for the province of Santa Marta and the Ramada, another one from 1661 which apparently did not include the Ramada, and a visit of Juan Cuadrado to the missions in the Province of Santa Marta (Luna 1993, 60). None of these are as specific as Quero’s census.

<sup>38</sup> . The only exception is Maria Teresa Molino (1976) who takes up the case of several encomiendas in the Sierra Nevada, but not in enough detail to relate them to process that link with present day indigenous people.

<sup>39</sup> AGI. Santa\_Fe,50,R.3,N.62. “Carta de D. Gerónimo de Quero, Gobernador de Santa Marta”. 1627. Images 10-12, and that same document transcribed by Karl Langebaek, (Langebaek 2007)

<sup>40</sup> I learned to read paleography (Ladron de Guevara León 1996). Laura Sanchez, a researcher and expert on Spanish paleography affiliated with the AGN checked over key parts of my transcriptions for veracity. To my knowledge these encomienda documents have never been transcribed nor cited previously.

“merits” and symbolic capital in the Spanish hierarchy of the possible candidates, their families, background, the procedural steps for awarding the encomienda and its genealogy. Numerous witnesses, repeat over and over the same declarations and descriptions. They legitimate the official face of the encomienda, but occasionally slip and portray the abuses and avarice going on behind the scenes.

The documents are written in situated speech frames of officially ordained public audiences or visits, that take place in a house in a Spanish town, usually in La Ramada. In the presence of public functionaries, the king’s “Visitor” cites witnesses from the region, to present their testimony. The scribe records it, as a process often lasting several days. The documents are produced out of those local speech frames involving Spaniard, indigenous, slave and “mestizo” participants, rendering visible wider grounds of reference encompassing territory, practices of Spanish domination and the indigenous peoples.

The issue of translation is also important. The documents incorporate specific instances of indigenous language and testimonies. The scribes are not indigenous, nor do they speak the native languages, unlike the colonial documents by Mayan scribes which William Hanks cites (2010). However, perhaps as similar to the colonial Maya documents, these documents “blend” wider context. The King’s scribes in our encomienda documents rely on indigenous translators to describe situations which in turn the scribe must also render in Spanish text. In that manner, translation forms part of the historical practices of creating or “blending” wider context (Hanks and Severi 2015, 9, 11). In this sense, the encomienda documents, form part of the construction of a wider set of emerging power relations between the indigenous and Spaniards<sup>41</sup>.

The topic of the construction of territory, space and place and population is reflected in my analysis of these documents. They contain information about the indigenous towns, *pueblos*, or communities, subject to each encomienda, their locations, censuses, names and some descriptions. Especially the earlier documents, from the 1620s and before, present census with lists of the names of the “**pueblos**” or indigenous communities and the names of their caciques often the population. Some of these towns are easily identifiable as the present day Kaggaba ezuamas, or other known Kaggaba and Wiwa populations.

The Spanish frequently use the term of indigenous “pueblos”- towns, as a place reference in these documents. However, is not clear from the documents what the term “pueblo” means. For instance, Quero’s 1625 census<sup>42</sup>, provides clues to the different nature of the encomiendas and indigenous populations in the Sierra Nevada from the encomiendas around the larger cities. That census, and some of the visit documents I cite from the 1620s, were part of an effort by the king to reinsert the encomiendas in the Province of Santa Marta back under the colonial

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<sup>41</sup> See “practices of commensuration” (Hanks 2015), and how Mayan colonial documents (Hanks 2010) enmeshed in the construction of contexts of indigenous relationships with the Spanish during the colonial period. .

<sup>42</sup> Mentioned in AGI. “Carta de D. Gerónimo de Quero, Gobernador de Santa Marta”. Santa\_Fe,50,R.3,N.62. 1627-7-20 Images 10-12, also transcribed by Langebaeck, (2007), and “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE RAMADA”. “Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Ramada a Miguel de Castellanos Peñalosa. Resuelto”, 1625, AGI, SANTA\_FE,168,N.8, .lma 7.



administration. They were apparently “falling apart” and their encomenderos no longer paid tribute<sup>43</sup>.

Quero in the census, excuses for himself for identifying the encomiendas in La Ramada with the name of the encomendero and not with the name of its principal indigenous “pueblo” -town, “because they are in Sierra, divided and separated, the names of the towns are not declared.”. This is unusual. The Spanish normally identified an encomienda with the name of the “pueblo de indios” inside which the indigenous population was supposedly settled or “reduced” often around a doctrinaire church. The lack of the use of Pueblos as a descriptor in the name of each encomienda of the Ramada indicates that the indigenous territory of Ramada, and in general for the “Sierra” was under much looser Spanish control<sup>44</sup> than those of the rest of the Province. This reflects the permanence of indigenous practices of producing space and managing territory, which the Spanish were unable to control nor name.

I now present a history of each encomienda in the Ramada, each one of which corresponds to a particular story of the indigenous peoples from those times. During these histories, many of the people that appear in one encomienda, and things that happen there become familiar, and reappear in the other encomiendas. These histories situate the reader in the times of the encomienda as an instrument of Spanish power, and of how the indigenous people coexisted with and manipulated these Spanish assemblages of domination.

Some histories are necessarily quite detailed, otherwise they would not be grounded in historical data. I condense and bring together the most graphic moments from those documents. These very situated histories of indigenous peoples in the Sierra Nevada profoundly reframe current understandings of practices of indigenous resistance in colonial Latin America. The conclusions of this chapter summarize the historical panorama, and relationships with the Kaggaba.

I was unable to find any encomienda documents dated before 1620. But many have references and citations on those same encomiendas that often go back to the times of conquest. In this way it was possible to trace out the development of several of those encomiendas from around 1550 up to the year 1684. After that date the documents disappear from the Archives, or at least I couldn't find them, or the encomiendas come to their end and transform into something else. We show the approximate locations of each encomienda in Maps 4 and 5, in relation to the Kaggaba and Wiwa place names identifiable in the documents, and some other Kaggaba ezuamas of that time.

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<sup>43</sup> In general the number of “indios tributarios” per encomienda in Santa Marta is much lower than the rest of the Nueva Granada during the same period (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 46-50), (Colmenares 1973, 80-96), (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 242-4). (Miranda Vázquez 1976, 90-9) explained by population reduced through disease, and poor treatment by the encomenderos, or reduced census reporting to evade the encomendero's tribute to the King. .

<sup>44</sup> Quero does occasionally mention names of other pueblos of other encomiendas “in the Sierra”. Some are recognizable in present day Kaggaba or territory. For instance, Quero cites the encomienda of “Yarebita” in Santa Marta. a name known by the Kaggaba as the sacred site of “Yazhibita”, the ruins of a large terraced pre-Columbian town still visible in the Don Diego valley.

## HISTORIES OF ENCOMIENDAS AND INDIGENOUS RESISTANCE IN THE SIERRA NEVADA

### 2.4.1. A Spanish Hacienda on the Tapias River - Don Francisco de Peralta -

This was a land parcel of 225 fanegadas<sup>45</sup>, to which Capitan Francisco Peralta had confirmed his titles in 1644 for a price of 662 pesos. They are ‘tierras de labranza’ where Peralta probably had groups of tributary Indians working. The property was probably much larger than that because its boundaries are given as between “the two rivers of Henea (Tapias) and Rancheria”, which are at least 20 kilometers apart. Tapias appears as a place on some colonial maps<sup>46</sup> from 1633, located somewhat upriver from the Tapias River outlet at the sea.

The document makes no reference to any indigenous peoples on the hacienda. It probably would be one of the haciendas owned by an encomendero, with cattle, horses and crops where the indigenous people from the encomiendas had to come down from the mountains and pay tribute in the form of work. Peralta is mentioned around 1620 in other encomienda documents, as one of encomenderos of the Ramada<sup>47</sup>, and In Quero’s census is listed in the Ramada with an encomienda of 30 “indios tributarios”. However, it was impossible to find the documents on Peralta’s encomiendas.

Capitan Francisco de Peralta was associated with the pearl trade in Rio de la Hacha. He had several apparently important aristocratic titles in Riohacha including “Aguacil Mayor de la Inquisición”, and Capitan of the Orden de Santiago. His grandparents were early pearl traders and slave owners in Rio de la Hacha and Cabo de la Vela<sup>48</sup>. Significantly, his maternal grandfather was Mariscal Miguel de Castellanos a pearl trader from the island of Cubigua, who emigrated to the more profitable pearl trade in Rio de la Hacha. Peralta’s family was closely intertwined with the Castellanos family who were large slaveowners, ransacked surrounding indigenous communities, and constantly abused the indigenous communities other encomiendas located around Tapias.

### 2.4.2 The Spanish meritocracy, Pearls and torture: Encomienda of Miguel Castellanos y Peñalosa.

The documents from this encomienda form part of the process that the King and the Quero, the Governor of the Province of Santa Marta started after 1620 to regain control of the “ancient” encomiendas of the Ramada, meaning those established before 1570 (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 242). In a letter to the governor of Santa Marta in 1619 the King cites “Collusion for not having done in accordance with the / Laws and orders that are given and that according to those laws” the encomenderos had lost the right to their encomiendas. The King requests that those encomiendas should be newly “composed” to have the encomendero send at least something,

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<sup>45</sup> AGI. Confirmación de Encomienda de Rio de la Hacha. Santa\_Fe,171,N.28. 1644. The AGI Classifies it as an encomienda.

<sup>46</sup> ANC. Mapoteca: SMP. 4, REF X-62, 1639. Terra Firma et Novum Regnum Granatense et Popayan.

<sup>47</sup> AGI. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. 1628. Image 26.

<sup>48</sup> AHN de España, Peralta y de Castellanos, Francisco de. ES.28079.AHN//OM-CABALLEROS\_SANTIAGO,Exp.6330. 1637. “Pruebas para la concesión del Título de Caballero de la Orden de Santiago de Francisco de Peralta y de Castellanos, natural de Río Hacha, Familiar y Alguacil Mayor de la Inquisición”. Image 9.

the “Quinta Parte” to the Royal Treasury. As part of that process, the governor makes a visit to La Ramada to audit all the encomiendas there, including that of Miguel Castellanos y Peñalosa<sup>49</sup>.

- The noble birth right to the encomienda.

As a result of that enquiry, in 1625 this encomienda, of the jurisdiction of the “City of the Ramada”<sup>50</sup>, was assigned to Miguel Castellanos y Peñalosa. The encomienda had initially been assigned to the Mariscal Miguel de Castellanos<sup>51</sup>, probably at some point around 1570. Mariscal Miguel de Castellanos inherited the encomienda to his son Francisco Castellanos, around 1605 with a new title issued by Governor Manzo y Contreras<sup>52</sup>. This was the same governor who violently stamped out the indigenous rebellion of 1599 in Santa Marta. Francisco Castellanos dies and inherits the encomienda to his son Miguel Castellanos y Peñalosa. The 1620 inquiry found that the Francisco had been in gross non-compliance with the king’s orders. It had been left “Baca” or vacant, with no tributary Indians declared and no payment to the King for years. Given that the original right to the encomienda was only valid for “two “lives, Francisco should have returned it to the king when his father had died. These irregularities merited that he and his inheritors should have lost their right to the encomienda.

Nonetheless, Miguel Castellanos y Peñalosa argued that his disregard of the Kings’ orders was not a major issue. His father, grandfather and great grandfather had all been able to reach arrangements with the King to recompose their encomiendas. The encomienda was left “empty” due to lack of tributary Indians, which he claimed, was not his fault. This claim was quite dubious, since the Castellanos family would not have paid the King large sums nor used their political influence to keep on renewing their title to the encomienda. Effectively, Miguel Castellanos y Peñalosa paid a sum of 40 pesos to validate his right to the encomienda and in 1625 the King sent him the Real Cedula.

By the year 1636, Miguel had died and the encomienda passed on to his young son who lived in Santa Marta under the tutelage of his mother. Miguel’s brother Francisco Castellanos y Peñalosa took advantage of the situation, arguing that the mother and child were not administering the encomienda properly, and that it should be better assigned to him. Francisco paid the sum of 85 pesos, and took the encomienda from his nephew in 1636<sup>53</sup>. After that, the document trail disappears.

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<sup>49</sup> AGI Confirmación de Encomienda de Ramada a Miguel de Castellanos Peñalosa., SANTA\_FE,168,N.8 1625. Image 6.

<sup>50</sup> “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE RAMADA”. “Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Ramada a Miguel de Castellanos Peñalosa. Resuelto”, 1625, AGI, SANTA\_FE,168,N.8. Image 9

<sup>51</sup> “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE RAMADA”. “Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Ramada a Miguel de Castellanos Peñalosa. Resuelto”, 1625, AGI, SANTA\_FE,168,N.8, .Image 7

<sup>52</sup> AGI Confirmación de Encomienda de Ramada a Miguel de Castellanos Peñalosa., SANTA\_FE,168,N.8 1625 Image 7

<sup>53</sup> AGI, SANTA\_FE,170,N.20, “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE RAMADA”. “Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Ramada a Francisco de Castellanos Peñalosa. Resuelto”, 1636: 3 – 10, image 3.

- The Encomienda, slave raiding and the pearls of torture.

The formation of family oligarchies who flouted Spanish norms including prohibitions of handing encomiendas down multiple generations was frequent in the Province of Santa Marta (Molino Garcia 1976, 181). This was especially the case for the Castellanos family. They kept passing the names of Miguel and Francisco to their eldest sons down the generations, as they did their encomienda. The indigenous people were their birthright. They consolidated their domination of Spanish power relations in the region of Rio de la Hacha and beyond, through a network of unscrupulous and black-market business activities, strategic marriages, violence and domination of the indigenous people and other Spaniards (Musset 2018, 75-90).

Mariscal Miguel's father Francisco de Castellanos<sup>54</sup> immigrated from Spain in the 1530s to participate in lucrative business of pearl harvesting on the island of Cubagua, the first major pearl fishery in the Caribbean, and where he was treasurer<sup>55</sup>. Cubagua's pearl banks were gradually depleted and finally washed out in a storm around 1541 (Barrera Monroy 2022).

After that, Francisco Castellanos followed the pearl trade to the more promising fisheries near Rio de la Hacha, where he also was city treasurer around 1545<sup>56</sup>. In 1549 he also lived directly in the pearl farms in Cabo de la Vela located outside Rio de la Hacha<sup>57</sup>. He brought 10 black slaves there in 1550<sup>58</sup>, probably for pearl extraction, alongside his interest in gold mines in the Sierra Nevada<sup>59</sup>. Mariscal Miguel Castellanos carried on his father's legacy in the pearl business and was treasurer of Rio de la Hacha around 1573<sup>60</sup>.

Mariscal Miguel was particularly well known, referred to as the richest "neighbor" of the city of Rio de la Hacha, and was feared by the indigenous people of the region (Langebaek 2017, 53). He was accused in 1580 of sending squadrons of slaves to abduct the indigenous people from the Jurisdiction of La Ramada and take them to Rio de la Hacha to work in pearl diving<sup>61</sup> (Barrera Monroy 2022, 13). He was also implicated in 1576 for having taken lands from the "indios" in other areas of the province<sup>62</sup>. The governor of Santa Marta was at odds with him for "having

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<sup>54</sup> ANH. Peralta y de Castellanos, Francisco de. ES.28079.AHN//OM CABALLEROS\_SANTIAGO, Exp.6330. 1637. Imagen 2.

<sup>55</sup> AGI. Autos entre partes. Santo Domingo. ES.41091.AGI/24//JUSTICIA,973. 1531 - 1534. No lo lei.

<sup>56</sup> AGI. Rio de la Hacha y los Remedios. Cuentas de Real Hacienda ES.41091.AGI/16//CONTADURIA,1562. 1529 - 1552.

<sup>57</sup> Real Cédula a Francisco de Castellanos, tesorero en el Cabo de la Vela y pesquerías de perlas, sobre varios temas. ES.41091.AGI/23//CARACAS,1,L.1,F.143V-145R,1549. And see "Real cédula a Francisco de Castellanos, tesorero real en el Cabo de la Vela y pesquerías de perlas, sobre varios asuntos", ES.41091.AGI/23//CARACAS,1,L.1,F.122R-124R. 1547.

<sup>58</sup> Real Cédula dando licencia a Francisco de Castellanos, tesorero de la pesquería de las perlas de Cabo de la Vela, para llevar a Indias 8 esclavos negros, un tercio hembras, a cuenta de las 1.000 licencias concedidas a la isla Española. ES.41091.AGI/23//INDIFERENTE,424,L.22,F.199V-200R. 1550.

<sup>59</sup> Real cédula a Francisco de Castellanos, tesorero de su majestad en el Cabo de la Vela y pesquerías de perlas, sobre varios asuntos. ES.41091.AGI/23//CARACAS,1,L.1,F.135V-136R. 1549. Y oro en la sierra nevada. And see "Real cédula a Juan Pérez de Tolosa, gobernador de Venezuela y Cabo de la Vela, para que informe sobre la conveniencia de nombrar a un teniente de tesorero en las recién descubiertas minas de Sierra Nevada". ES.41091.AGI/23//CARACAS,1,L.1,F.137V. 1549

<sup>60</sup> AGI. Informaciones: Miguel de Castellanos. Informaciones de oficio y parte: Miguel de Castellanos, tesorero de Riohacha, vecino de Riohacha. Presentación en el Consejo en 1573. ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTO\_DOMINGO,12,N.17.

<sup>61</sup> CARTAS DE GOBERNADORES. Carta de D. Lope de Orozco, Gobernador de Santa Marta. ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTA\_FE,49,R.9,N.32, 1577. Imagen 2 y 3.

<sup>62</sup> Informaciones y probanzas. Santa Fe. "Otras hechas por don Lope de Orozco, gobernador de Santa Marta, contra el mariscal Miguel de Castellanos, y Pedro Beltrán, por haber quitado a los indios de Santa Marta las tierras llamadas Pitamirete. Dos piezas. 1576". ES.41091.AGI/24//JUSTICIA,1123. 1527 - 1576.

destroyed the Indians by having forcibly taken them under his service” and intercepting and destroying the reports that the Governor had sent to the king to denounce the Mariscal<sup>63</sup>.

Under these circumstances, the Castellanos family remained amongst the most prominent families in Rio de la Hacha for generations. The Mariscal’s son, Francisco Castellanos Barrios was treasurer of Rio de la Hacha in 1619 and grandson Miguel Castellanos de Peñalosa held the post of “depositario general y tenedor de difuntos” for Rio de la Hacha in 1617<sup>64</sup>. Miguel’s brother, Francisco Castellanos y Peñalosa was “aguacil mayor” in 1629<sup>65</sup>.

Key to the power of the Castellanos was the pearl business. The pearl traders and their descendants moved up the ranks of the elite Spanish hierarchy in Rio Hacha and Santa Marta (Navarrete 2003, 38). The pearl fishery business around Rio de la Hacha was based on a harsh disciplinary system, denounced by occasional Spanish visitors, especially the clergy. Indigenous slaves, often kidnapped from the encomiendas of Ramada and Valledupar, worked on the fisheries as divers or completed other tasks in the pearl camps.

In 1570 the Governor of Santa Marta, Pedro Fernando de Bustos outlawed the use of indigenous slave divers due to violation of the Leyes de Protection de los Naturales. The Spanish replaced the divers with black slaves after that (Navarrete 2003, 38-42). Through their mayordomos, the owners of the “pearl canoes” meted out severe treatment to both the black and the indigenous diver slaves. The divers often died from the effects of repeated free lung dives to depths between 14 to o 16 meters, and had to keep on diving until they collapsed from exhaustion and bleeding lungs. Then the Mayordomos would whip and beat and then chain the divers into huts during the night so they would not escape. In the meantime, the Spanish would do their best to increase profits though the black-market dealings with English and French pirates (Barrera Monroy 2022). Under such abuse, the black slaves staged many revolts and escapes attempting to set up “Paleneques” - towns of escaped slaves out in the forests of the Sierra Nevada. Usually, the escaped slaves were dragged back to the fisheries and punished, as happened in one rebellion of Mariscal Miguel de Castellano’s slaves in 1577 (Navarrete 2003, 42).

The colonial pearl fisheries, the encomienda, and slave raiding, were a clear example of the application of the “law of Kamajuna”, or “Blood punishment”, a frequent practice handed down the generations of the Castellanos family, to convert human life into money. The pearl fisheries were commercial enterprises, but as the Spanish forced more and more work out of the slaves the they started to “fall into ruin”, and even disappeared for a time around 1608. Although they are reestablished after 1615, they never fully recover. Their downfall was mostly the result of the permanent practices of abusing to the slaves, which ended out imploding the very system that produced wealth for the Spanish (Navarrete 2003, 45-50).

The Castellanos family extracted wealth from the indigenous people in the Ramada with violence exercised through an imbrication of the pearl fisheries, the encomienda and slave raiding. Not all

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<sup>63</sup> Estado de la provincia de Santa Marta. ES.28079.AHN//DIVERSOS-COLECCIONES,45,N.16. 1581. Imagen 1. Carta escrita por el Carta del gobernador de Santa Marta, D. Lope de Orozco, a Felipe II.

<sup>64</sup> CONFIRMACION DE OFICIO: MIGUEL CASTELLANOS PEÑALOSA, ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTO\_DOMINGO,31,N.54. 1619

<sup>65</sup> CONFIRMACION DE OFICIO: FRANCISCO DE CASTELLANOS PEÑALOSA. Expediente de Confirmación del oficio de alguacil mayor de Rio Hacha a Francisco de Castellanos Peñalosa. Resuelto. ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTO\_DOMINGO,32,N.71. 1629

the encomenderos in the Ramada worked in the pearl farms, but it is likely that they applied similar practices, to extract gold and wealth from the indigenous people in the encomiendas. It was all about money, and power, domination and violence to squeeze out as much as possible from human life, from the indigenous peoples and black slaves, as inseparable from the practices of the Spanish aristocracy in Riohacha. The status and prestige of the Castellanos in the Spanish meritocracy was seated on the fundamental premise of extracting life from the indigenous people, what I call “reverse reciprocity”, on the myth of the Spanish conquest.

- The territory of this Encomienda.

The 1625 and the 1635 descriptions of the towns and caciques in the encomienda are textual transcriptions of previous census copied from the original title to the encomienda given to Francisco de Castanos sometime around 1605<sup>66</sup>, which in turn would be based on a title that had been given to Mariscal Miguel Castellanos around 1570 or perhaps to his father, Francisco Castellanos sometime before. That original census is as follows:

“The cacique Casandigua and cacique Icaraca with the indios who are in the headwaters of the Tapias River on both sides, starting from Casandigua – and likewise he was commended from the other riverbank to the Ancho River, a ‘pueblo de indios’ called Guatanque and another town called Bengua and Laegue (sic), and the town named Mariague, and another called Matogue; and in the Tamina River the town called llamado Maca Ague, and the town called Dugaique (sic) and the town Buen Ague and the town Buocagues and the town Duanague and the town Simaques and the town Caricaque and the casique Guamemo with one hundred populated houses for visitation<sup>67</sup>”. This is an extensive area, covering several river valleys, and possibly reflects the indigenous towns and caciques subjected to the encomienda during an early conquest or Spanish military expedition to the region.

This description includes a couple of places that the Kaggaba mamos recognize. The Tamina River clearly is the name for the Palomino River. The mamos from the Rio Ancho valley remember Matogue, as an ancient nujue called Mutogui then occupied by lineages of “Nañiba ” located along the upper areas of Negro River in the Ancho River Valley<sup>68</sup>. In any case, much of this zone is occupied by Kaggaba ezuamas dating before the arrival of the Spanish.

The 1625 document mentions that the pueblos of the encomienda were now limited to a much smaller area between the Ramada (Jerez) and the Tapias rivers. The seat of the encomienda was at the site of Tapias, as a base of operations of the Castellano family.

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<sup>66</sup> AGI. Confirmación de Encomienda de Ramada. SANTA\_FE,170,N.20. 1636. Imagen 1.

<sup>67</sup> AGI. Confirmación de Encomienda de Ramada. AGI, SANTA\_FE,168,N.8. 1625, Imagen 7

<sup>68</sup> Information provided by Mamo Luis Noavita, June 20, 2017. and Mamo Manuel Coronado June 07 2020 . Buen ague would possibly be the Kaggaba Ezuama of the Aguegued located in the Ezuama of Mashkeinzhi in the upper Rio Ancho.

### 2.4.3 The Caciques of the “Pick and Shovel” – The Encomienda of Alonso de Troya.

This encomienda covered the pueblos called Dibuya, Duanza, Duana and Sina Gona “de la Sierra”, and was called “la encomienda de indios aruacos”<sup>69</sup>, probably located around the Jerez Valley and up the Cañas valley. It clearly mentions the principal Kaggaba Ezuama of Makutama. What we know of this encomienda comes from a document that formed part of Quero’s 1620 census that examined and reissued the titles to the encomiendas in the Ramada.

The encomienda of Alonso de Troya was initially titled to Baltasar Coello sometime in XVI century. Baltasar held a few posts in the Ramada, including that of Alcalde Mayor<sup>70</sup>. Baltasar inherited the encomienda to his son named Francisco Coello. In 1604 the Governor of Santa Marta Juan Guiral Belon, removed it from Francisco Coello. He inherited it to Baltasar Coello’s son in law and Mayor of the Ramada, Capitan Alonso de Troya. Troya was not convinced that Francisco was capable of running the encomienda.

Troya makes fun of the fact that Francisco had decided to become a priest. “He pretends to be a priest and as such he walks around in a clerical habit and a bare crown, and has not made residence or had a populated house as I commanded him with the penalty of losing that said encomienda<sup>71</sup>”. Troya argued that not only was he a priest of “a low order”, but that being a priest was no excuse to have neglected his obligations to the King. To the contrary it was people like himself – Troya, who been of useful service to the Ramada and would be a suitable encomendero, capable of paying the King for receiving the encomienda. It was also a strategy for keeping the encomienda in the family through Troya’s marriage with Baltasar’s daughter.

Contrary to what Troya claims. Francisco was quite successful as a priest. He had already been named as the doctrinaire priest of the encomienda of Francisco Castellanos in Tapias<sup>72</sup>, probably well before 1620. By 1620 he held positions in most of the region. He was the “sacristan”, the priest, of Rio de la Hacha, and “Capellan de los hatos del Valle” – Chaplain of the estates of Valledupar, responsible for administering catholic rites and indoctrinating indigenous people, black slaves, and Spaniards in distant rural settlements around Valledupar<sup>73</sup>. In the Ramada not only was he the priest, he also served as the judge for civil affairs, and was in charge “of the curacy and doctrine of the natives and of the neighbors of said city”<sup>74</sup>, and received a considerable salary for that. Perhaps, the encomenderos in the Ramada were wary of Francisco, given that priests often defended the indigenous people from the abuse of the encomenderos and attempted to uphold the Laws of Protection of the Naturales, or they just simply wanted to take over his encomienda.

- “The “indios” of the pick and shovel”

The 1620 validation process included creating an updated census for each encomienda. During the initial audience held in Riohacha, Troya had argued that in his encomienda, the “Indios, who

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<sup>69</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. Confirmación de encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. 1628 Image 48

<sup>70</sup> AGI. ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTA\_FE,131,N.28 “Informaciones: Francisco Coello”, 1620. Images 38 and 41.

<sup>71</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. Confirmación de encomienda de Nueva Salamanca De La Ramada. 1628 Image 16

<sup>72</sup> AGI. ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTA\_FE,131,N.28 “Informaciones: Francisco Coello”, 1620. Image 75

<sup>73</sup> AGI. ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTA\_FE,131,N.28 “Informaciones: Francisco Coello”, 1620. Image 76

<sup>74</sup> AGI. ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTA\_FE,131,N.28 “Informaciones: Francisco Coello”, 1620. Images 73 to 82.

today are so few that they do not come to serve, there are only eight or nine children and adult Indios left and there are years in which what they produce is not enough to pay the rescues and tools and doctrine that I give them, and with all these gifts and benefits that I give them, and other expenses that result from the visits". Basically, he asserts that he had to pay to keep the encomienda going.

The Governor was suspicious and sends his deputy, Francisco Lopez Aguacil Mayor, on a visit to the Ramada to verify not only what Troya had claimed, but the census of all the encomiendas in the Ramada, decreeing: "in each of the following encomiendas, inquire how many service and work Indios there are, called of the shovel: Del Capitan don francisco de Peralta, Alonso De Troya, de Gregorio Mejia, Herman Sanchez de Agudo"<sup>75</sup>. They describe the indigenous people who would come down to the Ramada and pay their tribute in the form of work for the encomendero.

During the audience in the Ramada, the "aguacil mayor" interviews two mayordomos of the encomienda who both state that they know the encomienda and give their version of the census as follows: "because many have died, he knows that it does not have more than the following service and shovel indios: Duycho capitán = campana mandador = lloron = bollito = tiburón = conisamare = chinquise = Daira baza = Duanachu, = the brother In law of duichico = duyquire = in all they are eleven, that are present and come daily to work on the corn fields and although the said Alfonso de Troya has the towns of Duanza and Sinagona, in which this witness has been a few times, they are all in ruin and are short of people"<sup>76</sup>.

The Aguacil then proceeds to interview those same indigenous people who appear in the census of the encomienda, all of whom are "Bozal y no cristiano", meaning non-Christians who did not speak Spanish. As his "interpreter of the tongue," he uses "'Agustin, indio ladino' – a Spanish speaker and Christian "Indian", from the encomienda of Gregorio Mejia" to translate. The first indigenous witness declares that "in the language of his land his name is gondigua, and is originally from dibuya in the sierra, and he is of troya". The next declares that "his name is chinquise and he is a natural of Duanza in the Sierra". Another explains "His name in the language of his land is Doyandigua and the Christians call him campana (bell). And he is the 'mandador' of the indians in the encomienda, of his encomendero alonso de troja, and he is from the town of Dibuya"<sup>77</sup>.

Through their translator, they all repeat the same census that the mayordomos gave. They also declare in turn that those 11 "service and shovel Indians" are all "mancebos, manicatos, who clear the land, plant, harvest, and do everything else they are sent to do". They state that there are no more "indios" who come down from the Sierra to work besides those named because they have all died from influenza, and all of those who help are from Dibuya.

Another member of the encomienda declares "his name is donchico, who is the captain and mandador of the indios of the encomienda of Troya, and his land is the town of dibuya". He explains that "the casique, who is in the town of Dibuya that is called Magostama, and that he

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<sup>75</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. Confirmación de encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. 1628 Images 22 and 26. I could not find any documents related to the encomienda of Hernan Sanchez de Agudo.

<sup>76</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. Confirmación de encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. 1628 Images 22 and 26.

<sup>77</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. Confirmación de encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. 1628 Images 32 and 33.



never comes down to the flatlands to do any kind of work. He continues: “In all they are no more than those indios mentioned, and in the Sierra the only other people are their wives, and the cacique and the rest have died from the plagues”<sup>78</sup>.

The encomienda includes this group of naturales who had to come down to work in the Ramada, as part of their obligations to the encomienda. These eleven people in the encomienda seemed familiar with the Spanish “vecinos” from in the Ramada. They lived and worked in the Ramada, and several had Spanish nicknames. However, the only Christian “ladino” was Agustin. He was from a different encomienda, that of Gregorio Mejia, but lived in La Ramada, and apparently was the sole indigenous person who could speak enough Spanish to translate during the visit. It is very likely that those 11 people in the census were not only “service and shovel” indigenous people. To the contrary, several had declared themselves to be the caciques and captains of the pueblos in the encomienda and most likely were responsible for bringing down declared or undeclared tribute from their pueblos to the Ramada.

After completing his investigations, the Governor “composes” the encomienda again to Alonso de Troya, in 1624 for 165 pesos in gold, a rather large sum, considering that the 11 tributary Indians each produced 5 pesos in silver a year, for a total of 55 pesos a year<sup>79</sup>. Most likely, the encomienda was much more lucrative and had more population in the pueblos of the Sierra than Troya had claimed. Likewise, the indigenous witnesses would want to declare as small a population as possible to defend their communities from paying tribute.

- Territory of the Encomienda: “Dibulla de la Sierra”.

The territory of this encomienda includes the present day Kaggaba Ezuama of Makutama, written as “Magostama”. The other “pueblos” mentioned, when the Governor assigned possession of the encomienda to Troya in 1604 were: “the towns of Sina Gona, and Dibuya, its caciques and captains and indios”<sup>80</sup>. This perhaps was the original census of the encomienda that had been issued to Balcazar Cuello some decades earlier around 1570. In 1604 Troya received it from 3 Caciques who came down to la Ramada for the ceremony: “Nayagira, and the capitán of the town called Duanza, and its surroundings, and the other said to be called Duana, which he said was in the vicinity of the casique of the town called Sinagona, and another called Bonguadigua and the said town of Duanza<sup>81</sup>”. We see then that this encomienda is composed of Pueblos from the Sierra with people who would come down to the Ramada.

The present Ezuama of Makotama is referred to as part of the “pueblo de Dibuya called Magostama”. The so called “Pueblo of Dibuya de la Sierra” was a group of pueblos in that area. On that topic, Mamo Luis Nolavita explained that “Dibuya de la Sierra” makes reference to the indigenous town of Bunkuanezhaka, (Pueblo Viejo), “where the mamos from the ezuamas of Makutama, Kuamaka and Ableinzhi used to visit to give the spiritual food that takes care of all people, animals, forests and water in the Sierra”. From there, Dibuya de la Sierra is connected to the sea at the site of the Ramada in the present-day town of Dibulla. Mamo Luis suggests that

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<sup>78</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. Confirmación de encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. 1628 Images 36 and 37.

<sup>79</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. Confirmación de encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. 1628 Images 38

<sup>80</sup> AGI. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. 1628. Imágen 15.

<sup>81</sup> AGI. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada. SANTA\_FE,168,N.50. 1628. Imágen 17.

the names Duana and Duanza are from lowland lineages living near la Ramada. This is probably the case. The encomienda of Troya would encompass the route from the Ezuama of Makutama to the sea at Dibulla – La Ramada, still today one of the main Kaggaba routes down the mountain. Those Kaggaba ezuamas occupied before the Spanish arrived are at least one of those “Pueblos” mentioned in the document. After 1628 the documentation on this encomienda disappears.

#### 2.4.4 The Lowland Caciques of Bonga - Encomienda of Juan Marsal.

This encomienda is important because it was located around the indigenous pueblo of Bonga, in the present day Cañas river valley. It had other sectors near the middle Jerez Valley called Machirachua, and town called Aminguarague. The information on this encomienda is from an encomienda title dated from 1570. That 1570 document apparently no longer exists, but parts of it were transcribed in a section of a 1676 encomienda document on the Encomienda of Marocaso<sup>82</sup>. In that 1676 document, Sebastian Perez attempts to obtain the title to Esteban Delgado’s encomienda of Marocaso. He needed evidence that his wife, Ana Delgado, had the necessary merits and the descendance from the first illustrious conquerors so that Perez could to be named as encomendero. To demonstrate his wife’s lineage, Perez produces a copy of a title to that old 1570 encomienda in Bonga that was assigned to Juan Marsal, Ana Delgado’s great grandfather.

The 1570 transcribed document talks at length of Juan Marsal’s merits as one of the first “conquerors” of la Ramada, and mentions that the encomienda was originally titled to Alonso Camargo de Vera in la Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada, probably around 1540. Upon his death in 1570, the encomienda was transferred to Juan Marsal, for two lives<sup>83</sup>. Marsal had emigrated from Valle del Upar to become a “vecino” of la Ramada in 1570. He was one of the witnesses in the 1573 document of the description of the Ramada (Langebaek 2007, 50) and was the grandfather of Gregorio Mejia another well-known figure and encomendero in La Ramada<sup>84</sup>. No other document that I have been able to locate mentions this encomienda nor its Pueblos.

The original of the encomienda, only mentions the pueblo of Machirachua. However, during Juan Marsal’s possession ceremony in 1570, three caciques came to the Ramada to pledge their loyalty to him and describe themselves as follows: “that he is a ladino called Don Juan and his Indian name is Suycarayomo. And he said he is the captain of the town called Aminguarague which is of the indios that Alonso Camargo de Vera had under his encomienda. And another indio present was asked, and said, being a ladino that his Indian name is Sinque<sup>85</sup> and he is the Capitan of the town called Bonga and its cacique is named Bolonge” and another “who was present and being

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<sup>82</sup> AGI. ES.41091.AGI/22.13.5.16//SANTA\_FE,179,N.11 “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE MAZAGAICA, ETC”, 1676.

<sup>83</sup> AGI. ES.41091.AGI/22.13.5.16//SANTA\_FE,179,N.11 “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE MAZAGAICA, ETC”, 1676. Im 88, 90.

<sup>84</sup> AGI. ES.41091.AGI/22.13.5.16//SANTA\_FE,179,N.11 “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE MAZAGAICA, ETC”, 1676. Image 101 –2. Gregory Mejia was also the treasurer and accountant of the Ramada around 1605. Sebastian Perez does not show the original of the 1570 document, but a copy (see image 85 of the 1676 document).

<sup>85</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,179,N.11 “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE MAZAGAICA, ETC”, 1676. Image 92

ladino, was asked for his name and from what town he was, and said that in Christian and Indian language his name is Amicton, and he is the cacique of the town of Machiragua<sup>86</sup>.

This encomienda would be located in the lower area of the Cañas River and the Jerez River. The pueblo most easily identifiable in the description is Bonga, as the present day Kaggaba community of Bonga (Bunkuangueka). Bonga is occupied at that time by the lowland caciques, related to but in contention with the Kaggaba as we saw in history of “Cacique Shimata and Kamejuna”, and in other histories the mamos tell further on, in Chapter 3.

In terms of the Pueblo of Machiragua, a river with the same name is mentioned in the 1676 document as located around Tapias<sup>87</sup>. Rio Machiragua appears in a Spanish map of the region from 1731, as a secondary outlet of the Tapias (Genea) river to the sea<sup>88</sup>. Present day cartography still shows the Michiragua Creek located between the Tapias and Jerez rivers.

Evidently, the Caciques in those three towns had strong relationships with the Spanish and the encomiendas. It is exceptional at the early date of 1570 to see Caciques in the Ramada who are “ladinos” - speak Spanish, and are baptized. The Kaggaba call these caciques from Bonga, Nañiba. They strengthened alliances with the encomienda, and then with the colonial Catholic church, in attempts to dominate the Kaggaba. This document reflects the history of Cacique Shimata and Kamejuna<sup>89</sup>. Perhaps the document was a falsification of its time, but it has relevant information.

#### 2.4.5 Valley of the Tayrona - the Spanish heart of darkness: Encomienda of Gregorio Mejia:

- Origin of the encomienda and the “Conquest” of the Tayrona.

In 1620 Gregory Mejia also went through the processes of reconfirming his title to this encomienda as described in an archive document with a final date of 1628, as the only document I was able to find on that encomienda. The place names are virtually unrecognizable today, but would appear to correspond to areas of Don Diego and Buritaca rivers.

According to the document, the encomienda was originally titled to Pedro Garcia Duran a “vecino” of “La Ramada”. It then passed on to Capitan Juan Gomez who inherited it to his daughter, Ana de Aleman<sup>90</sup>. Her first husband named Justo de Estrada, held and administered the encomienda for her. He died and Ana de Aleman married Gregorio Mejia. She was unable to directly hold the title because it was already in its “second life”. To keep the encomienda in the family, in 1605, at her request the Governor of Santa Marta, Juan Guiral Belón Caballero reissued the title to Gregorio Mejia, her new husband<sup>91</sup>. The Governor reconfirmed the encomienda again to Gregorio Mejia in 1621, which he validated with the King in 1628.

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<sup>86</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,179,N.11 “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE MAZAGAICA, ETC”, 1676. Image 95

<sup>87</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,179,N.11 “CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE MAZAGAICA, ETC”, 1676. Image 103. That document mentions Machiragua in relations on the merits of the early “vecinos” and their battles with the indigenous people there.

<sup>88</sup> ANC. Mapa, CO.AGN.SMP.6,REF.96, 1731. “Mapa de la costa de la provincia de Santa Marta con las bahías, ríos y sitios,.....”

<sup>89</sup> Summary of conversation with Mamo Luis Noavita..

<sup>90</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 26,

<sup>91</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 20.

Gregorio Mejia and his son Antonio Mejia were well known figures in the local political circuit around La Ramada, Valledupar and Rio de la Hacha. However, they were not pearl traders and apparently not from such wealthy and “illustrious” families as the Castellanos or Peralta. Gregorio Mejia. To the contrary he had a cattle ranch and had been mayor of the Ramada. The Mejia accompany judicial errands for the mayors and other encomenderos in the region. By 1660 Antonio Mejia rises in importance, holding evermore public offices around the region<sup>92</sup>.

- An encomienda of “Cimarrones” - escaped indigenous people.

In 1605 when Gregorio Mejia received the encomienda from his wife, it included the Pueblos and Caciques as follows: The “cacique of Matocan<sup>93</sup> called Chinguaro and capitán Toquina who is from that town, and the cacique of Guantamasi and Machoque with its indios and the town called Sincorona and the cacique of the town called Agaunague, and the captain of that town and the town called Chayorogue and in the valley of Chayroa a town called Guala and Simense before that valley and the other towns, caciques and captains of indios of that encomienda and the annexes that Pedro Garcia Duran had and possessed, as a vecino of said city Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada<sup>94</sup>”.

Evidently, this 1605 description the document cites was in turn, based on a much older one titled to Pedro Garcia Duran. Given that this title was first held by Pedro Garcia, and then his son Capitán Juan Gomez and then was held by Maria Aleman’s first husband, Justo de Estrada, it dated from at least 1570 when the Ramada was “repopulated”. In 1605, Mejia received the encomienda from four indigenous people declared to represent the entire population listed in the title. These “nativos” were “Papagayo and his brother, Gonzalo and another, and another called Cacorina from the pueblo of Matocari<sup>95</sup>”.

The next episode in the description of the encomienda takes place 15 years later during the 1620 “composition process”. Like most of the other encomenderos of the Ramada, Gregoria Mejia claimed his encomienda was not worth much. He states that in the past - meaning in 1605 or before, the tribute of the encomienda had been rated at “200 pesos of good gold<sup>96</sup>”, but now the encomienda was almost empty. He explains that the “Indios” no longer come down from the Sierra. They have almost all died from Sarampion and Viruelas, and lived in distant towns that have now disappeared and produce “no fruit”. He thus argues that his “Quinta Parte” to the King should be reduced, since those limited number of “naturales” do not produce enough tribute to bear even the costs of the encomienda, tools, doctrine and visiting expenses<sup>97</sup>.

To verify the situation, the governor orders the same simultaneous visit to four of the encomiendas in the jurisdiction of the Ramada<sup>98</sup>. In the visit, the Spanish “mayordomos” and one “vecino” are the first to give their description and census of the encomienda, saying they were

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<sup>92</sup> AGI. ES.41091.AGI/22.13.5.16//SANTA\_FE,179,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda De Mazagaica. “Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Mazagaica y Marocassa en Pamplona de la Ramada a Sebastián Pérez. Resuelto”, 1676

<sup>93</sup> Based on the paleography in this document, this indigenous town could be read as “Matocan” or “Matocari”.

<sup>94</sup> AGI. AGI SANTA\_FE,168,N.49 Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada, 1628. Im 17, 25.

<sup>95</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 21.

<sup>96</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 20.

<sup>97</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 33

<sup>98</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 41

familiar with the encomienda. Juan Lopez, a mayordomo, states he has been living in the Ramada for the last 10 years, and “he knows the encomienda of Gregorio Mejia, and has been in the towns of a Matocana, Caracaca and Carmi, which are in the sierra<sup>99</sup>”.

Lazaro Galan, gives the most complete census of the encomienda. “at this time, he knows that it has the mentioned nine service or so called shovel Indians, and two Christians called Perico and Agustín, and of the rest he knows the name of some of them, being, the capitán Macomira, doña Ana Duimalo, Duiconcha, Diagoa, Domana, and another whose name he does not remember, and there are no more than the nine indios who give regular service to Gregorio Mejia in his garden and crops, the bosales and the Christians in the cattle ranch”, and a Capitan Duimaco.

Gregorio Mejia does have other pueblos and caciques in the Sierra, which according to the Spanish witnesses are comprised of “free Indians”, “cimarrones” who are in a state of rebellion. They live far away and seldom visit and do not provide Gregory Mejia with any sort of service, nor respond to his orders. Only those 9 “shovel and service Indians’ visit the encomendero, forming an indigenous service group shared amongst the encomenderos in the Ramada<sup>100</sup>.

Amongst the “Indios de Pala” of the encomienda, only two are “Ladino and Christian”. One is named “Perico”. The other is the same Agustin from de Troya’s encomienda. He is 18 years old, and as a Christian is able to give testimony under oath and the sign of the cross. He was brought down from the Sierra at a very young age, was raised with the encomenderos, and has since not been back. He does not know the rest of the Pueblos in the Sierra nor the “Cimarrones”. He serves as translator for the entire audience of all the encomiendas.

Agustin gives the following census of the “indios de Servicio”. “He knows of the adult indios who come to the garden and the fields of the aforementioned, except small children who are not theirs, and those called ‘shovel’ Indians are the following: Magomira Capitan, Duiconcha, Duimaco, Diguagoa, Donaoma, Boncochea, Duiroco, Chincoma, Donurocuca, Alonsil and this same witness, and another Indian named Perico who work on the cattle ranch”<sup>101</sup>. Evidently then the group of “service Indians” is larger as it is accompanied by children and perhaps the rest of their families, and it is the Christians who are in charge of the cattle<sup>102</sup>. All are young, around 20 years old, except their Captain described as being about 33<sup>103</sup>. In the remainder of their testimonies, the indigenous people do their best to avoid declaring the presence of additional families in the Sierra.

A Mayordomo Lazaro Galan mentions that in addition to the “indios de pico y pala” in the Ramada he knows the other pueblos that Mejia has “encomendados” in the Sierra. He “goes in company with other people to the Pueblos to call the Indians down, but they hide in the forest, and even if anyone does come down, they escape the next day” (47). Like in the times of the Castellanos family, the Spanish still make raids to bring the indigenous people down to work, but claim that these expeditions are not effective.

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<sup>99</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 47

<sup>100</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 46-8

<sup>101</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 49-50

<sup>102</sup> Later in the Colonial period cattle become an important source of wealth for the Kaggaba.

<sup>103</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Images 52-55.

As was the case for the other encomiendas, this encomienda must have produced more than just the work of the “Service and shovel Indians” who visited la Ramada, otherwise Mejia would not have been so interested in renewing his wife’s title. To have the encomienda retitled to him in 1621, he pays 65 pesos silver at a rate of 5 pesos for each person in the census<sup>104</sup>, considerably less than the 200 pesos of “good gold” estimated from 1605, but still a substantial figure.

It is reasonable to guess that mayordomos and maybe also “Los Indios de Pala” probably extracted tribute from the towns up in the Sierra, alongside the indiscriminate “other people” who came along on raids to the Sierra. Perhaps this was an excuse to not declare tribute. Perhaps it was also true that in 1620 it was rather difficult for the Spanish to control this encomienda citing constant problems with “cimarrones” or runaways.

- The encomienda as the moment of inscription of “conquest” of the Tayrona.

The original census from Pedro Duran’s encomienda sometime in the mid XVI century was large with a central Pueblo called Matocan or Matocari and an expansive list of other pueblos including Sincorona, and notably, the valley called Chayroa. By 1620, the only Pueblo that remains from the original census is Matocan. The encomienda had apparently lost many towns and caciques.

It is difficult to confirm exactly where this encomienda was located. Nor myself nor any of the Kaggaba mamos I asked could identify the names of its Pueblos, perhaps it is because of inaccuracies in the Spanish scribe’s phonetic transcription of place names. It is also likely that the indigenous people were displaced from that area long ago by the conquest, and those Pueblos were left uninhabited and forgotten. There are some clues that indicate this would be the case for the “Tayrona Valleys” of Don Diego, Buritaca and Guachaca.

The Pueblo “Sincorona” in the first description of the encomienda from perhaps 1570, is also mentioned by the early Spanish chroniclers in other documents as an indigenous “population” around the Don Diego river (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 65). The Spanish initially called the people who lived in the Valley of Tairona the Tairo. Some tayrona sites in the area are still called “Chayrama”. The name ‘Valley of Chayroa’ was perhaps in fact Tayrona, given that “Ch” in Kogian sounds similar to a “T”<sup>105</sup>. In any case, it is possible that parts of this encomienda were located around the Don Diego River, in the Tayrona Valleys.

The Don Diego Valley was of great interest to the early Spanish as part of the Tayrona region, and very rich in gold objects. Garcia de Lerma around 1531 sent troops to the Tayrona Valley to obtain that gold, and vanquish the indigenous people and subject them to encomiendas to compensate the captains of his troops for their services in the conquest of the region (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 19), (Aguado 1916 [1568], 93), (Castellanos 1857 [1589], 252). Later, after 1534 another Spaniard, Fernandez de Lugo sent troops to several places in the Sierra, including up the Don Diego River to attack parts of the Tayrona Valleys. None of these expeditions were particularly successful, meeting strong indigenous resistance (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 22). In addition, the Spanish from the island of Cubaga who had established the pear fisheries in Carrizal

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<sup>104</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Images 58.

<sup>105</sup>However all the Kaggaba mamos who I talked with disagreed saying perhaps “Chayroa” is Cherua which refers to a special nujue for the mamos located just outside a Kaggaba town, of which there are many in the Sierra.

near Rio de la Hacha, made incursions into the Buritaca and other Tayrona valleys, in an attempt to set up gold mines there in the year 1548 (Musset 2018, 73).

Despite their inability to permanently dominate the terrain, the Spanish chronicler Juan Castellanos informs that on one of these expeditions around 1531, Pedro de Lerma, Garcia de Lerma's nephew, and his group "rescued", extremely large amounts of gold from the Tayronas, around 90,000 pesos. It was done through violent reverse reciprocity. The Spanish traded tools and trinkets for the gold, setting up agreements in which the indigenous people would voluntarily bring their gold to the Spanish, in exchange for saving their lives, but always under imminent threat. In spite of these voluntary arrangements the Spanish, still occupying the Tayrona communities committed continual abuses, having no problem in going into the houses and raping the wives and daughters of their newfound Tayrona allies or committing random killings. Castellanos observes that through the Spanish "shamelessness and looseness these indios were depopulated (Castellanos 1857 [1589], 276) and their towns started to disappear.

In 1571 the Spanish made other armed incursions to the area, this time led by Francisco de Castro (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 26) and Luis de Rojas the Governor of Santa Marta. Pedro Garcia was one of the leaders or "caudillos" of those troops. We see his name as the original recipient of the encomienda of Gregorio Mejia. The Spanish at that time mention the population of Sincorona as 'the best entrance to the Tayrona Valley' (Castellanos 1857 [1589], 323-4) and as one of the largest Tayrona towns in the area (Castellanos, 321), town which was also listed in the census of the encomienda. The Spanish were impressed by the Tayrona weaving, agriculture, building techniques and their red stones, or "tumas" - crystal beads. From Sincorona the Spanish entered and sacked large Tayrona terraced towns around Don Diego. Tayrona warriors or caciques, wearing feather headpieces and gold, armed with makanas, - clubs, bows and arrows, would assault or menace the Spanish, yelling at them to leave. The Spanish would let their dogs loose to capture and chain the indigenous people by the neck, use them as guides and then kill them. Here we see that moment of inscription of the indigenous people into the normalized form of the encomienda, based on violence and debt.

The Spanish were still searching for gold, but according to them, during that 1571 expedition, they were only able to rescue 300 pesos of "low-quality gold (Castellanos, 322)". The riches of the past were gone. They again attempted to make some "repartimientos" or encomiendas of the indigenous people in the area<sup>106</sup>, and set up a town nearby they named "Encija" (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 32) from where they would establish the encomiendas. The Spanish lived at that site during three months depending on food the indigenous people brought them, and apparently their own crops. They finally abandoned that town and the region in general (Castellanos, 322) to search for gold elsewhere. By the early 1600s, those Tayrona valleys were gradually abandoned, the indigenous people displaced (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 30-35).

The encomienda of Gregory Mejia would have been originally "composed" directly from the Spanish raids or "conquests" of the valley around 1571, or before. The original encomendero Pedro Garcia would have received the encomienda in compensation for his services. The 200

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<sup>106</sup> See also (Aguado 1916 [1568], T1, 88, 93)

pesos of “Good gold” Mejia says the encomienda produced in 1605, would still be that gold which the Spanish were still able wrestle out of the hands of the remaining Tayrona. Mejia’s declaration confirms that then, the tribute to the encomienda in fact was paid partially in gold, and not in other merchandise as was often the case.

It is no wonder that in Mejia’s encomienda there were so many indigenous “cimarrones” who fled on sight of the Spanish when the mayordomos and “other people” went to round them up. Did they come down to the Ramada in chains? The encomienda documents do not say. However, in 1620 the fear of the Spanish conquest and violent methods still was still very recent. The very same mayordomos and “other people” who went to the Sierra to round up the “Indios Cimarrones” were very likely the same sons of the solders from the conquest.

It becomes quite apparent that the operation of the encomiendas was directly associated with Spanish armed violence, and similar forms of coercion intended to force the indigenous people to give up their gold, now through debt. Armed Spanish raids were still going on when the encomiendas were being established around the Jurisdiction of the Ramada in the Sierra, which coincide with the dates of the early census and descriptions given in most of the encomiendas of the Ramada. Many encomiendas in the Ramada that appear in the 1620 documents were in fact were born right out of the conquest and its violence.

Those chains of debt are constantly renewed. The transfer the encomienda to Mejia in 1605 was sealed with a short ceremony in which the caciques have to embody their submission. The mayor of the Ramada takes the four indigenous Caciques, who represent the whole population of the encomienda, by the hand and leads them across the room to Mejia, who then receives them and walks them back. He puts a hat on their heads as a “sign of possession of all of the people and each one of the pueblos indicated in the title<sup>107</sup>”, declaring that all their indigenous people are now subject to Mejia’s orders, for him to benefit from all rights to them. These apparently innocuous frames of interaction are forms of embodied articulation directly into historical assemblages of debt and the law that comes with it.

Key to the function of the encomienda was maintaining the indigenous people permanently indebted from then on. Much of the Spanish meritocracy was founded on legitimizing their right to subject and indebt the indigenous people for cost of the war and their own defeat, reliving those moments of “inscription”. The indigenous people were chained by debt to Spanish systems of law that extracted gold in exchange for life. From the very beginning it took the form of reciprocity, the Spanish trading trinkets disguised as indigenous lives, for gold. This system of reverse reciprocity continued through intermediaries like caciques such as Kamejuna. Since it all worked in reverse, the more the community produced, the more indebted they became until many often vanished. The story of Kamejuna is not just myth, it happened.

The encomienda of Gregory Mejia completely disappears from the records after 1628. Mejia had received it for “two lives” and would have inherited it to his son Antonio Mejia who would have held it at least until the 1650s. But there is no trace. It is possible that these documents are still to be found. It is also likely that after 1628 the indigenous populations in the encomienda had

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<sup>107</sup> AGI.. SANTA\_FE,168,N.49. Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada 1628 Image 21.



already started to disappear some decades earlier, decimated by the Spanish conquest, or were displaced from Don Diego and escaped or incorporated into other encomiendas, like that of “Sancona and Don Diego” which we will see next.

- LATE 17<sup>th</sup> CENTURY ENCOMIENDAS -

The next two encomiendas leave paper trails which survive to the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Those the encomiendas continue the story of how Spanish forms of reverse reciprocity, law and violence transform into administrative systems based on domination and debt. The populations of those encomiendas are easily recognized as the present day Kaggaba, Wiwa and perhaps some Arhuaco. The later encomenderos were often the descendants of the original Spanish invaders but many times removed. In these later documents they must go to great lengths to legitimate their family relationships back to that original moment when the first Spanish conquerors subjected the indigenous people to violence, to inherit these chains of debts, now recognized and misrecognized though titles of nobility, services, and positions in the Spanish hierarchy. See map 5 for the approximate locations of these two encomiendas.

2.4.6 Spanish tribute on Indian backs - the Encomienda of Marocaso: Esteban Delgado, 1659.

For this encomienda I have only been able to find two late documents, one from 1659 and another from 1676. Both confirm that it was Esteban Delgado’s encomienda, and assumably would be the same one that Quero lists in the 1625 census of the Ramada. Delgado’s original documents apparently no longer exist or are still to be found. There are no references on this encomienda prior to 1657, nor its early place names or descriptions from the 1620s. Meanwhile, by 1657 the town of La Ramada is depopulated and the seat of its Jurisdiction and audiences is now Rio de la Hacha.

This encomienda is called “Macogaica y Marocasso y Taquina”<sup>108</sup>. The “Pueblo” of Marocaso is still located in the Rancheria River Valley. Marocaso later transforms into a notorious catholic mission town of that same name, subjecting the Wiwa people in the 1800s. The Pueblo of Taquina is located in the upper Rio Ancho Valley and is the Kaggaba Ezuama of Takina<sup>109</sup>.

- The Catholic church and indigenous resistance in the encomienda.

The descriptions of the history of the encomienda in these later documents starts with Esteban Delgado’s death. Sometime around 1640 his daughter “Mariana Delgado y Peralta” inherits the encomienda and has it titled to her husband Don Diego de Savalza. Don Diego had left for the aristocratic port city of Cartagena to become a Capitan de Infanteria, and apparently had not taken much interest in the encomienda. Years later in 1657, Francisco de Salas a local official from Rio de la Hacha, disputes Don Diego de Savalza’s right to the encomienda, arguing it should be declared vacant and given to a new and more effective encomendero, namely – himself.

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<sup>108</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de La Ramada en Santa Marta a Francisco de Salas.Denegado. 1659 Image 30. Also mentions the Pueblo of Namayin, Image 12.

<sup>109</sup> Yanelia Mestre, an Arhuacac from Nabusimake mentions a zone called Makogaika near the Arhuaco town of Nabusimake.

The governor of the Province of Santa Marta holds a preliminary hearing in Santa Marta, and then makes a secret visit in 1657 to Rio de la Hacha to investigate. Don Diego, in the initial hearing makes a mess of his defense, couldn't find his title papers, and declares that he had left a friend, Capitan Lorenzo Suarez de Amaya, as the informal Mayordomo in charge, which was illegal<sup>110</sup>.

The encomienda had only one "indio manso" –baptized and spoke Spanish, and the only indigenous witness in the secret audience. His name is Jacinto, about 60 years old and declares that he has been with the encomienda for many years, and remembers Quero's visit to the Ramada<sup>111</sup>. Jacinto declares the present-day census, with the names of all the indigenous people in the encomienda, which I estimate to be about 200 people. All indigenous people in the encomienda are "bozales", and there are many more who are not in the census.

Jacinto then makes some serious charges about how the encomienda is organized. The ad hoc Mayordomo, sends his "slave with the orders he sees fit, who go up and give them to the Cacique who has them complied with<sup>112</sup>". Jacinto declares he also receives orders from Capitan Lorezno and walks up the mountain to personally give them to the "Caciques so that they make the indios bozales of these towns comply with them, in the way they do<sup>113</sup>.

Jacinto then makes a serious accusation. The indigenous people in the encomienda "who are not censused or tributed nor do they know what that is and making it clear to... his honor, he said that it would better to be tributed, and representing to him how bad it was to be living separated and should be living all together like the white people, he said that they would rather live together, not separated from their natural, not like they are today and they do not plant their corn gardens, they bring every year, coca leaf, beans, and spin the cotton thread when they bring it up into blankets, bags, mochilas, jute hammocks as their tribute, and that was his response"<sup>114</sup>.

Jacinto concludes, that the people in the encomienda "have no church nor father to teach them doctrine, nor anyone to teach them the law of God, but they live in their own gentility idolizing the devil. And if there were someone who taught them the letters of God, they would learn them willingly and he who declares, this Christian, knows how to make the sign of the cross and pray and he knows this because Esteban Delgado raised him since he was a small child in his house as his page, otherwise he would be in the Sierra, and would be like the others"<sup>115</sup>.

All these arguments were causes for cancelation of the encomienda. Don Diego had no proper mayordomo, Don Lorenzo used African slaves and Jacinto himself to pass his orders on the Caciques in the Sierra. The indigenous people paid no tribute, but they did bring down goods to Don Lorenzo, they were not versed in the catholic faith although they would be good candidates for indoctrination and were willing to learn. They did not live in a properly organized "Pueblo de Indios" as was the case for the encomiendas around the city of Santa Marta, but according to their "natural" order.

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<sup>110</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Images 6-9

<sup>111</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Images 13-14

<sup>112</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Image 11

<sup>113</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Image 13

<sup>114</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Image 14

<sup>115</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Image 14-15.

The Governor of Santa Marta, Ramon de Zagarriga is not sympathetic to Don Diego, concluding that has not complied with any of the king's orders"<sup>116</sup>. Based on Jacinto's testimony, in October 1657 the governor declares the encomienda as vacant and in 1658 reassigns the title to Francisco Salas. Jacinto himself hands over the encomienda in the possession ceremony. The lieutenant governor delivers Jacinto by his hand to Salas, and then Salas has him move a chair as a sign of possession of Jacinto and the remainder of the population of the encomienda<sup>117</sup>.

The governor is particularly concerned that almost no "Naturales" neither in the encomienda, nor in the entire Province have been evangelized except for those near Santa Marta. Only the service and shovel Indians come down, and not even they are evangelized<sup>118</sup>. The people in the Sierra live their natural and "diabolic" ways. He instructs Salas to repair that situation. Within three months of having received the encomienda, he must build a "church for the doctrine of your natives whom you will populate in a town without removing them from their natural<sup>119</sup>" environment. This would be one of the first indigenous church towns to be set up in the Sierra Nevada, but we do not know if it was ever built. These are all extraordinary accusations that before had rarely been vented by the Spanish administration.

Why would Jacinto try to evangelize and subject his own people to tribute? Oddly, he denounced the inability of the encomendero to comply with his obligations, to evangelize the Naturales, settle them around a church and charge tribute. It would be reasonable to guess that Jacinto, who had been part of the encomienda for many years and was a Christian, had made an alliance with Fernando de Salas and the Governor to take over the encomienda. Evangelization now becomes a tool to advantageously reposition people, even certain indigenous people, in the exercise of power and access to wealth collecting the debt of the encomienda. Jacinto had, advocated the incorporation of the indigenous people into the Catholic church to further his own interests. Perhaps he was another Cacique like Kamejuna, taking advantage of his own people.

It is also possible that this is a form of indigenous resistance. It is not clear to what extent Jacinto believed in the Catholic faith. He could have been using his position as a baptized indigenous person to protect his indigenous communities. By attempting to generate alliances with the Catholic church people like Jacinto could have been able to denounce the abuses of the encomenderos. They were participating in incipient processes of change that would place indigenous people under the protection of the "Leyes de Protección de los Naturales" and perhaps lift off the encomendero's chains of debt and domination. We don't really know which of these two possibilities were behind their motivations, or maybe both were.

- The encomienda and its merits.

The next document from this encomienda is from 1676 and very lengthy. By the year 1674, Don Diego and his wife have both died. The Governor of the Province of Santa Marta, declares the

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<sup>116</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Image 20

<sup>117</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Image 35

<sup>118</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Image 33

<sup>119</sup> AGI. SANTA\_FE,172,N.11. Confirmación de encomienda de la Ramada. 1659 Image 33, and was required to maintain a "casa y viviréis en la Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada como cabeza de vuestra encomienda y en ella tendreis caballo, sayo, lanza, armas de fuego y municiones para defender la tierra" and evangelize the indigenous people.

encomienda as vacant and opens the search for a new encomendero. Over the 15 years that transpired after Governor Zacarriga had issued the new title in 1658, the king had firmly denied confirmation to Salas. The idea that Salas would comply with his duties as encomendero, build churches and evangelize the indigenous people did not seem to hold as much weight as Don Diego's position in the Spanish hierarchy which legitimized his merit to the encomienda.

Don Diego was apparently very well connected in the Spanish administration, and his wife was part of the strategically positioned Peralta family from Riohacha. The king would have nothing to do with Salas, perhaps an upstart in the colonial hierarchy. So, in 1676 the Governor of Santa Marta titles the encomienda to another candidate named Sebastian Perez<sup>120</sup>.

That document almost in its entirety describes the process through which Perez gets the title to the encomienda. These later encomenderos had to make a big effort to demonstrate their position in the local hierarchy and their connection to the first conquerors. Having a encomienda was a demonstration of social capital, that derived its value from the myth of conquest upon which the power of the Spanish meritocracy was legitimized. Maintaining the subjection of the Indian was part of it. The encomenderos seemed to consider it their right to have an encomienda with indigenous people permanently indebted to them

The only information about the indigenous people in the second document is a mention of the ceremony in which Santiago Perez receives the encomienda in 1674. "Five indios presented themselves, and one said his name was Don Carlos the Cacique of the indios of Marocasso, the other Antonio Captain of that town, the other lorenzo of the town of Macogayca the other diego and The other Gregorio requested that he receives Possession with those indios"<sup>121</sup>. The caciques and captains all have Spanish names, meaning that they probably were Christian and spoke Spanish: by this time the indigenous people were more firmly integrated into the encomienda.

#### 2.4.7 The first church towns in the Sierra: Encomienda Don Diego y Sancona of Pedro de Cadiz.

This encomienda initially covered some areas of the Don Diego River and the Ezuama of Sancona located in the Ancho River valley around the Kaggaba ezuamas of Kuamaka and Ableinzhi. This encomienda tells the story of the transition taking place at this time, from the administration of the indigenous people in the encomienda to the Catholic Church. Of all the encomiendas we have visited in this chapter, Don Diego and Sancona has the most complete set of documents. In addition, this encomienda, after about 1700, the encomienda probably transforms into the Kaggaba Church towns of San Pedro, San Antonio de Kukutabe, and San Miguel, although I have not yet located any documents that would directly mention this transformation.

- The early encomienda of "Don Diego and it's annexes".

In its early years this encomienda was similar to the others in la Ramada in certain respects. It was originally titled to a Martin Pulgar de Mozo and was to be passed along to his son also named

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<sup>120</sup> SANTA\_FE,179,N.11 CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE MAZAGAICA, ETC, Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Mazagaica y Marocassa en Pamplona de la Ramada a Sebastián Pérez. Resuelto. 1676.

<sup>121</sup> SANTA\_FE,179,N.11 CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE MAZAGAICA, ETC, 1676, Image 183

Martin Pulgar<sup>122</sup>. The younger Pulgar already had been administering the encomienda for his father, but had lost interest, favoring the more lucrative pearl fisheries. In 1620 the governor cited the son to appear in the Ramada to revise and renew the titles to the encomienda. He didn't go, and sent his father instead. Usually, the encomenderos of the Ramada would make these types of claims to reduce their contribution to the king or as an excuse for not having paid their tribute. Martin Pulgar's father actually requested the King to declare the encomienda empty and recompose it to the benefit of another well merited person.

As a result, in 1621 the governor decided to assign the encomienda to Pedro Cadiz, whose father, Juan Gomez who was one of the first conquerors in the region. Pedro de Cadiz accepts the offer of the King even though "that encomienda was very tenuous, with only four or five indios who would serve. To his majesty he paid one hundred pesos in legal silver for the war costs in this province"<sup>123</sup>. Pedro de Cadiz died shortly thereafter. His daughter, Ana de Santiago received the title to the encomienda in 1633, now called "Don Diego and its annexes".

The census was as follows. The governor gave Cadiz all the rights to "to the pueblo de indios called cayadus, with its casique duario Duyngucio aranguta, aracaga chibaynguti and the casique chingarabonaca, and the towns named acama ducamaya, coyaca, duga, conquite, and the town of don diego who was succeeded by his son chicoma, his son with the capitain chiminacora and the town of puyqui?? and captain Perico and the cacique janamboa and the town of guamira and aumaca ,chinchinaca, chibucaca, damacaca, y utamo with all their casiques and captains and indios subject and belonging to each one of those towns in the way that the said Martin Pulgar had and possessed them, so that all of them may serve you in the ways permitted by his majesty"<sup>124</sup>. Given that this was the same census of the towns given to Martin Pulgar it probably dates from the latter part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

We see the Kaggaba ezuamas around Sancona that the census calls "aumaca chinchinaca". These are the present day ezuamas of Kuamaka, and Inzhizhaka, and other surrounding ezuamas improperly written. The rest were probably indigenous towns in Don Diego that disappeared like the ones in Gregorio Mejia's encomienda.

- The abuses against the "naturales" of Don Diego y Sancona.

Like Marocaso, this encomienda undergoes a transformation in the later part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century towards the Catholic church. In 1657 the mayor of Rio de la Hacha, Francisco de Jimenez, lodged a complaint against Ana de Santiago and Francisco Diaz for mismanagement of the encomienda and poor treatment of the "naturals". He wanted the encomienda for his son. Ximenez was the illegitimate son of a notable Spaniard trying to open up a space in the Spanish hierarchy. He already had encomiendas around Cartagena<sup>125</sup>, and the city of Valledupar<sup>126</sup> where he was

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<sup>122</sup> AGI. CONFIRMACION DE OFICIO: MARTIN EL MOZO PULGAR, SANTO\_DOMINGO,32,N.29 1625.

<sup>123</sup> ES.41091.AGI/22.13.5.6//SANTA\_FE,169,N.7. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE LARRAMADA. Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Larramada en Santa Marta a Pedro de Cádiz. Resuelto. 1629. Images 6, 11.

<sup>124</sup> AGI. Confirmación de Encomienda de la Ramada. SANTA\_FE,169,N.7. 1629 Imágenes 12 y 17.

<sup>125</sup> (Borrego Pla 1995, 12)

<sup>126</sup>AGI. Confirmacion de Encomienda de Valledupar. SANTA\_FE,171,N.39, 1647. Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Valledupar a Francisco Jiménez de Enciso. Resuelto.

lieutenant governor and captain general. In 1660 he was accused of not paying his tribute to the King for gold and silver that were deposited in an “estancia” near Riohacha<sup>127</sup>.

The governor of Santa Marta Ramon de Garriga, organized a “secret visit” to Rio de la Hacha, that developed in much the same way as the Marocaso investigation. It was based on interviews with three indigenous Christian “ladinos”. The principal witness is Nicolas, 40 years old, and strikingly like Jacinto from Marocaso<sup>128</sup>.

Nicolas gave the description of the encomienda of “Sancona”. It had a total of 233 indigenous people. Besides Nicolas, and the other two “ladinos”, all the “indios” were “Bozales and not Christian” As was the case for Marocaso, the census must have been previously written down: the encomenderos were becoming more familiar with the populations. This is the most complete census that I have found of any encomienda from that time.

Nicolas denounced the administration of the encomienda, citing basically the same problems of Marocaso. The indigenous people lived according to their “natural ways”, and not in Pueblos—they are not “Censused nor tributed and they would be given to understand God and that would be better, and to live together and not Divided as they are today<sup>129</sup>”. “Los Indios” in the encomienda were not indoctrinated in the catholic faith. According to Nicolas they “do not have a church and the have never had a Father nor whom would teach them, and for that reason they live in the Gentile law of their ancestors. And that they would learn the law of God very willingly if they were taught”<sup>130</sup>. In addition, the encomienda was not run by officially accepted mayordomos but by ‘mulatos’ and ‘mestizos’<sup>131</sup>.

What most stands out is Nicolas’s very graphic denouncement of the mistreatment and neglect of the “indios” in the encomienda. Nicolas asserts that “all the year they serve their encomendera, carrying on their backs the fruits of the sierra both to Valle de Upar and to the city of la Ramada, an immense job given the rough paths. And that this is in the form of corn, bags, blankets made from spun cotton, beans, coca leaf (hayu) and other things<sup>132</sup>”. Francisco Dias and his wife no longer maintain residence in La Ramada, but in Valledupar, so the naturales have to take their products to the encomendero’s houses in both places. “And all year they are kept busy in going from the encomienda in Valle, overloaded with work, and they are indios from the highlands. And they are not paid”<sup>133</sup>. The distances are long, and the Indians must “transverse more than thirty leagues as mentioned previously with the other tribute for the city of El Valle, and another eight leagues to the city of the ramada<sup>134</sup>”. Due to the “immense work that was expounded in the sixth question, and because they have to leave their cold highlands and go to

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<sup>127</sup> PLEITOS GOBERNACION DE SANTA MARTA. ES.41091.AGI/20//ESCRIBANIA,741B, 1660-1666.

<sup>128</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 12-14-

<sup>129</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 9.

<sup>130</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 10

<sup>131</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 9

<sup>132</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 9.

<sup>133</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 10.

<sup>134</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 23.

the hot lands, exactly four indios have died, bleeding and foaming -reventados y rabiando"<sup>135</sup>, on the trails.

The death of these four indigenous people is a serious matter. Nicholas says the encomienda's "Service and Shovel" indios were also mistreated. Adults and children were forced to work in the houses and farms of Ana de Santiago in Valledupar and in La Ramada. They build houses and corrals, take care of her cattle, and do anything else asked of them, without any remuneration.

The Governor indicts Francisco Diaz for "not having complied with his majesty's orders"<sup>136</sup>, not having indoctrinated the indigenous people nor subject them to sufficient tribute. But most of all, the governor denounces Diaz for his "ambition" as the cause of cruel treatment to the Indians and that he had "annihilated" the encomienda, with abuses related to forced and unremunerated work in the "hatos" of the encomenderos. Long and forced treks carrying heavy loads of tribute, were the cause of several deaths of the indigenous people.

Francisco Diaz then had to refute each one of these charges, which he did through his lawyer, and which in summary was as follows. Regarding the prohibitions against using "mulato" and "mestizo" mayordomos, the lawyer alleged that the encomienda didn't produce enough "fruit" to pay a proper mayordomo. All the encomenderos in the Ramada are accustomed to using "mulato or mestizo" mayordomos. What matters is the treatment they give to the "naturales".

The lawyer clarifies that it is not Francisco Diaz's fault that indigenous people have died on the paths. They were not forced to carry heavy loads. They could have died anywhere from fever. The lawyer also argues that the "naturales" bring their tributes both to Valledupar and la Ramada voluntarily and for their own benefit since they also bring down other goods to trade.

He reminds the audience that it is custom for all the encomenderos to charge their tribute in the form of work done by the "naturales" who come down to their farms, and the encomenderos always pay the "Indios". In any case, the naturales could not work on Francisco Diaz's ranch, because he doesn't have one. Ana de Santiago receives the naturales with great charity and kindness attending to their needs, and curing them, as do the other encomenderos.

Francisco Diaz says he has always paid the Catholic priest in the Ramada to teach the naturals. They in reality are not inclined to learn the Catholic faith, and prefer to stay in their "mal natural". It is not the fault of the encomendero that they do not want to come down to the Ramada for the teaching<sup>137</sup>. He wraps up by disqualifying Nicolas' testimony saying obviously the "indios" would testify against their encomendero. As idolatrous "gentiles" their testimony wouldn't be worth much anyway<sup>138</sup>.

Regardless of those arguments, the Governor unwaveringly "resolves the charges in the favor of the naturales for their protection and increase"<sup>139</sup>. He seems quite irritated, and declares that due to the severity of the charges and the degree of incomppliance with the Kings orders, not only

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<sup>135</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 10

<sup>136</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 23

<sup>137</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 28

<sup>138</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 26-8

<sup>139</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 29

does he declare the encomienda “vaca”, he will subject both Francisco and Ana de Santiago to “severe punishments”. They will have to pay the “salaries” and the costs of the entire process. The governor sends for their cattle to be impounded in their ‘hatos’. Shortly thereafter in February of 1658, the governor assigned the encomienda, now called “Don Diego or Sancona” to Francisco Ximenez de Enciso, and his sons<sup>140</sup>.

- The Encomienda laid bare.

The 1657 dispute over the encomienda of Don Diego and Sancona is an extraordinary moment in the encomienda documents. As a speech genre the encomienda documents almost never deviate from preordained procedures and outcomes, while denouncements are very rare. In this case, both the accusations and Ana de Santiagos’ and her husband’s rebuttal broke those rules. During centuries, the encomienda documents had avoided mentioning the abuses and violations of the law that occurred alongside the encomenderos’ interest in creating wealth.

Now the veil was lifted and opened a window on the real practices through which the encomiendas in La Ramada had been operating for centuries, but rarely acknowledged by the encomenderos themselves until now. The Naturales come down to the cities, where they stay in the Spanish houses, work for them on their farms probably for very low wages or none at all. They must carry loads of tribute all around the mountain and produce fruits for negligible prices. As a result of all that work, they sometimes die. Diaz confirmed that it was a common practice to manage encomiendas through groups of ‘black’ slaves, ‘mulatos’ and ‘mestizos’.

The case also reflected serious fissures and changing relationships of power and discourse around the administration of indigenous people and on acceptable forms of violent extraction of wealth from the indigenous people, as the King’s subjects with rights under the Catholic church. The Governor’s sentence would “protect the said natural Indians and obligate the said Encomendero to take care of their well-being and increase”. He validated Nicolas’s testimony and argued that the encomienda should be managed according to the Kings norms for the protection of the Naturals<sup>141</sup>. He concludes that the encomenderos should administer their encomiendas in accordance to the indigenous people’s need for “spiritual pasture” and care.

The encomienda should not be administered, as Francisco Diaz was doing, from that which satisfies the “ambition” of the encomendero, through application of “cruelty” and mistreatment of the “Indios”, as a system which has “annihilated the encomienda and destroyed it”<sup>142</sup>. This form of administering the encomienda based on violence, justified by the merits and rights earned by the Spanish conquerors, with only interest of extracting wealth from the indigenous people, puts at risk ending the very encomienda itself. Diaz represented that form of inverse reciprocity, arguing that his practices were not cruel, but a legitimate and commonplace form of managing an encomienda and creating wealth. A form of misrecognized structural violence. This brings us right back to the story of Kamejuna, as the avarice which destroys his own people.

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<sup>140</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 39

<sup>141</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 29

<sup>142</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Image 24



This testimony also confirms that the encomiendas could be run through Christianized indigenous people like Jacinto or Nicholas who formed part of the groups of “indios de servicio” around the encomiendas, and often were the caciques themselves. However, all the indigenous people and even the ‘mestizo’ mayordomos were subject to the same system of domination. These were chains of subjection, and each link would extract a certain amount of wealth through the domination of the next link. Perhaps by this time, the system was not as harsh as it had been in the early encomiendas. However, its origin based on violence was the same.

It is also clear that at least by 1657, there are still no doctrinaire churches nor catholic priests actively evangelizing indigenous people in the Sierra, otherwise Francisco Diaz would have said so. The encomenderos paid the priests to evangelize only the indigenous people who came down from the Sierra. The only Christianized indigenous people who apparently came down, were the few who came down to live in the Ramada or Rio de la Hacha, closely associated with encomenderos and the collection of tribute from the communities.

The story continues in the next document on that encomienda. It is clear that the encomiendas were still prestigious and profitable enough to argue over. Around 1664, Ana de Santiago went to appeal her case with the Audience Real in Santa Fe de Bogotá where she had powerful allies. She argued that the charges against her were all false. She was a poor and elderly woman with several daughters, while Francisco de Jimenez was a rich and powerful man, and had won the graces of the Governor Ramon de Zacarriga who was also his godfather. They had taken advantage of her with lies, deceit and influence<sup>143</sup> to dispose her of the encomienda that was her only form of sustenance.

The King never confirmed the encomienda to Francisco Jimenez de Enciso either. The descendants of the first conquerors held sway. Ana de Santiago’s right to the encomienda is respected, and it is not formally reassigned, but it was not returned to her either. Around 1664, a new governor placed it under the charge of an administrator in the name of the king. It is only after Ana de Santiago dies in 1680 that new process starts to find the next encomendero. Santiago Perez, the same encomendero who obtained Marocaso in 1674, made a big effort to get the title. But in 1681 the Governor assigned the encomienda to the Mayor of Rio de la Hacha named Miguel de Fuente, who supposedly needed it because he was rather poor.

- The Catholic church moves into the Ezuama of Sancona.

Shortly after the process of removing the encomienda from Ana de Santiago. The issue of the administration of the encomienda through the Catholic church moves into the spotlight. In 1664 the King’s Fiscal from the Real Audience de Santa Fe sends a letter to the bishop. He was worried that the Governor Ramon de la Garriga, and his new encomendero Jimenez were in fact not sincere about protecting the indigenous people nor indoctrinating them to the Catholic faith, but that it was just a vain strategy to get the encomienda. The population of the encomienda, of now nearly 200 “indios”, who despite being in lands reduced under the dominion of the Spanish crown for centuries, were all “bozales” with no “spiritual pasture”, and no access to a church nor

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<sup>143</sup> ES.41091.AGI/23.13.5.19//SANTA\_FE,182,N.9, Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de La Ramada. Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Nueva Salamanca de la Ramada en Santa Marta a Miguel de Fuentes. Resuelto, 1684 45-7.

the possibility of baptism. Thus, the fiscal requests that the bishop himself build a church to indoctrinate and baptize the indigenous people in that encomienda<sup>144</sup>.

The documents do not say if this church was built, but by the year 1664 clearly, the Catholic church is assuming a more direct role in the administration of the encomienda. In 1684 Miguel de la Fuente received the encomienda from two “indios, the first called himself lorenso the mandador of the encomienda of don diego or sancona, and the other Juan de fuentes, also from that encomienda. And he requested that he be given possession through those indios”<sup>145</sup>. Both of these indigenous people had Spanish names, and probably were Christian.

Certain changes start to become apparent in these late encomienda documents that reflect a change in forms of administration. For instance, the indigenous people were no longer allowed to participate or testify in the processes of assigning encomiendas, only Spaniards. The audiences that assigned the encomienda in 1680 to Miguel de la Fuente are now held in the bishop’s dispatch in Riohacha and not in the Cabildo house as usual.

By 1680 Sancona is now called a “doctrinaire town” with baptized children and a “doctrinary priest of the Aruacos de la Sierra Nevada” at work. He certifies that the “Caney de Sancona is one of the doctrinaire towns under my charge”. The priest is now responsible for maintaining the census and description of the encomienda, which in 1680 he certifies as 21 “Indios utiles”. The census now only includes the Christianized members of the encomienda. Many of them are children<sup>146</sup>. Meanwhile, however, the Mayordomos are still there collecting tribute.

The encomienda documents do not mention that the priest actually visited the pueblos in the Sierra, nor that a church had been built in the “Caney of Sancona”, as the King had requested in 1664, but in all probability it was. We do see the increasing efforts of the Catholic church as an institution, to administer and evangelize the indigenous people directly in Sancona, and simultaneously in Marocaso. This time reflects the start of a transition from the “Natural” indigenous spatial networks of encomienda to the emergence of “pueblos de indios” organized around churches in Kaggaba territory.

The encomienda is inhabited by the “Arguacos of the Sierra in the Pueblo of Sancona”. Sancona is the Spanish name for the Ezuama of Ableinzhi in Kaggaba territory. The early census in that encomienda mentions the name of the town of “Aumaca” which is another spelling for the nearby Kaggaba Ezuama of Kuamaka, and “Chinchinaca” is the Ezuama of Inzhizhaka located at the foot of the ezuama of Ableinzhi. Clearly, this sector of Sancona in the encomienda corresponds to the Kaggaba region of the ezuamas of Kuamaka and Ableihzhi, which include number of smaller ezuamas all organized around the upper Garativo River<sup>147</sup>. Sancona, probably as a reference from earlier times also appears as a ‘parish’ in Nicolas de la Rosa’s history of Santa Marta written in 1742 (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 51).

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<sup>144</sup> SANTA\_FE,173,N.24. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE DON DIEGO, ETC. 1665. Images 40. 41, 50.

<sup>145</sup> SANTA\_FE,182,N.9, CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE NUEVA SALAMANCA DE LA RAMADA. 1684. Image 22

<sup>146</sup> SANTA\_FE,182,N.9, CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE NUEVA SALAMANCA DE LA RAMADA.1684 Image 44

<sup>147</sup> This also includes the Ezuama of Washishgueka or “Caciquial” just below ezuamas of Kuamaka and Ablienchi which the kaggaba mamos explain was the seat of the Caciques for this region.

Sancona, as group of ezuamas, also corresponds to the location of the first Catholic church that the mamos remember to have appeared in Kaggaba territory, at the place called Kuintemula just below the ezuama of Ableinzhi - Sancona. It is very likely that any first efforts the bishop made to build a church took place there around or after 1680. Given these spatial correlations, it is also very likely that Sancona in the early 1700s would later transform into the encomienda run by the Catholic church in San Antonio de Kukutabe, which were to become the first permanent church towns in Kaggaba territory, as we will see in the next chapter.

## **2.5 Tracing the Kaggaba ezuamas through the chains of debt to the Encomienda**

- Kaggaba ezuamas, and the encomiendas of the Jurisdiction of the Ramada.

We have now finished our history of the encomiendas in the Jurisdiction of La Ramada. Not only does it give a vision from those times, it has provided enough evidence so as to be able to generate an idea of the situation of the indigenous people in the encomienda, and some draw conclusions.

There are sufficient place and personal names, and other indicators in the documents to be able to directly correlate most of these encomiendas with specific regions in the Sierra Nevada. The encomiendas have fluid, overlapping and disconnected territories, that change over time. However, it was possible to identify an approximate territory for each encomienda in the jurisdiction of La Ramada and their relationships with present day indigenous territory and their principal communities (See maps 4 and 5).

The encomienda documents also demonstrate a clear connection to the indigenous peoples of today in the Sierra Nevada. From very early times, the documents refer to the population in the encomiendas of the Ramada as “aruacos” or “Arguacos de la Sierra”. This means that all the men used poporos and coca leaf, the women wove cotton bags. Through Spanish eyes they all had similar languages, clothing and customs. These are indigenous people who share lineages and origins with the Kaggaba, and the Wiwa, Arhuaco and Kankuamo and associated lineages of Nañiba which have gone extinct or were assimilated. These are also all “Tayrona” territories.

Most importantly, it was possible to find place names of Pueblos in the documents that definitively correspond to Kaggaba ezuamas and Wiwa communities which still exist today. The encomienda of Miguel Castellanos, in its census from about 1570 includes the Ancho and the Tamina Rivers (Palomino), which are central territory for the Kaggaba, with ezuamas inhabited by them before the conquest<sup>148</sup>. The encomienda of Alonso de Troya mentions the Ezuama of Makutama in the upper Ancho River, as the pueblo of “Magostama”, and Dibulla de la Sierra would include that area of ezuamas down to Pueblo Viejo<sup>149</sup>. The encomienda of Juan Marsal from 1570 mentions the Pueblo of Bonga, historically occupied by the Kaggaba and lineages of lowland Caciques like Kamejuna who tried to dominate the Kaggaba. In the encomienda of Gregorio Mejia we identified the Tayrona town of “Sincorona” in the Don Diego Valley.

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<sup>148</sup> Of all the Pueblos mentioned in the Encomienda of Miguel Castellanos, the only one the Kaggaba mamos could possibly identify with some probability was “Matogwui”, as part of the Ezuama Mashkenzhi in the upper Ancho River.

<sup>149</sup> In the encomienda of Troya, the mention of the Pueblo of “Sinagona” very likely is the Pueblo of Sancona later to emerge in the encomienda of “Don Diego y Sancona”.

The encomienda of Esteban Delgado, “Marocaso, Macogaica and Taquina”, in 1657 clearly makes reference to present day the present Wiwa town of Marocaso located the upper Rancheria River. Its town referenced as “Taquina” is the Kaggaba Ezuama of Takina in the upper Ancho River right next to Makutama<sup>150</sup>. The encomienda of Don Diego y Sancona, refers to Sancona, known to the Kaggaba mamos as the Spanish name for the Ezuamas of Ableinzhi. Its 1605 document mentions the pueblos of Uamaka and Inzhizhaka, which are Kaggaba ezuamas near Sancona

It is true that many of the place and personal names in the encomienda documents were not easily correlated with present day names in any of the indigenous languages of the Sierra Nevada, neither by the elderly Mamos we work with, nor in books. There would be many reasons for that. Foremost, most of the pueblos were simply destroyed by the Spanish and then abandoned, especially in the Don Diego Tayrona Region. Many mamos I consulted indicated these names were in Teyuan language, but I didn’t go to the ezuamas of Palomino talk with the mamos still expert in Teyuan.

Likewise, it is not clear what the word “pueblo” signified for the Spanish in these encomienda documents. In the case of La Ramada, that could refer to any kind of indigenous settlement, a group of settlements, region or geographic feature. These have diverse forms of naming in the Kogian language. The Spanish do say that the populations and terrain were organized according to the “Natural” ways of the indigenous people, which would include those diverse forms of naming. Evidently those “Natural” ways also include the names of the Tayrona towns, some of which very clearly are the Kaggaba ezuamas.

The place names and how they are deployed in the encomienda documents of the Ramada evolve over time. The detailed lists of the pueblos of the earlier encomiendas disappear, substituted by fewer and more general names easily recognized by the Spanish. This reflects the later superposition of a Spanish geography of space and place as more suitable for the administration of territory by the Catholic church.

The fact that we were able to identify Kaggaba ezuamas and other present day indigenous populations with the places and people in the encomiendas is very important, and as places identified as “tayrona” in the documents. Clearly these are places occupied by the same indigenous people before the arrival of the Spanish, until today. It also enables us to see that these are the histories of both subjection to debt and terror, and of indigenous resistance during the encomienda that form part of the legacy of the indigenous peoples in the Sierra since the very arrival of the Spanish. Many are not far removed and forgotten nameless peoples from the past are but those same indigenous peoples of today. Likewise, it is possible to understand the origins of the assemblages of debt and reciprocity that indigenous peoples of today have worked though for centuries.

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<sup>150</sup> in the Encomienda of “Marocaso, Macogaica and Taquina”,The Pueblo of “Macogaica” is easily understandable in Kogian and Iku, as the site “gueka” of the Authorities and Caciques “Maku”. Macogaia is a region in present day Ahruaco territory, but we don’t know if it was that ancient town in the encomienda.

## - Debt and indigenous Resistance

Over the course of this chapter, we have been able to describe the basic techniques through which the Spanish established and maintained the *encomienda* as the principal form of administrative power exercised over the indigenous peoples in the Ramada until about 1700. The careful reading of the *encomienda* documents renders visible the early processes through which the Kaggaba and other indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada coexisted with or “resisted” Spanish forms of domination since the “Conquest”. The Spanish colonial administration operated by subjecting the indigenous people to assemblages of debt relations based on the misrecognition of the original moments of violence of the “Conquest”, sublimated and naturalized through categories of Spanish aristocracy and merit. The histories the Kaggaba Mamo tell in this Chapter give an idea of how their ancestors confronted that violence through articulations of debt with forms of reciprocity with nature, with life, the “Law of Origin”.

The Spanish during the early military expeditions of conquest in the Sierra Nevada literally chained the indigenous people to the *encomienda* as an assemblage of domination based on violence and debt. These original moments of creating the indigenous subject during the conquest were moments of “bare life”. The indigenous people had to exchange their right to life by giving the Spaniards tribute in gold. The *encomienda* as an assemblage of reverse debt always referred to that permanent state of bare life, of having to pay that debt to the Spanish.

Gold was a link between the *encomienda* as tribute, and as an indigenous form of production of wealth, was based on spiritual reciprocity nature. However, when brought to the Ramada as “tribute” it was transformed into value within the market system. Simultaneously, these assemblages of reverse debt depended on exchanges with indigenous practices of creating life through practices of reciprocity with nature, territory, and the spirit, which the Kaggaba call the “Law of Origin”, without which the *encomienda* and the indigenous peoples would disappear. The *encomienda* was imbricated in that assemblage of reciprocity.

Extreme violence applied to extract of wealth from the indigenous people during the early *encomienda* in the region was the undisclosed norm. The *encomiendas* were part of wider assemblages of colonial power based on similar practices of violence. We see that the pearl fisheries, around Riohacha and Cabo de la Vela forced the indigenous people and African slaves to extract pearls under domination, debt, and torture. *Encomenderos* like Mariscal Miguel Castellanos raided the other *encomiendas* of the Ramada to bring down indigenous slaves and force them to work on his plantations and pearl fisheries. It was all linked.

The Spanish themselves generally did not directly run the *encomiendas*, but through networks of reciprocity with caciques, ‘mestizos’ and slaves. The story of Kamejuna, handed down to Kaggaba Mamos of today, reflects on how lowland Caciques associated with the *encomienda* extracted wealth from the Kaggaba communities through severe punishments and torture. This “Law of Kamejuna” harnessed the “Law of Origin” to take advantage of indigenous relationships of production that sustained life and created wealth from reciprocity with nature.

By 1620 these chains of reverse debt based on violence as relationships between caciques and mestizo mayordomos that underpin the *encomiendas* become more evident. The documents describe the “Indios de Pala” – “shovel and service Indians”- as small groups of indigenous people who develop around each *encomienda* and come down to the Ramada, or live there with the

encomenderos. A few have been evangelized, and some have Spanish nicknames, or are Caciques of their Pueblos- These groups living or visiting the Ramada interact with the rest of the encomienda population up in the mountains, may they just be workers, or Caciques, or both.

After 1658 the documents start to reveal how this system of domination operated through relations between Mayordomos, African slaves, 'mulatos' and 'mestizo' people associated with the Ramada, along to the caciques and their communities in the Sierra. Each one of these people formed links along Spanish relations of power, both being dominated by the system itself, and at the same time dominating and passing the debt along to the next link. Through these relations of power, wealth, and personal advantage the participants carved out places for themselves within the colonial hierarchy, all the way to the King or Queen.

It is quite likely that much of the gold extracted from the encomiendas, or the tribute paid in goods stayed in the hands of this growing group of intermediaries and the caciques themselves. The encomienda itself was based on reciprocity shared down the line, and on deception. The encomienda made considerably more profit than just the work produced by the service Indians or the declared tribute. The encomenderos commonly reported smaller populations to avoid paying tribute to the King and would willingly pay substantial sums in gold to the King to have the encomienda reassigned to them, even until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The ability of these intermediaries to force the indigenous people to deliver wealth though debt must have been effective, and respected by the indigenous people, even though they were not officially authorized to exercise the law. This was the case for Kamejuna, who never received authorization from Cacique Shimata. It was an illegitimate law, a twisted law, as Mamo Numsiko observes, based on personal benefit at the expense of the next person down the line. However, at the end of the line, the encomienda depended on "natural" relationships of the indigenous people with their territory. That wealth was extracted from the indigenous people in the Sierra as they were able to maintain their own "Law of Origin", embedded in the "order" of territory as interrelationships with the land and life itself, as a fluid interaction with the Spanish along the connections of reciprocity.

The encomienda system, in late 17<sup>th</sup> century, is still based those moments of original violence. The encomienda of "Don Diego and Sancona", tells that story of how the tributary "Indians" travel to Valledupar or Rio de la Hacha where they work for the encomenderos and bring down their goods to trade at a disadvantage. They died on the paths, were overworked, and treated as objects of forced labor. The Governor in 1668 denounces all of this as only serving the avarice of the encomendero and the attrition of the life of the encomienda.

A constant tension exists between the encomendero and his or her destruction of the life of the encomienda. Under this pressure, many of the indigenous populations under the encomienda simply disappeared into the Mother Earth, into the spiritual caves of the mountains and the sacred pools of the rivers, as did the ancient Kaggaba community of Bunkuenazhaka (Pueblo Viejo), desperate under the rule of Kamejuna.

The encomenderos normalize or naturalize their application of violence and forms of extraction of wealth as part of the Spanish aristocracy that defines the "merit" of the encomendero based on their links with the original Spanish conquest. The use of the figure encomienda as a tool for the local Spanish population to ascend in the aristocracy is increasingly common around the

Province of Santa Marta (Mena Garcia 1982, 22) (Molino Garcia 1976, 132). The encomenderos misrecognize their own incomplicity with the principles of life. The encomienda legitimizes the heroic myth of the subjection of the “indio” by the civilized.

Through these links of reciprocity, the system of paying tribute to the Spanish was inextricably linked to the “Law of Origin”. The law of Kamejuna had to be articulated with the Law of Origin for it to create wealth, which always led to its own demise. Perhaps because of that, in spite of all their efforts, the Spanish never really seemed to be able to control the indigenous Pueblos in the encomiendas of the Ramada.

The encomienda had difficulty in incorporating the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada. The encomienda of Gregory Mejia in 1621 had significant problems with “indios Cimarrones” - escapees. In 1657, Francisco Dias is quite clear that catholic evangelization does not take place in the Pueblos of the encomienda, and the indigenous people have no interest in learning the ways of Catholic church. Both Jacinto and Nicholas in 1657 declare that the indigenous people live according to their “natural” ways, dispersed around the mountains.

People like Jacinto and Nicolas perhaps become complicit in bringing indoctrination and the domination of the Catholic church to their own indigenous peoples as a method to improve their own position of prestige and power. It is also possible that their participation within the discourse of the Catholic church was a form of access to rights in the Leyes de Protección de los Naturales which the Catholic church promised to uphold for indigenous peoples<sup>151</sup>.

As we will see in the next chapter, while the church denounces the mistreatment of the indigenous people in the encomiendas, especially during after the 1680s, the arrival of the Catholic church to indigenous territory in the Sierra did not actually eliminate the relationships of violent subjection and domination, they just changed in form. Christian Indigenous people like Jacinto, and Nicolas, who had argued in favor of the Catholic church must have been disappointed by the results.

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<sup>151</sup> In the Muisca encomiendas around Bogotá, some caciques also played these double roles of resistance. The strategic deployment of their roles with the encomienda enabled them defend their communities and ancestral practices (Jairo 2014, 87).

### **3.0 Church Towns and the Statue of San Pedro: Reciprocity and Resistance, 1700 to 1820.**

When I started to research this chapter, neither the Kaggaba, nor the writing about them gave a clear idea on how nor when the Catholic church arrived to their territory. For the Kaggaba, it happened a long time ago, after the conquest. I found that the arrival of the first permanent indigenous “church towns” to Kaggaba territory was probably just before 1700<sup>152</sup>. This Chapter describes how establishing relationships of reciprocity with the Catholic church was one of the Kaggaba’s principal scenarios of resistance to violence, associated with the disappearance of the encomienda and successfully dealt with the introduction of church towns.

These processes of resistance are based on the Kaggaba’s articulation of the Catholic church within forms of reciprocity based on the Law of Origin, h transforming those same relationships. As practices embedded in the sedimented layers of history and territory, they keep on emerging over time the strategies of indigenous transformation of context and subjectivity through reciprocity, that we develop in this dissertation. This Chapter about relationships between church towns and Catholicism amongst the Kaggaba, which might imply that the indigenous people of the Sierra converted to Catholicism. That could not be further from the truth. The success of these Kaggaba practices of resistance is based on firm adherence to their own Law of Origin and from there, articulation with certain elements of Catholic practice, but not their adoption.

#### **3.1 The early moments: The Catholic church attempts to destroy the Ezuamas.**

This first section of the chapter brings into focus the eminent dangers that the Catholic church posed to the indigenous people as it made its entrance amongst the “aruaco” encomiendas of the Sierra Nevada during the 1680s. In the case of the Kaggaba these first intrusions of the Church gave them a warning of what was to come, and in response, were able to develop relatively successful strategies of articulation with Catholic church and transformation of violence. However, in other areas of the Sierra, especially around Atanquez, that was not the case.

Almost nothing is written about these times of transition. However, I found two sources that render visible the implications of the early regimes of evangelization in the Sierra Nevada. One is a well cited document called “El llanto Sagrado de America” published by Friar Francisco Romero in 1693, who describes his expedition to destroy indigenous “sanctuaries” in the Valledupar sector of the Sierra Nevada (F. F. Romero 1996? [1693 ])<sup>153</sup>. The other is Kaggaba memory of what would be the first Catholic church set up in their territory, perhaps being the same church mentioned in the 1684 document on the encomiendas of “Don Diego and Sancona”.

#### **- Capuchin friars whitewash the Cacique’s ashes on the Cathedral walls.**

Fray Romero’s texts with unintentional precision, show the zeal of the priests to violently reconquer the encomiendas, with very little pious respect for the indigenous people. In 1691,

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<sup>152</sup> The first written references to permanent church towns verifiable in Kaggaba territory date to about 1718 (Alcacer 1959, 172).

<sup>153</sup> The ecclesiastic notary Melchor de Espinoza, a priest from Riohacha, accompanied the expedition, giving a more complete version, which Karl Langebaek transcribes and analyzes alongside the text of the “Llanto Sagrado” (2007, 235-47).



Fray Romero and his expedition set out from Atanquez<sup>154</sup> located above Valledupar, and then moved higher up the mountain to destroy the “sanctuaries”. His descriptions of these “aruaco sanctuaries” fit in perfectly with the present day Kaggaba ezuamas, their equivalents amongst the Arhuaco and Wiwa and what would have been their Kankuamo equivalents in the past.

As was the case for Sancona, the Catholic church was also making a great effort to assume the administration of the encomiendas of those “Aruacos”. The priests found that the Mayordomos from the encomiendas around Valledupar were abusing the Indians for monetary benefit. The Church denounced almost all those encomenderos, as “leeches who aim to drink their (the Indian’s) blood”, as violence that was destroying the same indigenous people the encomiendas depended on. In response, the church would ostensibly protect those indigenous people by placing them under Catholic administration.

The church’s will to defend indigenous rights only went so far. A Spanish “Visitor” Juan de Cuadrado had gotten news that in the encomienda of “San Isidro in Atanques”, many “Aruaco temples” still existed up in the Sierra, and he decided that they needed to be eliminated (Langebaek 2007, 223). Fray Francisco Romero, was placed in charge of a commission of soldiers, clergy and public functionaries, to find and destroy them.

The documents from the encomienda of San Isidro in 1690 reflect the presence of the church. Indigenous Christians, with Spanish first names<sup>155</sup> lived “under the bell” in towns supervised by a priest. The archive documents also mention pueblos of “Aruacos de la Sierra” from that encomienda, who rarely came down to Atanquez, are not Christian, and do not pay demora<sup>156</sup>. Those were the offending pueblos whose sanctuaries Romero wanted to eradicate.

Fray Romero described the “indios aruacos de la Sierra Nevada de Atanquez” as people who adore “worked stones, clothing and other jewelry, and also do harsh penances such as not eating salt for a month, nor getting together with their wives nor eating chewable things, nor going out in the sun nor talking to each other, even if they are congregated and barbarically fasting as well (Langebaek 2007, 240)”. For all the aversion to these indigenous practices, the priests seemed familiarized, and attracted to their customs. The encomenderos had lived off their tribute for more than a century. These are also basically the same practices of present day Kaggaba ezuamas and their Arhuaco equivalents.

It was not only religious expedition, but also military expedition, accompanied by armed Spanish troops. Romero “exhorted” the “principal “Aruaco” of Atanquez who was seventy years old, with golden nose rings, a multicolored feather bonnet, a long beard, and their customary dress (Langebaek 2007, 223)”, and the indigenous Christian, “Capitan Julian” of the encomienda, to guide his party up to the ezuamas, to the temples. Romero made it clear that if these indigenous

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<sup>154</sup> Atanquez was and still is the principal town of the Kankuamo indigenous people.

<sup>155</sup> AGI. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE TOMAS DE VILLANUEVA: ,ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTA\_FE,184,N.12. 1693, Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Santo Tomás de Villanueva y San Isidro de la Sierra en Santa Marta a José Tafur de Valenzuela y Leyva. Pendiente. Imágenes 102-108, and 116, 119.

<sup>156</sup> AGI. CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE TOMAS DE VILLANUEVA: ,ES.41091.AGI/23//SANTA\_FE,184,N.12. 1693, Expediente de Confirmación de Encomienda de Santo Tomás de Villanueva y San Isidro de la Sierra en Santa Marta a José Tafur de Valenzuela y Leyva. images 116-119.

“principals” would not bring the commission to the temples they would be imprisoned and subject to “rigorous punishment”. Those found teaching “idolatry”, would be imprisoned for life (Langebaek 2007, 246)”. The Caciques had no choice but to accede.

The expedition goes up to “remote” locations, one- or two-days travel from Atanquez over rough trails, as high as possible until it becomes too cold to walk. The entire group, or smaller contingents with Spanish troops, with the caciques or the “Captains” under duress, are forced to lead the Spanish to the sanctuaries, which Romero also calls “Cansa Marias”<sup>157</sup>. They burn down each one on the spot, and often take the objects therein. The caciques and “Captain Julian” made efforts to lead the Spanish away from their sanctuaries and were able to save a considerable number of objects, hiding them elsewhere. As a Christian cacique, Capitan Julian defends the Ezuamas, perhaps as the “ladino” caciques Jacinto or Nicolas had done in Sancona and Marocaso, as resistance enabled through participation in assemblages of domination.

Romero describes the objects he takes as “idols”, “unheard of and completely horrifying, and likewise others in the figure of men that are also horrible and frightening and some headdresses with innumerable feathers about a yard high and sloping down the back as a long cape down to the feet also covered with feathers, and a quantity of flutes, whistles, and gourds (Langebaek 2007, 246)”. Romero brings some of these objects to Valledupar, where they publicly burn and destroy the feather headdress and capes, musical instruments, and “statues” in the main plaza. Perhaps as trophies, or perhaps because the Spanish appreciated them, the commission keeps many of them to show the Governor of the Province and the bishop.

The Spanish church also saw enough value in those “horrendous” objects, including dancing masks of the kind the Mamos still use today in their ezuamas, to send some to the Vatican (Bischof 1974). They arrive directly to the pope where reportedly they started the collection of the Ethnological Museum of the Vatican (Reyes Gavilán 2016, 279). And while mysteriously not mentioning the gold pieces, the descriptions of these objects, the masks, headdresses and capes, and musical instruments are pretty much the same as those used today by the Kaggaba mamos in their ezuamas, for “spiritual” work to heal the water, and the land. They are were what their Kankuamo, Kaggaba, Wiwa and Arhuaco mamos had had been using until Romero took them.

In 2014 the Vatican Ethnological Museum put those same objects on exhibit. They described the masks and the objects “found in a Tairona Temple”, as “some of the only Tairona wooden objects known to survive today” and are very important for the present-day indigenous inhabitants of the Sierra to maintain their connection with nature (Vatican Ethnological Museum 2014). It is striking that what the Vatican Museum called in 2014, Tairona objects from “Tairona Temples”, are those from what Romero calls “aruaco” sanctuaries, being the same nujue and ezuamas of today’s indigenous people in the Sierra. The “aruaco”<sup>158</sup> and the Tayrona were the same.

The indigenous peoples of today are the direct descendants of the Caciques who Romero encounters. Those “sanctuaries” were probably in Kankuamo territory. But for the upper

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<sup>157</sup> The Kaggaba mamos to this date still often call their nujue the “cansa maria”,

<sup>158</sup> Here it might be pertinent to remind the reader that “aruaco” as the Spanish used the term, referred to the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada in general, with no differentiation between the different peoples.

sanctuaries it is hard to tell. The mamos and authorities of the Kankuamo, Kaggaba, Arhuaco and Wiwa constantly visited each other's ezuamas, interconnected over the paramos, and they all share similar practices of the Law of Origin and one unified territory.

Evidently, during the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Catholic church was intent on destroying the ezuamas and sanctuaries. For the Catholic church, providing "spiritual pasture" to the "indios" involved applying the same chains of debt and violence that had bound them since the Spanish conquest. Those raids of the 1690s dealt a hard blow to the Kankuamo and their Mamos started to disappear. The last Kankuamo mamos or "Caciques" gave their masks and territory to the Kaggaba for safekeeping until they could learn to dance again, and the Kaggaba are still waiting for that to happen (Morales Tomas and Pumarejo Hinojosa 2003, 95).

A Kaggaba Mamo Alejandro Nieves, who is from that region, shared a history about what happened to the Kankuamo after the Catholic church started those persecutions:

"My grandmother told me a little about what happened when the priests arrived in the territory, and about the last of the Kankuamo caciques. The priests went up to the Sierra, through Valledupar, looking for all the caciques, take them down to the city, and burn their nujues. They finally got Cacique Shimata. He was the last Cacique. They had already persecuted all the rest of the caciques in Kankuamo territory. They told Shimata that he had send word to his people to bring down 7 baskets full of gold, otherwise Spanish would burn him. But they were only able to collect four baskets. The gold had run out. The Spanish tied him to a post, put firewood behind his back and lit it. He was totally burned. They collected his ashes to mix with lime and paint the church in Valledupar.

The Spaniards then searched the entire Sierra looking for any last caciques, but practically none of the Kankuamo caciques remained. The Kaggaba told the last Kankuamo that they could save them. The Kaggaba knew how to open the walls of the mountain and hid 7 Kankuamo families, along with Arhuacos, Wiwas, and ourselves inside the mountain. When it was safe to come out again, the Kaggaba returned to our ezuamas with our traditions, dances and objects, but the Kankuamo did not. They had lost their ezuamas, their caciques and their mamos.

That moment signals the end of encomienda. Cacique Shimata of Mamo Alejandro's story was perhaps not the same as the Shimata in the history of Kamejuna. But they played similar roles. They were intermediaries between the Spanish and their indigenous peoples of the Sierra.

- Mamo Juan Pablo and *Kuintemula*, the first Church town in Kaggaba territory.

Around that same time, on the other side of the Sierra, the Church was also trying to take control of the encomiendas in the Kaggaba ezuamas around Sancona, Takina, and in the Wiwa areas of Marocaso. We have not been able to find any written accounts of these expeditions, nor of the first church towns there. Some Kaggaba mamos can tell histories from those times and the first church towns that the priests attempted to install in Kaggaba territory. In this case, the priests were not accompanied by Spanish soldiers, but Nañiba caciques.

The priests established their first Church town in Kaggaba territory on top of a sacred site called *Kuintemula*<sup>159</sup>. It was strategically located just below the ezuama of Sancona, with access to other the major Kaggaba ezuamas in the area, including Ableinzhi, Kuamaka, Inzhizhaka and Sugulu. That church was probably the same. The Mamos are very clear that the establishment, and demise of that church town took place before the first permanent church town was established, called San Antonio, around 1700 in Kaggaba territory (See map 3). It was perhaps that of the “Caney of Sancona” from the 1680’s.

Several mamos from the area around the Ezuama of Sancona narrate what happened to that first church town in their story of “*Mamo Juan Pablo and Father Ventura in the Church town of Kuintemula*”<sup>160</sup>. The Mamos of the nearby ezuama of Sugulu first mentioned this history to our group from the OGT in 2015 when we were visiting to work on the book *Shikwakala*. Those who told that story, Mamo Esteban and Antanasio Zarabata are the direct descendants of Mamo Juan Pablo, the protagonist, seven generations back. They told us that story, and to a group of mamos while we were sitting in front of their *njuje* in Sugulu. It basically went as follows.

Many years ago, the Ezuama of Sugulu had a large community of Kaggaba, under the charge of a respected Mamo named Juan Pablo. Nearby, in *Kuintemula*, a Father Ventura had come up and set up a church town, where he wanted to settle all the Kaggaba community and their mamos from their ezuamas and “subject them to the law of the church”. The Father sent his indigenous authorities - *cabos*, to bring down the mamos from their ezuamas. Mamo Juan Pablo resisted, but finally they forced him down to live there. Soon after, an epidemic of “blood diarrhea”<sup>161</sup> broke out in that church town, and the Kaggaba started dying.

Since the town had been built right on top of the sacred site that cures diarrhea, it had been “affected”, and Mamo Juan Pablo’s spiritual payments to cure the disease there didn’t work. Neither would Father Ventura let Juan Pablo back to the ezuamas to do the spiritual work necessary to cure the disease. One by one, everyone in the church town died. The last to die was Father Ventura, leaving the town abandoned and desolate. Mamo Juan Pablo returned to his Ezuama in Sugulu, but the effects had been devastating. He had lost his dancing masks, and gold objects, as did many other mamos in the surrounding ezuamas. There, that history, which in fact was quite long, ends.

The imposition of these church towns, would seriously affect the Kaggaba, displacing the authority of the ezuamas for the authority of the Catholic church. The church towns worked through a new set of indigenous authorities with new names like “Mandador”. It was especially problematic that the church authorities at *Kuintemula* were “*Nañiba*”, like *Kamejuna*. They made

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<sup>159</sup> Interview with *Mama* Atanasio and *Mama* Esteban Zalabata, in *Sugulu*, Noviembre 2015. The story was complemented with the same story Mamo Morro Venancio, told on Nov 11, 2014, in the Kaggaba community of San Antonio, for the book *Shikwakala*.

<sup>160</sup> Mamo Juan Pablo was a principal Mamo or Cacique of Sugulu with its Tairona objects, masks and gold, just like the Caciques and “sanctuaries” in Romero’s document, and the “pueblos” of the encomienda living according to their “Natural” ways.

<sup>161</sup> In the 1684 census of the “Caney of Sancona” both the priest and the mayordomos mention that the population had been reduced by the “*virjuelas*”, probably that same “blood diarrhea”, accompanying the more permanent Spanish presence. SANTA\_FE,182,N.9, CONFIRMACION DE ENCOMIENDA DE NUEVA SALAMANCA DE LA RAMADA.1684. Image 44.

alliances with the Catholic church to directly subjugate the Kaggaba and their ezuamas under the extractive violence of the *encomienda*.

Both the Nañiba and the Catholic church wanted to destroy the ezuamas, and the Kaggaba had little defense against these joint incursions. The Mamos urgently needed to find a response, especially now that the Catholic church towns were a central feature of the institutional apparatus the Spanish were using to dominate the Sierra Nevada. To protect themselves from these assemblages of debt, violence and subjection the Kaggaba implemented a successful strategy. Based on the integration of elements like the Statue of “San Pedro” and others elements into the “Law of Origin” through reciprocity, the Kaggaba were able generate direct relationships with the Catholic church. They inverted those chains of debt to meld more advantageous alliances with the Catholic church and remove the lowland caciques from Kaggaba territory.

### **3.2 Discipline and Punish: Catholic church Towns administer the *Encomienda* after 1700.**

- “Pueblos de Indios”- Church Towns: domination or free choice.

These new church towns, or Catholic missions, were introduced to the Sierra Nevada during the late *encomienda*, and as instruments of Spanish power, for the discipline, administration and punishment of the indigenous people somewhat reminiscent of forms of neoliberal governmentality. The objective of the administration of indigenous people under the church town, was not only to dominate territory, but to organize the indigenous people as the king’s subjects through the application of the catholic faith (Suárez 2015, 127), (Herrera Angel 1998).

This was distinct from the *encomienda* system in which the indigenous people were basically enslaved or subject to a set of feudal relations based on the production of wealth through debt. The *encomienda* had failed as a model for control of territory and population. Of particular concern was the distant Sierra Nevada, surrounded by rebellious Guajira and Chimila Regions. Around 1694 the King proposed to have the *encomiendas* there administered through catholic mission towns under the tutelage of the Bishop of Santa Marta or alternatively, the Capuchin Friars (Saether 2005, 61, 120), (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 308).

While also a mechanism of Spanish domination, participation in Church towns implied certain advantages for indigenous people- With a church town in their territory, the indigenous communities were classified as “indios de razon”, improving their status and access to rights within the colonial system (Alcacer 1959, 221), including exemptions from tribute, and rights to of land reserved for the indigenous people (Herrera Angel 2011)<sup>162</sup>.

The Catholic mission was simultaneously a business. In the region they were first applied amongst the “Guajiro” - Wayuu indigenous peoples in the nearby desert provinces. There, the new missions and Church towns, combined a focus on evangelization of indigenous peoples with locating these towns in areas of economic importance for the Spanish, like the pearl fisheries

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<sup>162</sup> Often in the late colonial period the king would declare lands around the church towns and *encomiendas* as indigenous “Resguardos”. The King decreed several Resguardos around Santa Marta, but the local elite blocked those, and none in the Sierra.

around Riohacha, and commercial routes, to support implementation of that new model of economic, political and territorial domination (Alcacer 1959, 65, 118).

After 1694 and almost until the end of the colonial period, both the Bishops of Santa Marta and the Capuchinos fiercely competed with one another, denouncing the shortcomings of each other's efforts. The objective was to obtain the King's concession to operate missions in the Sierra Nevada and the Guajira (Alcacer 1959). A special rivalry developed between the Bishop of Santa Marta, Antonio Monroy de Meneses and the Capuchinos<sup>163</sup>, each jockeying to obtain the right to administer the missions of the Sierra Nevada and the Guajira<sup>164</sup>.

Over the years in this midst of this competition, both the Bishop and the Capuchins established what was a relatively wide network of missions in the Guajira (Alcacer 1959, 135) including the church towns of "Menores", "Boronata" and "La Cruz" around Riohacha and "Camarones" near where it still is today (See Map 5). By 1769, the Capuchinos declared that "the guajiros were now in their majority reduced to Pueblos (Alcacer 1959, 166)". The idea was to extend that same network of church towns from the Guajira up into the Sierra Nevada.

Establishing a Pueblo de Indios followed a specific pattern. A church was built in the plaza in a prominent and visible place from which a grid of streets irradiated. Some pueblos de indios were small, with just one original "pueblo", others quite large and attempted to nucleate several encomiendas with their caciques and captains (Suárez 2015, 129). Often the Spanish would attempt to burn the existing indigenous houses and "idolatrias" and destroy their fields to integrate the indigenous peoples in body, spirit, and territory, within the Spanish administration (Suárez 2015, 134), (Fals Borda 1957).

These towns were common to most of the early encomiendas in the Nuevo Reino de Granada (Herrera Angel 2002), including those around the city of Santa Marta (Herrera Angel 1998). Their doctrinaire churches are still a common sight all around Colombia, as the remnants of a "Pueblo de Indios" and their encomiendas (Apriles-Gnisset 1991), (Corradine 1989, 1992), (Chica Segovia 2019). Some of these churches were quite simple, and others over time were ornately remodeled (Reina Mendoza 2008). Indigenous doctrinaire churches still are to be seen around the city of Santa Marta in the villages of Mamatoco, Gaira, Bonda and Taganga, as the same "pueblos" of "indios" that Quero mentions in his 1625 census of encomiendas around the City of Santa Marta.

The Kaggaba church towns of the Sierra Nevada of 1700 and thereafter, form part of that model of social and economic order. The actual physical constructions of Kaggaba church towns are much smaller and simpler those around Santa Marta. Their houses are distributed around the church and plaza, but not on a grid pattern of streets. The Kaggaba still maintain those buildings and that basic spatial pattern, in Kaggaba communities of San Antonio, San Miguel, San Francisco and a few other Kaggaba church towns (See map 3).

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<sup>163</sup> Historia Eclesiástica SC.30,15,D.14 1720 1721 ANC, "Antonio de Monroy y Meneses obispo de Santa Marta , su informe sobre reducción y catequización de indígenas de su diócesis y demás documentos referentes a las misiones religiosas en dicha provincia", folios 213 y 214, images 100 y 101.

<sup>164</sup> (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 294) "Carta de Juan, Obispo de Santa Marta de 12 de Feb del Cabildo de Riohacha de 1 de mar 1699".

Documents from that time describe how the friars, priests and Caciques set up these church towns in the nearby region of the Guajira, as similar to the procedures used in the Sierra Nevada. The mission towns could be established using force, but preferably by the “free request” of a Cacique. The Cacique and a priest would select a site, erect a cross, and draw out the layout for the town. The Fray would give the indigenous people three machetes and “Amudes de clavos” – sets of nails, to build the church and the other houses (Alcacer 1959, 150, 156).

Many Caciques in the Guajira seemed to actually want a church town and Frair (Alcacer 1959, 157). To freely accept a mission town represented advantages for the Cacique over other indigenous people who didn’t have such a town. The priests were powerful allies who would protect from threats, and unfair trade relations (Alcacer 1959, 144, 149, 156-7), and granted access to protection under the Spanish legal system (Alcacer 1959, 152), (Saether 2005, 15). These were alliances of mutual benefit for both the priests and the “indios” under their care.

The creation of the Catholic missions or Pueblos de Indios in the Sierra Nevada arose directly out of the same policy for their implementation in the Guajira, and in many cases from the same priests and missions. But there were significant differences. In the Guajira, when the indigenous people tired of their church towns, they would simply burn them down and abandon their priests (Alcacer 1959, 246). The Kaggaba did things differently. They developed long term strategies to coexist with these church towns, while retaining a certain level of autonomy.

- San Antonio and San Pedro, the first permanent Catholic church towns in Kaggaba territory.

On my first visits to the Kaggaba areas up higher in the Sierra, years ago, I encountered by chance one of these Kaggaba church towns. I had gone up to Pueblo Viejo, and then to San Miguel on a two-month visit. It was for a photography expedition, agreed upon with the OGT. I was the anthropologist “guide”.

In San Miguel, we were kindly attended by Mamo Jacinto, the chief Kaggaba mamo of the region, and of the OGT. He and other mamos showed us many special “sacred sites”. For instance, the blue rock where “yali”, -white men- had to make their spiritual payments, near a cave where San Luis Beltran had supposedly stayed centuries ago. Mamos holding their special staffs of authority with the two red yarn balls hanging from each side would have their photographs taken.

Near the end of the trip, we went up to the Kaggaba town of San Miguel, home to some of the most “traditional” ezuamas in Kaggaba territory. Makutama, Takina, Seizhua obviously inhabited by them for many centuries, with elderly mamos and their apprentices who never leave their ezuamas, surrounded by impressive high Andean forests, lakes and grasslands and their respective sacred sites. In the middle of all that, It seemed a bit strange to me that the community of San Miguel, had a little, but very well-made mud daub whitewashed catholic chapel right in the middle, with a plaza and a wooden cross in front. It also had square house next door that the Kaggaba described as the “warehouse” used mostly to put up visitors, including ourselves. I wondered how this church had gotten into the middle of this traditional and very isolated Kaggaba community and region.

The church had a brass bell on it dated from 1915, but the structure looked to be much older perhaps Colonial. I asked some of the people about the church and they said that there was a

statue of a saint inside it, but the Kaggaba in charge who could open the church wasn't here. A catholic priest used to come to say mass, but no longer. A "inspector de policia" and the priest would stay in the warehouse during their visits just like we had. All that had stopped with the advent of the OGT in 1987. The Kaggaba community did however periodically maintain the structures and renew the grass thatching on the church, which seemed a bit contradictory to me. Why would the Kaggaba keep up a Catholic church that must have been an instrument of evangelization and domination?

Part of responding to that question involved piecing together a chronology of the first permanent church towns in Kaggaba territory, which turned out to be San Antonio and San Pedro. Fleeting references in the documents made that possible. The chronology is as follows:

Around 1720, the Capuchinos stated that they had come up to the Sierra and reestablished two church towns, which they call the "Populations of San Pedro de Ramada and San Antonio de Yucal (Alcacer 1959, 172). They assert that the Bishop of Santa Marta had originally established those two "ancient "aruaco" church towns, probably some 20 years before, during the times of King Phillip V. The Capuchinos, when they visited in 1720, found that the indigenous towns of San Pedro and San Antonio had "fallen into ruin" and most of their people had



Figure 4 Kaggaba Church town of San Antonio. Photo by Bibiana Salamanca

returned to their mountains and "idolatrous" ways (Alcacer 1959, 172)<sup>165</sup>, (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 361). We can assume that those church towns of San Antonio and San Pedro were probably first established a little before 1700, they had faded out and were reestablished around 1720.

Meanwhile, Bishop Monroy also was making permanent efforts to reactivate those towns. One of these efforts happened in 1722, which the Capuchinos relate: "Faced with the possibilities of losing his mandate in the Sierra..., the bishop did not remain still. At the beginning of the year 22, he moved into the Sierra Nevada, armed with trinkets, beads and silver-handled staffs to name captains. Attracted by these gifts, many of the natives came down from the mountains (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 340)<sup>166</sup>. This reference to the bishop giving staffs of authority to "name captains", is quite important. This was the same kind of staff Mamo Jacinto and many other mamos had to show their authority when they were getting photographed, and they were also given out by the church to name indigenous authorities to establish church towns.

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<sup>165</sup>De Alcacer cites a document written 60 years after the Capuchins reestablished San Antonio, "Informe sobre el adelantamiento de las misiones en Santa Marta por don Juan Rosa de Amaya y Buitrago, 1788. ANB, Curas y Obispos t. 20, fs. 643 – 712".

<sup>166</sup> "Carta de don Juan Beltran de Caicedo a SM de 10 de mayo de 1721, date which doesn't coincide with Monroy's visit.



In spite of the efforts of the Bishop, the Capuchinos won the concession, to the missions in the Sierra Nevada, and reestablished those two church towns in 172. They established the Kaggaba church town of San Miguel in the 1730s (Alcacer 1959, 172). These Kaggaba church towns prevailed all through colonial times<sup>167</sup>, and are the same church towns as those of today, except for San Pedro which disappeared by the end of the colonial period<sup>168</sup>.

### **3.3 The Valley of Cototame. The Kukatabe gold piece, and the Church Town of San Antonio**

Most significantly for this history of Kaggaba resistance, the encomiendas in and below Sancona are now renamed as Cototame including their new church towns. The first mention of Cototame appears in 1705 as an encomienda in the Ramada transferred to the crown (Molino Garcia 1976, 58)<sup>169</sup>. The Spanish archive documents after 1720, until the end of the colonial period, almost always make reference to “San Pedro y San Antonio de Cototame”, located within the “Valley of Cototame” or “Cototama”. continue throughout 17<sup>th</sup> century. The names of all the other encomiendas in the Ramada are also now totally different<sup>170</sup>.

In effect, those first church towns were still immersed in the encomienda and its chains of debt. In 1718 Bishop Monroy denounces that there were still five encomiendas in the jurisdiction of the Rio Hacha in the Sierra Nevada (Mena Garcia 1982, 18)<sup>171</sup>. Alongside the introduction of the Catholic church, the encomienda still took advantage of the indigenous people, having them work all year making hammocks, bags and other products even if they had a reduced tribute, “The administrators have the indios as though they were ‘bought slaves’”<sup>172</sup>.

There are no explanations in the documents on why or how these “pueblos de indios” came be called “of the Valley of Cototame”. However, a few Kaggaba Mamos do remember. The word Cototama was part of the history of how the Kaggaba were able to extract themselves from the encomienda system, liberate themselves from the Nañiba Caciques, and establish direct alliances with the Catholic church towns.

For the project around the book Shikwakala with the OGT, our team asked several elderly mamos in the Garavito valley about the word “Cototama” which I had found in the documents. They were rather surprised to hear that question, I guess that no one like me had posed before, and

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<sup>167</sup> (VISITAS-MAG:SC.62,1,D.13, folios 847-848, ANC). See also (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 106) citing AHNC. Visitas del Magdalena, vol. 1, fols. 802v-805v, 175”,

<sup>168</sup> By 1742 the parroquias in the Jurisdiccion of de Riohacha which could correspond to Kaggaba territory are San Pedro, San Antonio del Yucal, Santa Cruz, Sancona, Marocaza, Zahirino, Chimirunhúe y Cototame (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 42) citing (Rosa 1820 (1742)) See also (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 195-6) citing AHNC. Visitas del Magdalena, vol. 1, fols. 802v-805v, 175”, (VISITAS-MAG:SC.62,1,D.13, folios 847-848 en ANC). Sancona was a parish. Cototame included San Pedro and San Antonio.

<sup>169</sup>, Uribe (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 65) citing (Molino Garcia 1976, 50-52, 58, 70-73, 110-111) and (Mena Garcia 1982, 11-12, 13, 18.), and see Alonso de Valera a S.M , Santa Marta, 6 de Octubre 1705 Santa Fe, 504 AGI

<sup>170</sup> See (Molino Garcia 1976, 51, 71, 144). The names of some encomenderos are recognizable from the late encomienda documents we cited in the last chapter.

<sup>171</sup> y (Molino Garcia 1976, 173), citing “Informe de don Antonio Monroy a S.M., Santa Marta, 30 de mar 1718, AGI, Santa Fe 518.

<sup>172</sup> A royal cedula “suppressed the abuses established by the ecclesiastics against the indigenous people, especially in the five “Aruaco” encomiendas that existed in the province of Rio Hacha, poorly treated by their encomenderos, who forced them to weave hammocks and backpacks on their own, and by their doctrinaire priests who also took advantage of their work for free. (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 327)” cited from a “carta de fray Antonio, obispo de Santa Marta, a SM de 30 de Marzo de 1718.

they didn't have to think much about the answer. The Valley of Cototama was in fact named after a gold object that the Kaggaba mamos prepared in their Ezuamas, called Kututabe. The mamos had used that object to establish the Church town of San Antonio, and it was key to Kaggaba practices of resistance at that time. Arregoces Conchacala had assigned me to find out about these topics for the Book Shikwakala.

The first Kaggaba mamo to mention that word was Mamo Bernardo Moscote Mamatacan. Arregoces Coronado, my Kaggaba friend from the OGT office, had heard Mamo Bernardo talking about the first church towns. Arregoces set up an appointment in the Kaggaba community of Dumingueka and I went to see him. The Moscotes are a long lineage of Mamos from the Ezuama of Kuamaka, around the town of San Francisco, the last church town to be established in Kaggaba territory. Their great-great grandfather had done it. Mamo Bernardo would always defend the church town as the seat of Kaggaba government, of the OGT, even though other mamos might question him. I had never really understood why until then.

Mamo Bernardo, when I went to talk with him was at least 90 years old. We left his house and with Arregoces walked to the "geka" meaning the place where the mamos gather to publicly consult the Law of Origin with their "Zhatukuwa". We were the only ones there that day. We sat together on the mamo's special rock seats, under a large higuera tree, next to the river rumbling by. Mamo Bernardo, was holding his staff of authority with the two traditional red yarn balls hanging from either side, just like mamo Jacinto's and the ones that Bishop Monroy had handed out to the Kaggaba captains some 300 years ago.

He told us the following very short story. "The Cototame was Kukutabe. Kututabe was a piece of gold that we mamos from the Ezuama put into San Pedro, the saint made from the wood of an Avocado Tree. With San Pedro we bought the other Saints for the towns. They were ours, and that is why we are still the government, that is why we Moscote are the "Mamo Jefe" of the OGT today". Mamo Bernardo did not want to elaborate any further. He talked about his importance as a mamo and his past accomplishments. Regardless, his story shed a first light on the origin of the church towns articulated with of the ancestral practices of the Kaggaba.

The next mamo who we asked was Mamo Venancio Morro. Again, Antonio Coronado and myself stopped in the community of San Antonio, on yet another trip to Sugulu, and asked about how the town of San Antonio came into being. Mamo Venancio is of a lineage of mamos responsible for San Antonio. Sitting next to the fire in Antonio's house, he explained:

"There is a ñiuba, a figure in gold, with its origin linked to the Gonawindúa peak though the Ezuama de Matugaka / Ableizhi. That gold piece is also known by the name of Ableizhbezhu. In Matugaka, a Mama named Nunkubula Kuchakube, made a copy in *Aldu* wood (Makana wood) carved in the exact likeness of this gold figure of Ableizhbezhu. Then they took that statue to Jashina in Riohacha and clothed him. Now with his clothes on, they gave him the name Ableizhbezhu<sup>173</sup> Santu, and they

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<sup>173</sup> The Ezuama of Matugaka is that mentioned in chapter 1, invaded by the Spanish. It is part of the ezuamas of Ableizhi, of Sancona, which is why the figure is called Ableizhbezhu, meaning the mouth of the Ezuama of Ablenzi. These figures were related to Sancona, and its encomienda as the location of the failed church town in Kwintemula. See Maps 2, 4 and 5.

called him “Saint Abel Kukutabe Yucal.” Mamo Kuluado and his son Singanu came down to help to that work of converting him into the statue of that Saint. “After this replica of Kukutabe was established, the Bishop arrived and ordered the church to be built here (in San Antonio)”<sup>174</sup>.

What Mamo Venancio relates is central to Kaggaba practices of resistance. Basically, he is saying the Kaggaba articulated the Saint used by the Catholic priests to establish church towns with the Law of Origin, embedded in ancestral territory. The mamos did that by using a gold figure (which they call the *Ñiuba Santo*, (the golden Saint), that is spiritually linked to the center of ancestral territory in the mountain of Gonawindua, and fabricating in its likeness, the Saint statue used to establish the first church town of San Antonio. They did not use the gold piece itself, but made a likeness of it, in “makana”, the hard wood used for the mamos staffs of power, into the statue of a Catholic saint used for the first founding the town of San Antonio.

The mamo who did this was called *Nunkubula Kuchakube*. Kuchakube is the name of a lineage of Mamos from the ezuamas of Kuamaka and Ableinzhi. The name Kuchakube, transformed into Kukutabe, or in Spanish “Cototame”, hence the origin of the Valley of Cototame around 1700. The saint was brought to Riohacha to be dressed as “*Santo San Abel Kukutabe Yucal*”, later to be called San Antonio “Yucal” as it appears in the Colonial documents from that time. The valley of Cototama was named for this lineage of the mamo *Kuchakube*, and was the name of that saint as the point of articulation between the Catholic church and the Kaggaba authorities.

The Mamos used this object, this saint, to establish San Antonio, with the “Bishop”, perhaps the same Bishop who started to establish church towns amongst the “aruaco” around 1700. For the Kaggaba this gold piece dressed as a saint, enabled the church town of San Antonio to be established based on same principles of reciprocity as the Law of Origin itself, and embedded in at the center of ancestral territory, its spiritual origin.

Mamo Juan Conchacala is another descendant of the Mamos who made the *Ñiuba Santo*, and is from that same lineage *Kuchanguma*, or Kukutabe. One day when he was visiting the Casa Indígena in Santa Marta, we asked him if he knew about Kukutabe, and the first Catholic churches. For the book *Shikwakala*. Mamo Juan talked about this to me and Arregoces Coronado during several hours, based on histories that he heard from elderly mamos when he was young.

When the mamos brought the *Ñiuba Santo* down from the ezuamas, to establish that town, the only Kaggaba authorities that existed were the Jukukwi of the Ezuamas. The mamos from all four ezuamas, Kuamaka, Ableinzhi, Makutama, Seizhua y Sekanzhi, worked together to found San Antonio, and sent their authorities down where they built a nujue right outside San Antonio. They wanted the town of San Antonio to be based on the same principles of the Ezuamas. The ancestral dances in the Ezuama are called *Kaldazhidue* to pay for the water, animals, forests and people. Those authorities established those same dances in the town of San Antonio. These dances were no longer based on native foods, but on the foods that the Spaniards ate, especially cattle, sugar cane, plantains and certain tubers. Those dances were also the patron saint dances, and the

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<sup>174</sup> Interview with *Mama* Venancio Moro, Julio 2015. OGT General Archive, Santa Marta for *Shikwakala*.

mamos used the Ñiuba Santo, as the Patron Saint. That saint did all the spiritual work for the good and water, just like the dances in the ezuamas.

After years of this, the Jukukwi, of San Antonio (the authorities who had come down from the Ezuama), died and were buried in San Antonio. The town started to get disorganized and then four Nañiba Caciques came up from Bonga to start another church town in Pueblo Viejo – Bunkuaneshaka. Just like Kamejuna, they didn't mind killing people, torturing them, and making them dig holes to find gold. They attempted to continue the violence of the encomiendas through imposing those church towns. This coincides with the descriptions that Bishop Monroy made of the encomiendas still taking advantage of the indigenous people in the Ramada up to the relatively late date of 1718, alongside the avarice of the encomenderos and their mayordomos. Just like the historical documents suggest, San Antonio was founded, abandoned and later re-founded with the Capuchinos, in 1726. In both the first and second founding, Saints the Kaggaba had manufactured, were strategies to displace the violence of the encomienda and the Nañiba from the Church towns.

San Antonio as the first church town enabled the Kaggaba to organize their communities around their own authorities based on the rules of the ezuamas. This process of church towns based on the authority of the Ezuama, and Kaggaba objects from the ezuama, as saints made in the likeness of the gold piece were an effective way to combat the domination of the Nañiba caciques. After San Antonio fell back into the hands of the Nañiba, the Kaggaba mamos made another saint, the Statue of San Pedro from the likeness of the Ñiuba Santo. With that saint they could establish towns again from the principles of the ezuamas, and it for creating church towns thereafter<sup>175</sup>.

It is no coincidence that the Kaggaba mamos used the principle of likeness, or sameness as a way to spiritually relate things. Foucault posits that generating knowledge as part of the Renaissance or 16<sup>th</sup> Century *episteme* is based on finding a sameness between all things, and with God. The interpreting of sameness to a hidden common origin restores the “unbroken plain of words and things” (Foucault 1994a, 40). A glimpse of those hidden interrelations invokes the power to reconfigure relationships between things. That is a power of healing, the power of magic.

### **3.4 San Pedro arrives in the Sierra Nevada: Resistance as Reciprocity and healing,**

- The Statue of San Pedro as the likeness of Gonawindua.

After that first establishment of San Antonio, perhaps around 1690, the Kaggaba mamos started to use a new Saint called San Pedro - “San Pizhu”, to set up the second founding of San Antonio, some 20 or 30 years later. Mamo Juan Conchacala says that San Pedro was replica of Santo Kukutabe meaning that it also originated in Gonawindua, the center of Kaggaba territory. Mamo Felix Coronado narrates the basic history of how the San Pedro established multiple church towns, along a route the Saint up to San Antonio. He also tells how Kaggaba mamos used the statue to defeat and take control of the Nañiba.

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<sup>175</sup> ¿ Mama Juan Conchacala, , April 2017. For book Shikwakala, General Archive, OGT, Santa Marta.

Mamo Felix, while narrating this history was consulting with his zhatukua. He said that the zhatukua confirmed the veracity and pertinence of the history he was telling, but that he could only tell a certain portion of it. I would have to come back another day and he would share the rest. Unfortunately, in the meantime, Mamo Felix fell sick from tuberculosis. His spiritual consultation and that of the other mamos in his nearby community of Tugueka indicated that he had no other option but to go down to seek treatment in the hospital in Santa Marta.

The doctors eventually put Mamo Felix into the intensive care unit, and hooked him up to a machine. It was December, his family had to go back up to the Sierra, and the other Kaggaba were up in the mountain too, so I visited him every day. Mamo Felix was a very unassuming and kind Mamo, and one of the most knowledgeable. He had worked with our Kaggaba ancestral territory group and narrated the names of at least a thousand plant species, knew almost all the birds and animals in his territory and could share innumerable hours of histories about the Kaggaba and their origin. I tried to explain that to the doctors but, it was in vain. Mamo Felix finally lost consciousness and passed away, returning his knowledge back to his territory.

Here, Mamo Felix presents his history, interspersed with my explanations, and related histories from other mamos. This weaves into a multilayered history of relationships with territory, articulation, and reciprocity with processes outside the Kaggaba communities, and resistance to domination, based on practices of reciprocity through the “Law of Origin”.

“I know that Sanpizhu was made by the Nañi in the Spanish place called Santana, far away. There was always a lot of competition for Sanpizhu and many problems related to this image. It is made of wood. They took Sanpizhu to Riohacha, where he stayed for a long time, then to Kamarona<sup>176</sup> due to the insistence of that town.

Then they took the Saint to Dibulla, because the dibulleros said it was also theirs. Then they took him to nañi Shungueka, and then to nañi Sesuzaka who also fought for the Saint, and said that he was theirs too. Then he arrived at Sungueka where the Nañiba Maku Suntashi lived below Padzitukua. Finally, they arrived at Makuzaka where they established the town of San Pedro. The ñañi said that the Saint would always remain there and that was the case for a long time. At some point, the Mamos put a gold piece inside the statue of San Pedro<sup>177</sup>.

To explain, Mamo Felix tells the story of how the Catholic church together with their Nañiba allies, use the image of San Pedro as part of a systematic effort to establish church towns in the Sierra Nevada. The statue of San Pedro makes a long journey starting from a distant town called Santa Ana where assumably the Catholic church fabricates it. The San Pedro continues its circuit through various Spanish towns including Riohacha, the Spanish mission town of Camarones and to Dibulla – la Ramada. In each place there is fierce competition amongst the local population, may they be indigenous or not, to appropriate the Saint probably because that Saint guaranteed the legitimacy of those towns and their relationship with the Catholic church. From Dibulla, San

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<sup>176</sup> Kamarona is town of Caramones, one of the first indigenous mission towns located on the coast near the Tapias River mouth where it still exists today, and sounds similar to Kamejuna,

<sup>177</sup> Interview with *Mama* Félix Coronado, July 2014. for the Book Shikwakala. These are all place names in Kaggaba territory where the Naniba founed church towns with the Saint.

Pedro continues its journey through Kaggaba territory up the Cañas river valley. It makes a number of stops where the Nañiba caciques fight to gain control of the saint and establish indigenous church towns, or at least chapels, none of which exist today. These are recognized sites in Kaggaba geography along the path from Dibulla to Pueblo Viejo (See map 3).

The Saint, with its priests finally arrived at the place called Mukzuzaka, a short walk from the indigenous town of Bonga. The priests in alliance with the Nañiba from Bonga with same statue, established a church town called San Pedro, that subsisted well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From there the priests gave mass, baptized and married the indigenous people, including the Kaggaba. Mamo Felix says that the Nañiba would tell the Kaggaba “that town is yours too”. But it really wasn’t. It was the Caciques from Bonga who managed the relationship with the priests. This happened after the first founding of San Antonio.

The Nañiba had plans to continue their trek with San Pedro and the priests, establishing towns further up the Sierra into the heart of the upper Kaggaba ezuamas. That was a serious threat for the Kaggaba. The Nañiba had already established a number of church towns in alliance with the catholic priests, such as Kwintemula and the encomiendas around Pueblo Viejo.

- Moments of healing - The Kaggaba retake Bonga and the Saint San Pedro.

The Kaggaba had to find a way out, and they did it, remitting to forms of articulation with the principles of origin. As they tell, what they did was based on healing, through transforming the assemblage of reciprocity that held them together with the Law of Origin and which also included the Nañiba but as a form of inverse reciprocity. With this strategy the Kaggaba turned the tables on the Nañiba, got hold of the Statue San Pedro and could found their own church towns.

The Nañiba were also Mamos. According to the Kaggaba, they used poporos. They were quite similar to the Kaggaba, given that they were from associated lineages. Through Spanish eyes they would all be seen as the “Indios de la Sierra” or “Aruacos” of the encomiendas. Like the Kaggaba, they based their work on the Law of Origin and used it to manage the forests, people and animals of the territory. However, they started to forget the principles of the Law of Origin, that it was based on maintaining the principles of life, and they would instead use it to get benefit for themselves through the application of violence. That was their demise.

Mamo Felix explained the problems that the Nañiba were causing to the Kaggaba and the ezuamas in terms of the Law of Origin-

For years, the Nañi from Bongá would go up to the Ezuamas of the Kaggaba seeking to bring down their Kuibi – apprentices, -to transform them into beans, to eat them. They brought the children from Ezuama and then burned them in the hearth and with the ashes they planted beans and corn. When the beans were harvested, the Nañiba sent them up to the parents and gave them those beans to eat. When a Kuiwbi began to learn, the Nañiba would send him down to do spiritual “payments” and instead would kill him so that the Ezuama could not gain strength. That is the origin of deception. In the same way, the settlers and other Nañi continue to deceive us and tell lies, to this day.

At that time, we Kággaba always would go down to a Ezuama called Kágueka, and from there we made many visits to San Pedro since it was nearby. With this Saint San Pedro, the Nañiba married the Kággaba, and baptized us. When they did these ceremonies, the Nañiba told us: “This Saint is yours, he belongs to the Kogui, so you have to make San Pedro stronger and take care of him,”, but in reality that is how the Nañiba plotted to destroy the Ezuamas.

From Bonga, the Nañiba caciques had been engaged in a protracted conflict with the Kaggaba even before the Church started to take hold in the Sierra Nevada. The Kaggaba, unwittingly would send young Kaggaba apprentice mamos, down to Bonga to be trained. The Nañiba would trick the apprentices, send them to the forest where they would be eaten by the spirits of the forest transformed into jaguars and snakes, or be sent back up in the form of beans. The Nañiba would also make flutes out of the bones of the Kwibi and send them back to the ezuamas where the Kaggaba mamos would unknowingly play them as music to strengthen the water and forests<sup>178</sup>. A case of reverse reciprocity.

Mamo Andresico, the head mamo of Bonga told us the sequel to Mamo Felix’s history. Alongside a group of about 20 Mamos and authorities, he had us sit on the still visible stone ring of a ruined “tayrona” terrace at the edge of Bonga, which were foundations for the principal Nañiba nujue. It had taken place some 300 years ago, and the histories of Kamejuna and Shimata as well. It took a good part of the afternoon to narrate, and it would take four nights to tell the whole thing. Here I only include certain parts of what Mamo Andresico shared that afternoon. The response of the Kaggaba mamos was based on healing, transforming the links of reciprocity<sup>179</sup>.

The Kaggaba Mamos, in response to the problems with the Nañiba, secretly trained several kwibi in the ezuamas to be able to learn to recognize and neutralize violence. Nañiba authorities went up to the ezuamas to seek out those Kwibi, to kill them, but they couldn’t find the last two. They learned how to speak Kogian, the language of the Nañiba, and how to relate with the sacred sites around Bonga so as to be able to appropriate the knowledge of the Nañiba. Once these Kwibi had grown up, the Mamos sent them down to Bonga and San Pedro. They were named Aldukshimawi y Ñuizhukasá.

In Bonga, the Nañiba sent the two kwibi off to the forest to collect firewood. Their real intention was to have them eaten by snakes and jaguars, as the mothers and fathers of the spiritual origins of nature. The brothers, while collecting firewood, encountered a cave, where some poisonous snakes almost bit them. They wanted to kill the brothers. But they transformed into women, the spiritual mothers of nature, and said,

“We were going to attack you but now we can't because we see that you don't want to do harm here, so we need to know why you came here’. Then the snakes

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<sup>178</sup> I have heard this general narrative of the bone flute, as the transformation of violence into life, shared amongst other indigenous peoples of the Americas in different contexts and versions.

<sup>179</sup> Interview Mamo Andresico, Bonga, 2013. For a month in 2014, The OGT team been working in Bonga, with its Kaggaba mamos and community. We been preparing an ancestral map of the many sacred sites that protect the water, forests, animals and families of the valley, all with long histories that the Mamos would relate. Mamo Andresico told us the stories of problems that the Kaggaba had had in this valley, included in book Shikwakala.

gave them a material, a “shala<sup>180</sup>” and made them confess everything they had learned since they were children until now, and in this way they confessed everything the Nañiba did to harm the Kaggaba in their ezuama. After confessing, the women replied, ‘We see now the many times we have hurt your people, and for so long you have been like our food. But now we can't hurt you because you have now paid your shala here, you are registered here. So, we have to repair these damages that we have done and we are going to give back in spirit to you all the damage that we have done. Then they began to confess all the damage they had done. When they finished, they said, we are the sewa, -we are the spiritual leaders for the Nañiba . But now we can't do that anymore, so we have to go up to the ezuamas with you.

This is a key moment of healing violence, paying back the debt of the damage done to the Law of Origin. In the form of that “shala”, the brothers returned their debt to the spiritual mother, in the form of their memory of how those caciques were hurting the ezuamas, how they were damaging the principle of the Law of Origin. That payment was a “gift” returning the damage to the principle of origin, healing it.

The snake mothers offered to go back up to the Ezuamas with the brothers to keep on healing and thus win over the Nañiba , but with one condition: “you have to think well, in the good of the mother. If you do that then we can go with you to the Ezuamas, but if your minds stray, we cannot go”.

The brothers complied with that requirement. The Nañiba had their daughters bathe with the brothers. By succumbing to temptation, the kwibi brothers would lose their relationship to the principles of origin, and only work from their own personal interest. They would enter into that entire chain of reverse debt and be overpowered. But they didn't do that.

That process of “healing” turned that assemblage of debt and violence on its head. The snakes now became the sewa, the ally, for the brothers, and the snakes turned against the Nañiba . “The women turned into snakes again and bit three Nañiba three times and left them dead”. “Their own sewa had turned against them”<sup>181</sup>.

After that the Nañiba made the brothers do a series of tests. They would have to do the spiritual work to get one or another “sewa”, the power of animals, or the spiritual mother of water of the forest. They were all traps, and the Nañiba thought the brothers would die when they coveted those sewa, those objects of spiritual power. But each time they complied with the Law of Origin, and so they received each sewa, each kind of knowledge.

The brothers returned to their ezuama with all those sacred objects, and with the spirit of the Law of Origin. “All the ezuama began to dance with the sewa, and that is how they learned what objects they had to use and in what places they had to go down to Bonga to pay for these debts. Aldukshimawi and Ñuizhukasá had learned the Law of Origin. That's how they won”. And with

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<sup>180</sup> Shala literally means to “pay”. It is a material that people use to pay their spiritual debt, of the damage they have done to the principles of life. This history is an example of healing, developed as Reverse debt and reciprocity Chapter 5.

<sup>181</sup>Interview with Mamo Andresico from Bonga, 2013; p.08. POMCA Rio Cañas.



that their story ended. Not only did they get the Nañiba 's sewa, they also got the Santo San Pedro Statue. And the Nañiba were vanquished.

Mamo Felix says It was not the Kaggaba who destroyed the Nañiba . It was the Nañiba 's own relationship to these principles of origin that elicited a response that defeated them. They had been using the Law of Origin to do damage, tricking the Kaggaba and the spirit in general. The mother, what I call here the assemblage of reciprocity had responded. The snakes, their spiritual mother, ended out biting and killing their masters the Nañiba. The very way that the Nañiba were using or applying these principles elicited the response that led to their own defeat. The Kaggaba by basing themselves on the principles of healthy growth, of the Law of Origin itself, obtained the powers of that Nañiba had applied backwards but now properly deployed as reciprocity with the spiritual origin of the life territory, with animals and plants. The Statue of San Pedro served the same purpose of maintaining those spiritual relationships of reciprocity between people and thing, including the Catholic church.

Mamo Andresico explains that over time, the Nañiba lost their identity. They started to intermarry with peasants, cattle ranching and moved lower down the mountain. The Mamo today view the Nañiba any people with those same attitudes, like colonists, drug traffickers, armed groups and others who come from the lowlands looking for personal benefit and trying to take advantage of the assemblage of the ezuamas, of territory linked to the origin of life, and most importantly, of the origin of life itself.

The deployment of the San Pedro Statue was only one facet of the continuous process of rearticulation of things and people with "the Law of Origin". There are many others. Cattle ranching is the last example I will mention here of elements in Mamo Felix's story that formed part of repositioning the Nañiba and the Spanish within these assemblages of reciprocity and territory and hence with themselves.

Around the time when the Kaggaba were fighting over the San Pedro, several Kaggaba mamos, most notably Mamo Kuldaldu from Ableinzhi learned the spiritual principles of how to manage cattle, what kind of spiritual payments needed to be given to the origin of cattle. The Kaggaba also had become familiar with cattle during their "Pick and Shovel" service in the encomenderos' farms. He went to Riohacha, bought some cattle, and brought them back to his ezuama<sup>182</sup>.

Mamo Kuldaldu had studied the Law of Origin, to include cattle in the assemblage of territory held together by reciprocity with the spirit, linked to the origin of territory. In a material sense, he learned to breed them, as an important source of food. The Kaggaba exchanged cattle with the Nañiba , who also started cattle ranching but not according to the laws of reciprocity with territory, another factor in their disappearance.

Since the Nañiba had been affecting the Kaggaba ezuamas for some time. To help repair that, Mamo Kuldaldu and others undertook a process of "spiritual recovery" or healing by renewing their capacity to organize themselves through the practice of the "Law of Origin", linked to the spirit of origin of life. This occurred around the time of Mamo Juan Pablo in the 1690s. It was

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<sup>182</sup> Later Mamo Bernardo Simungama, a descendant of Mamo Kuldaldu narrated a more complete version of this history on February 12 2016 in Santa Marta, for Shikwakala, which Antonio Coronado translated and complemented.

Mamo Juan Pablo who set up the young Kulaldu as an apprentice in a cave of the Ezuama of Ableinzhi. His training was to listen and be educated by the voice of the mother and not through any human intervention so he could embody that spirit. Kulaldu was able to reconnect the principles of lineages, animals, people, crops, natural grasslands, forests, water, and nature in general with these principles. This was taking place not only in Mamo Kulaldu's Ezuama, but in several others where the mamos had been working on these forms of reciprocity that they also expressed through the church towns and the figures of Kukutable and San Pedro.

In this way the Kaggaba were able to integrate the "negative" aspects of things, including Cattle, the Catholic church towns and the Nañiba themselves to fit, or not fit in, with the "order" of reciprocity between the territory, principles and its other elements. That same work unified, renewed and re-organized the lineages of Mamos and their practices. These multiple strategies of articulation with non Kaggaba elements form part of practices through which the Kaggaba mamos were able to consolidate and reposition themselves within changing Spanish disciplinary and economic assemblages that attempted to dominate the Kaggaba and extract wealth, vitality, from the principle of sharing, or reciprocity at the heart of the Law of Origin.

- San Pedro and the rebirth of the Kaggaba town of San Antonio.

The mamos from the ezuamas had "won" the San Pedro from the Nañiba in Bonga as part of this drawn-out process to assert the correct practices of care for Law of Origin. The Nañiba were not complying with the "Law of Origin" and effectively were displaced by their own inability to manage their territory in accordance with these forms of reciprocity. Creating debts with the Law of Origin, and their refusal to recognize them, elicited responses from nature that affected the Nañiba and finally led to their disappearance. They had participated in the Law of Origin, as an assemblage of reciprocity, but based on interest for money and violence. Meanwhile, the Kaggaba only had to be concerned with the proper application and embodiment of the Law of Origin, their relationship with territory and reciprocity with the principles of origin, but not by attacking the Nañiba, nor anyone else.

Through these spiritual "battles" the Kaggaba mamos explain that they also received control of both the town and the statue of San Pedro as the object through which they could establish a direct relationship with the process of establishing church towns. With San Pedro the Kaggaba Mamos reestablished San Antonio.

Mamo Felix's history of the journey of San Pedro, explains how this all came together, which would have taken place around 1720. The Capuchinos and Bishop Monroy were attempting to organize the administration of the indigenous communities under Catholic church as a systematic effort to reestablish the semi- abandoned towns of San Pedro and San Antonio. The second founding of San Antonio, now using the Saint San Pedro could have happened with the Bishop Monroy, or after 1726 when that town and the missions in the whole region, were transferred under the mission of the Capuchinos.

Once in the hands of the Kaggaba, the San Pedro starts to establish towns in Kaggaba areas near Pueblo Viejo. The lowland Caciques left the areas where they had been taking advantage of the Kaggaba for quite some time. Finally, it reestablishes San Antonio, now under the authority of the Kaggaba and later then church town of San Miguel. Most of all, the figure of San Pedro

enables the Ezuamas to continue accompanying the church towns, and not be displaced as was happening before the establishment of San Antonio.

“In San Antonio, the same Ezuamas who had won the Sanpizhu from the ñañi, said that it belonged to them because ‘that is why we did the work for the cattle’. It is there where the ezuamas created traditional “fiestas” including sacrificing and eating cattle. The communities related with San Miguel and San Antonio would all come down to participate in the festivities. Those who did not were those from the town of Santa Rosa since they had not participated in the battle for the Santo Sanpizhu. That Saint spent many years In San Antonio until Mama Kulaldu was almost about to die.

After they established the town of San Miguel they began to fight over the Saint Sanpizhu. I don't know how important a simple wooden saint was. But the people of San Miguel fought a lot with the people of San Antonio over who would get the Saint. Both towns said that the Saint belonged to them. In the middle of this fight, they took the Saint to San Miguel where he would stay a while and then the other town would abscond him back. Finally, the Saint ended up in the town San Miguel, and the church bell of San Pedro remained with the town of San Antonio”.

Mamo Felix asks the question: “why did the Kaggaba towns fight over who got the San Pedro, if it was only a simple wooden figure without any importance?”. The statue of San Pedro was not the same Saint Kukutabe first used to establish San Antonio, but it also played the same role of a replica of a Tayrona gold object connected to Gonawindua, as had the Kukutabe.

San Pedro operated for the Mamos as a means, or “sewa” through which they could spiritually organize their relationship with the Catholic church. The patron saint dances in the church towns, based on the principles of the dances in the ezuamas, enabled the Kaggaba to articulate with elements from outside their communities, to use and coexist and articulate them with the “Law of Origin” though the “codes” of spiritual exchange embodied in the work of the Ezuamas.

Most importantly, the Kaggaba were able to formally articulate themselves with the new regime of administering indigenous territories through the Catholic church. Acceding to that system, the Kaggaba extracted themselves from the chain of debt with of the Nañiba and the encomienda system. These were strategies that enabled survival in new contexts, and at the same time, strengthened Kaggaba relationships with territory and the principles of origin.

### **3.5 Kaggaba Church Towns: Ancestral authority melds with the Law of the Priest.**

The statue of San Pedro legitimized the establishment of “Pueblos de Indios” in Kaggaba territory. Forming part of a “Pueblo de Indios” and complying with the demands of the priests and other authorities enabled recognition of the Kaggaba as the King’s subjects. The indigenous peoples affiliated were protected under “Las Leyes de Protección de los Naturales” of 1542. That included fair and just treatment from the priests, reduced tributes, rights to the lands around the church towns and the prohibition for “Spaniards” to enter those lands, except the priests. The Catholic church justified their administration of the indigenous people based on upholding those rights, even though in practice they often did not. That was a significant break from the times of

the encomienda, given that the encomenderos rarely enforced those legal provisions for the indigenous people.

- The Staff of Authority. Kaggaba Resistance in the Church towns.

However, for the Kaggaba to gain access to these rights they had to participate and take positions within the assemblage of Catholic church towns, which had implications. Evidently the Catholic church still reproduced forms of domination and subjection to the King, as forms of violence inherited from the Spanish conquest. As late as 1808, the Kaggaba still had to pay a tribute of 4 pesos for each “indio tributario” in the census, to priests who now administered these tributes for the crown<sup>183</sup>. Most of these tributes still took the form of bags, hammocks and other goods.

The naming of indigenous authorities in the church town under the vigilance of the town priest was one of the requirements of the church towns. However, that was the responsibility of “Corregidor de los naturales”, or other civil authorities in the capital cities, not the church itself (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 105). The titles of these new indigenous authorities were “Alcaldes, fiscales, teniente and Mandador”. Cacique and Capitan still appeared as holdovers from the encomienda<sup>184</sup>, and mostly disappeared by the end of the colonial period<sup>185</sup>. They were responsible for ensuring the participation of the community in the church towns, having them pay tributes, participate in catholic indoctrination, maintain behavior ordained by the priest, get baptized married, and attend catechism.

When Bishop Monroy came to the Sierra Nevada to establish his church towns in 1722, he distributed staffs of authority with silver handles to name Captains who came down the mountains (Restrepo Tirado 1975, 340)<sup>186</sup>. These are the same sort of staffs with the two yarn balls on either side that Mamo Jacinto used for his photographs, and which many mamos still use today as a demonstration of their authority. In the OGT office, when I read that quote most of the Kaggaba on the team, reflected. “I knew it, those staffs come from the priests, from the police inspectors!!!, they used them to impose their Church authorities on us!!”. This became increasingly the case as time went on.

These staffs of authority were also objects hard won by Kaggaba authorities and which legitimized their role, rights and voice within the Spanish administration to defend themselves and their communities. As Mamo Juan Conchacala had pointed out, these new leaders were also linked to traditional roles of authority from the ezuamas. Through figures like Kukutabe or San Pedro the ezuamas had “won” the right to participate in running these towns through their own authorities to avoid the affectations generated by regimes of law and debt that did not recognize the indigenous people as subjects.

The participation of the Kaggaba in these church towns also had its risks. They were subject to the authority of the Priest and the mission. The same Kaggaba authorities had to enforce the

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<sup>183</sup> AGN. Indios de San Pedro y San Antonio de Cocotama: censo - CACIQUES\_INDIO,33,D.17. 1808. 12 folios.

<sup>184</sup> (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 106) citing “Sierra Nevada: declaración indios sobre tierras, doctrina 1750 SC.62,1,D.14, ANC”.

<sup>185</sup> Indios de San Pedro y San Antonio de Cocotama: censo, CACIQUES\_INDIO,33,D.17.

<sup>186</sup> Cited from “Carta de don Juan Beltran de Caicedo a SM de 10 de mayo de 1721 –Monroy went to San Antonio in 1721.

church town system amongst their own people, which had implications for the Law of Origin in numerous situations. For instance, disputes were often resolved in accordance with the indications of the priests and not through the consultations of the mamos.

We see signs of mistreatment. Priests continued to root out the mamos from their ezuamas and integrate them into the church towns. A census of 1795<sup>187</sup>, lists three “morros (Mamos) reducidos”: Luis, Mateo and Josef Maria Guadalupe Basabil<sup>188</sup>. A priest from Cototama named Rendon brought those three Mamos down from the mountains and baptized them with godfathers. He later hit the indigenous Captain with a stick and left a scar on his face after the Captain had informed Riohacha of these baptisms<sup>189</sup>. Other reports from the “Aruacos” of Atanquez, also allege frequent physical mistreatment by the church to the indigenous people in their doctrinaire towns (Morales Tomas 2011, 119).

As a requirement for having a church town, its indigenous people had to participate in Catholic rites. The children had to be baptized, and the couples married. The priests assigned them new Christianized surnames derived from the spelling of their lineages or the name of the Mamo being Baptized. Most census of San Pedro, San Antonio and San Miguel during the 18<sup>th</sup> century reflect those transformations in last names of the Kaggaba men, as the baptized versions the priests had phonetically adapted from Kaggaba lineages. These are basically the same as the present day Kaggaba people: Sauna, Coronado, Sarabata, Sundacama, Nuvita, Conchacala, Bacuna<sup>190</sup>.

Articulating with forms of Spanish administrative power including the church towns, was part of the game. Kaggaba authorities had to play sort of a double role in which they both defended their communities and at once subjected them to the onerous discipline of the priests. The Kaggaba and other indigenous people in the Sierra became adept using their position to obtain guarantees from the church town system, while having to bend to the will of the priests.

A few archive documents related to Cototame<sup>191</sup> describe indigenous practices of resistance in these church towns until the end of the colonial period. They give examples of how Kaggaba authorities intermingled processes of resistance and subjection, to strategically deploy their positions in the context of the Church towns.

One such situation dates from 1750, when the Governor of Santa Marta visited Riohacha to investigate allegations that the priests had been allowing Spanish merchants into the indigenous lands of Cototame, and were not attending their doctrinaire churches. The Governor summoned the indigenous authorities of Cototame from San Pedro, San Antonio de Yucal and San Miguel.

The Governor asked if the Priests were complying with their legal obligations to “administer justice, to commission instruction and indoctrination in the saintly Catholic faith, if they hear mass, and are administered the holy sacraments, if they pay more tribute than four pesos, if they

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<sup>187</sup> AGN. CACIQUES\_INDIO,46 \_INDIO,46,D.9 1794 – 1799. Folio 375 (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 106?).

<sup>188</sup> AGN. Indios de San Pedro y San Antonio de Cocotama: censo - CACIQUES\_INDIO,33,D.17. 1808. 12 folios.

<sup>189</sup> ANG. “Curato de Cototama: su abandono. CACIQUES\_INDIO,36,D.11, 1795. folios 25 y 26.

<sup>190</sup> Interview with *Mama* Juan Conchacala, Santa Rosa, Abril 2017, Shikwakala. For instance, the lineage of *Kululado* transformed in Spanish to Coronado, Kuchanguma into Conchacala, etc.

<sup>191</sup> Several of these documents have already been cited by anthropologists and historians. A closer rereading brings to light some aspects of how these church towns operated until the end of the Colonial period.

have enough fields for sowing and planting or if any Spaniards come to their towns to live in them and to make trouble and relationships”<sup>192</sup>. The indigenous authorities all assented that this was the case, the priests were complying. But they returned the next day to declare that their priest, Antonio Blanco was not usually present in the towns. The Governor issued a sentence against the priest and had him removed<sup>193</sup>.

Another scenario from 1794 occurs in the midst of the neighboring Guajira indigenous people’s armed revolt against the Spanish and their church towns. A group of 5 indigenous people from the Guajira had visited the Church towns of Cototama to convince the Kaggaba to participate. They told the Kaggaba that “they were really dumb to be paying tribute, attending doctrine and serving the priest as though they were slaves”, and they should not “obey the priest nor participate at all, and offered them their protection and support so they could become allies,<sup>194</sup> and destroy their own church towns.

Meanwhile the priest “Don Jose Gabriel Santaya” had been having problems subjecting the indigenous Capitan, “Don Joaquin Sundancama” to his orders and argued that “los indios resist coming to doctrine<sup>195</sup>”. He ordered the indigenous Captain to “obligate the indios to attend the doctrine, to comply with mass and to abandon the many wives each man had”.

The Captain refused, saying the Church disgusted him, and he would not subject his community to its rules unless they were willing<sup>196</sup>. With that, the captain surrendered his staff of authority to the Priest who in turn gave it to the lieutenant captain and ordered him to have the community comply with the catholic faith. However, the Priest did not have legal authorization to give that staff to anyone else. The indigenous captains could only be named by the Governor of Riohacha.

The captain went Riohacha and pressed charges against the Priest. The Governor concluded that Father Santaya with his rough and forceful treatment of the indigenous people had predisposed the Capitan to participate in Guajira indigenous rebellion. Santaya was declared as unfit, and replaced by another Father, Pablo Rendon. The authorities in Riohacha, unwilling to risk alienating the captain, reinstated his title even if that meant that neither he nor Father Rendon would overly force the communities to come to mass<sup>197</sup>. The indigenous people could mediate their relationships with their church towns to their advantage.

Participation in the Catholic church also helped to maintain a figure of indigenous territory in Cototama, keeping other Spaniards and non-indigenous people out. During the Guajira rebellion, Santaya feared for his life- He requested accompaniment of at least 12 families of Spanish settlers to go up to the Sierra, work the land and give a good example to the “Arguacos”. The head vicar in Riohacha responded that this would be impossible. Settlers going up Cototama would generate

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid. “Diligencias de visita a Cartagena, Santa Marta y Riohacha”. VISITAS-MAG SC.62,1, D14, folios 864-867.

<sup>193</sup> AGN. VISITAS-MAG SC.62,1, D 13 folios 855 – 863.

<sup>194</sup> ANG. “Curato de Cototama: su abandono. CACIQUES\_INDIOS,36,D.11, 1795 Folio 440, 448. Uribe (1990, 108).

<sup>195</sup> ANG. “Curato de Cototama: su abandono. CACIQUES\_INDIOS,36,D.11, 1795. folio 474.

<sup>196</sup> ANG. “Curato de Cototama: su abandono. CACIQUES\_INDIOS,36,D.11, 1795. folios 25 y 26.

<sup>197</sup> Apparently this was common practice. Indigenous Capitans in Valledupar also denounce mistreatment by the church around this same time (Morales Tomas 2011, 119).

distrust and suspicion amongst the “Arguacos”, who would offer no resistance, but would disappear into the mountains, abandon their towns and never become civilized<sup>198</sup>.

In 1789 another priest proposed that the Church towns of Cototame should be relocated to the base of the mountain (Reichel Dolmatoff 1951, 111)<sup>199</sup>. He argued that the “Arguacos” in Cototama were difficult to indoctrinate and needed a “new Conquest”. They were still “savages”, and kept their “moros” in the high mountains. It would be much easier for the priests to indoctrinate the “Arguacos” in the lower lands. He proposes that a Capuchin Friar and four soldiers would be enough root them all out of the mountains. That request was denied on the argument that indigenous towns may not be transferred to other climates, which would be a violation of “Las Leyes de Proteccion de los Naturales”. The “Arguacos” needed to farm their own lands and be buried alongside the bones of their ancestors.

In practice, Cototame was not that isolated from the rest of the Province, with considerable movement of Spaniards. The documents surrounding the Guajira rebellion incident mention numerous Spaniards in Cototama, including soldiers, traders, and even family members and assistants who accompanied the priest. Both Spanish merchants and “indios de Santa Marta”, would travel around the territory of the “parish” selling pots, axes, machetes and other supplies and maintaining friendly relations with the Arguacos<sup>200</sup>. However, apparently they did not maintain a permanent presence.

The Kaggaba could also avoid paying tribute and the obligation to maintain their priest if they were not in agreement. In 1799 the priest in Cototame, again complained that the Arguacos were not contributing to maintaining the church. In spite of the fact that they had plenty of cattle and chickens they lived far away from the town and did not support him at all. The bags and hammocks he got for tribute were of bad quality and difficult to sell, so he required a better stipend from the church<sup>201</sup>.

The at least 100 years of efforts to indoctrinate the indigenous people in Cototame had apparently not been very successful. According to the testimonies of most priests who were assigned to Cototame, the “Arguacos” never really committed themselves to the Catholic faith. Even by 1799 the priests complain that the indigenous people in Cototame have kept their “natural customs”, resist indoctrination, still have not learned to attend mass, keep their mamons in caves without baptizing them and have several wives. The indigenous people still maintained much of their “Antigua Libertad e independenciam”. The priests blamed themselves for not having sufficient presence in Cototame to have properly indoctrinated the indigenous population. The Kaggaba maintained their ezuamas, and their moros in caves in contact with the “Law of Origin”.

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<sup>198</sup> AGN. Indios de Cocotama: destitución de su Capitán. - CACIQUES\_INDIO,46,D.10. 1794 – 1800. Folio 354,

<sup>199</sup> AGN. “Indios de Cototama: su traslado, para la catequización”. CACIQUES\_INDIO,39,D.5. 1787. cited by Riechel Dolmatoff. Indios de Cocotama. Petición de fray Diego Garcia, sobre la conveniencia de trasladarlos al pueblo de las Sabanas del Volador, para su catequización. Año: 1787. Fondo: Caciques e Indios. T. XXXIX, fol. 169-190. (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 106) , “Indios de Cototama: su traslado, para la catequización. 1787 1799 CACIQUES\_INDIO,39,D.5 en ANC”.

<sup>200</sup> CACIQUES\_INDIO,46 \_INDIO,46,D.9 1794 – 1799. Folios 369 – 370

<sup>201</sup>AGN. CACIQUES\_INDIO,46 \_INDIO,46,D.10 1794 – 1799. Folios 369 – 370.

From the few documents available about the Cototama region, it would seem that the strategy developed by the Mamos in the ezuamas to win the San Pedro had been effective as a practice of resistance. Being linked to the church had many legal and procedural advantages. The Kaggaba were not willing to abandon these alliances and to adopt the warlike strategy of the Guajiro.

It all came at a cost, as we will see in the next Chapter. The practices of resistance and the forms of domination entwined together until over time, it became difficult for a few Kaggaba to say that belonging to a church town was even a practice of resistance at all. A few Kaggaba did engage with the church, learned mass, and their authorities ended out abusing their own mamos and communities. Nonetheless, alliances with the Church helped the Kaggaba continue their practices of the Law of Origin and maintain their ezuamas.

### **3.6 Conclusions: Catholic church towns and Kaggaba strategies of resistance.**

In the church towns the indigenous authorities and the priests are held together by multilevel relationships of reciprocity. The San Pedro Statue, like the Kukutabe gold piece, bring together forms of oppression with forms of healing. One is irreducibly entwined with the other. The Kaggaba authorities in the church towns recognize the violence in the moments of accepting the authority of the church, as something that also legitimates the very Law of Origin, and the work of the ezuamas. The Mamos had to recognize that violence to transform it, transcending Aulagnier's (2001) original moment of "inscription" of the self as both the oppression of the mother, and the creation of life.

At the heart of the Church town is the figure of the San Pedro, the same likeness as territory itself that articulates the church with elements of the Law of Origin. The San Pedro receives the spiritual gifts associated with using elements adopted from the Spanish in the assemblage, cattle, food, and gives them back to that assemblage in spiritual form. The San Pedro facilitates practices reciprocity as moments of healing, of returning the recognition of damage and affectations the church generates over the indigenous people.

Those same practices of healing emerge in the story of the two Mamo's apprentices who come to heal the Law of Origin with the Nañiba in Bonga, in the form of giving back "Shala", spiritual debt. The mother snake advises the brothers, that I will work with you as long as your interest is in caring for the Law of Origin itself. With that, the Kaggaba turn a system of reciprocity based on domination and violence on its head. The Kukutabe and later the San Pedro articulates the Spanish assemblages of inverse debt with the law or origin, enabling them to form part of the same assemblage. This is one of the fundamental strategies of Kaggaba forms of resistance to violence. The Kaggaba were able to articulate with the Catholic church precisely because the Church at some level did recognize the legitimacy of the indigenous subject.

Especially during the early implementation of the church towns in the context of the encomienda, around 1690, the Spanish went on crusades to destroy the indigenous "sanctuaries" or Kaggaba ezuamas and bring the mamos and caciques down from the Sierra to those new church towns. In the case of the Kankuamos, these were all out military assaults, imposing the Catholic church, and eliminating the caciques.



The Spanish applied the church town as a form of administration, discipline and vigilance of the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada. It was a spatial and ideological tool for the creation of indigenous “subjects: of the crown”, their evangelization, and collection of tribute as subjection or the debt linking them to the violence of the conquest. Participation in the church towns offered recognition and rights for indigenous people and significant advantages to coexist with colonial apparatus of domination. Around the end of the colonial period, many indigenous authorities became well versed in demanding compliance of their rights before public authorities in Riohacha and Santa Marta (Saether 2005, 15).

The introduction of the Catholic church towns came very late in the colonial period to the indigenous people in the Sierra as an instrument of Spanish domination and control of population and territory. While the Spanish established the first church towns near Santa Marta well before 1599, it was only around 1700 that the Crown made systematic attempt to insert church towns in the Sierra. Their late introduction responded to the capacity of the encomienda system to subsist on the territorial peripheries of Spanish power through assemblages of domination and violence, dependent on the wealth produced by the Law of Origin.

As a result, during time of the encomienda, the Kaggaba were able to maintain their ezuamas, and “natural” uses of territory. It is quite clear that these Kaggaba ezuamas are the same pueblos that existed during the encomienda and before. The priests alongside the indigenous authorities from the church towns still abused many mamos, extracting them from their ezuamas and subjecting them to harsh punishment.

However, the church town never functioned as the Spanish wanted it to. The indigenous people lived in their “disperse” ways, in their farms and ezuamas, and never really accepted the catholic religion. The Catholic priests from Cototama complain that while most Kaggaba were formally baptized and married, the Kaggaba did not become integrated into the Church system and still maintained their ancestral practices and relationships with territory. The Kaggaba resisted evangelization.

#### **4.0 Invasions of Kaggaba Territory: Simon Bolivar, Police Inspectors and Settlers. 1820 – 1980.**

After the War of Independence from Spain in 1820, the situation for the indigenous peoples in the Sierra Nevada drastically changed. The Colonial laws of Protection of the Naturals alongside the Spanish priests who enforced them disappeared. Without these alliances for protection, the underlying problems of domination and violence in the context of Kaggaba territory still latent from the encomienda start to resurface during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The incipient nation of Colombia made no effort to maintain or replace the Spanish laws of the protection of indigenous people. To the contrary, these new forms of nation building were focused on dissolving indigenous communities and categories of identity into the modern nation. The end of the colonial period also marked the end of the Catholic church town that defended at least some indigenous rights.

Many Kaggaba talk about “los inspectores de Policía”, -the police inspectors- who appeared alongside waves of settlers from Dibulla after the 1820s. These new forms of domination were later to become responsible for years of terror and systematic oppression of the Kaggaba and the invasion of many parts of Kaggaba territory, until the 1990s. The Kaggaba have emphasized those problems as the being the most serious forms of domination they had faced (CIT 2011).

However, neither the Kaggaba nor myself had any clear idea of how or when these Police Inspectors came to the Sierra nor their entangled relationship with the Catholic church, and colonists from Dibulla. This made it more difficult to identify the sources of these “affectations” and for the Kaggaba to be able to “repair” the lasting effects of these problems at both the “spiritual” and “material” levels. When the OGT team started to write the Shikwakala book around 2015, the Kaggaba wanted to get better grasp on the origin and processes that revolved around those affectations of the times of the “Police Inspector”<sup>202</sup>.

This Chapter first summarizes key processes of this transition from Colonial to more modern state-based regimes of power in Colombia and as they transpired in the Sierra Nevada. Then it focuses on how the Kaggaba deployed strategies of transformation of violence to address these new forms of domination. The Chapter describes forms of colonization and the privatization of Kaggaba territory, and the abuse and violence from police inspectors, priests, colonists, and merchants that went along with it. The Kaggaba also of how they maintained their identity as an indigenous people linked to Law of Origin.

#### **4.1 The new model of nation: Simon Bolivar and the civilization of the Indigenous people.**

- Simon Bolivar: Indigenous Liberation from Spanish Dominion.

The importance of Simon Bolivar for the indigenous people of the Sierra came into focus for me during a trip to Pueblo Viejo with a Kaggaba friend, Francisco Zarabata. The Kaggaba Governor of that time, Juan Mamatacan had sent me up with Francisco to plan our first European Union

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<sup>202</sup> Some authors, especially Carlos Uribe tracing the advent of the incipient Colombian nation in the Sierra Nevada in relation to the Kaggaba (C. Uribe Tobón 1990), (1993), (1997).

project<sup>203</sup>. We were there to hold a meeting with the Kaggaba community and authorities from Pueblo Viejo and the Mamos from the nearby Ezuama of Mamalua.

The meeting consisted of several days of consultations between the mamos to decide how to recover the native foods and lands of Mamalua. The meeting took place on a “geka”, a sacred site that the mamos had selected for the meeting and their spiritual consultations near Pueblo Viejo. One day they looked over at me, and told me one of the results of their consultations: “Peter, the zhatukua has just said that you are Simon Bolivar. You have come here to help fight for the indigenous peoples, to help protect our lands. Simon Bolivar did that; he was our great protector and liberator. He went up to the Sierra Nevada and met with us the mamos. We helped him to win the war!”.

It was true that both Simon Bolivar and myself share the same birthday although distant by some 200 years. It is also true that I had come to work with the Kaggaba not only to write a dissertation, but to contribute to the indigenous defense of territory and community. I also shared their concern that the Ezuama of Mamalua had lost its dancing masks to colonists who had pushed its mamos out many generations ago, but I didn’t really understand why I was Simon Bolivar.

Like the that day when Kaggaba, affirmed my possible Simon Bolivar genealogy, many indigenous people around Colombia envision Bolivar as their liberator from Spanish domination. Upon returning to Santa Marta, I looked in histories on Simon Bolivar, but could find nothing to confirm that he had actually met with the indigenous people there or even gone up to the Sierra at all<sup>204</sup>. Maybe those meetings happened secretly and Simon Bolivar and the Kaggaba Mamos did form some sort of an alliance

However, as I read on, at least in the Sierra Nevada the idea that Bolivar was a savior of the indigenous people turned out to be mere illusion. The new vision of nation that Bolivar and the other “Liberators” espoused and the policies they later implemented resulted as not advantageous at all for the indigenous peoples in the Sierra Nevada. Quite to the contrary, these policies and the “Liberators” themselves attempted to integrate the indigenous people and their lands into the economic and social life of the new Republic. The category of “indio” was now considered part of the antiquated ballast of Spanish colonial oppression.

Sensing that they were going to lose their lands and rights to exist, during and shortly before the “Revolution” many indigenous people around the Sierra became firm allies with the Spanish and fought alongside them in military operations against Simon Bolivar<sup>205</sup>. This was the case amongst the indigenous church towns around Santa Marta, like Gaira, Mamatoco and Cienaga. Many indigenous authorities and caciques had received recognition and status within the late Spanish colonial regime and had developed strategies to maintain themselves as indigenous communities, as was also the case of the Kaggaba in the Sierra Nevada. “Until the end of the

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<sup>203</sup> January 2007.

<sup>204</sup>See for instance, (Bushnell 1970).

<sup>205</sup> Indigenous peoples like those from the Guajira who had been at war with the Spanish and did not consistently participate in colonial institutions like the “pueblos de indios” tended to support Simon Bolivar and the Wars of Independence.

Spanish regime...[the] descendants of the pre-Hispanic indigenous population maintained certain and important legal and political privileges” (Saether 2008, 8).

In 1750s the Spanish administration started to grant titles of Colonial Resguardo to the lands around some indigenous church towns, including those of Mamatoco, Gaira and Cienaga. But it was to little avail. The local elites of Santa Marta had already been displacing the indigenous people from their protected lands around the church towns and transforming them into haciendas. Such was the case of sugarcane haciendas like “Hacienda San Pedro de Alejandrino”, on the lands of the indigenous church town of Mamatoco, on the outskirts of Santa Marta, where Bolivar passed his last days. The owners of those haciendas, being the wealthy political elite of Santa Marta were also the people responsible for implementing kings orders for the creation of the Resguardos, which they ignored (Luna 1993), (Sánchez Mejía 2012), (Sánchez Mejía 2016).

By about 1850 the indigenous “Pueblos” had mostly disappeared into the general population of Santa Marta (Saether 2008). The situation for the indigenous church towns, at least those of the Kaggaba, in the Sierra Nevada was different. Apparently, they were never assigned any Colonial Resguardos, but they were able to defend the lands and communities they had gained recognition for during the colonial period.

- Simon Bolivar: dreams of a modern nation state and “Civilized” indigenous people.

Simon Bolivar, and the other “Patriots” of the Wars of Independence, dreamed of a nation state that would radically break the chains of debt and domination that tied them to the feudal colonial system and the Spanish Conquest. It would be a nation in which its “Peoples would emulate the paths of civilized civilizations based on the ideas of nation, patria, progress and development (Delgado Santos 2012, 34)”.

These new liberal policies would “modernize” the economy, generating categories of citizenship, territory and practices enabling Colombia to participate in international capitalist markets (Bushnell 1996). The “population” was now considered as made up of citizens all with equal rights and responsibilities. Colonial categories of identity, based on categories of race and cast, (Saether 2012, 19, 224), were seen as impediments to participation in the nation and the incipient international capitalist market economies of that time. The indigenous people would need to be assimilated into this vision of the modern state, and freed from their state of “ignorancia y la barbarie (Solano 2011, 29)”.

Simon Bolivar and other “Liberators” quickly initiated processes to dissolve the colonial mechanisms of protection for the indigenous people, including the Resguardos and the Laws for the Protection of the “Naturales” (Mejia Velilla 1995, 45). This transformed colonial categories of territory, especially indigenous territory into private property, as part of the liberal model of nation based on economic production (Vásquez, 1955, p. 258) and the social production of space and territory in response to the new export economy (Nichols 1973). Territory is inserted into the logics and classifications of natural history, and wealth, as available for transformation and manipulation (Raffles 2002, 116-8). This created a rupture with the colonial notion of indigenous territory as collective, converting land and natural resources into private property now oriented towards the production of monetary wealth.

The Sierra Nevada became the object of numerous scientific expeditions, as the stage to implement projects for colonization, agricultural colonies, roads, mining and timber production

(Viloria de la Hoz 2005). While most of these expeditions mentioned the indigenous people, they were not considered as people with the potential to produce wealth, as they were during the period of the *encomienda* (Machado 2009, 51).

#### 4.2 Visions of modernity arrive to the Sierra Nevada and “San Antonio”.

The incipient Republic of Colombia, and its subsequent forms of Nation did their best to fit the Sierra Nevada into this new vision of nation and modernity<sup>206</sup>. These transformations flow through The Kaggaba Colonial Church towns like San Antonio where the indigenous people develop and specific forms and strategies of resistance, with far reaching implications. As Nestor Canclini reminds us (1990) modernity is always incomplete, hybridized modernity expressed with local traditions, but not because of that is it not modern. The social economic and cultural realms of the colonial period traced a marked continuity into the post-independence *criollo* realities in the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta (Saether 2008, 29).

Likewise, in the Sierra Nevada these visions of modernity came to life in ways quite different from what their proponents had imagined, as articulated with other practices emerging from the buried layers of history and events from the colonial period of domination and resistance. After the War of Independence, the new nation starts to apply an assemblage of policies for the integration of and total disappearance of indigenous people into the general population.

##### 4.2.1 The formula for “Civilization” in the Sierra Nevada: Church towns, Civil authorities, schools and missions.

Here we briefly lay out the institutional processes through which the State attempted to implement the dissolution of indigenous peoples and their lands during this period, that flow through San Antonio and Kaggaba territory, redeployed and re-articulated as practices of resistance embedded in indigenous practices of reciprocity and transformation.

The “**Police Inspector**” is the public authority that the Kaggaba mention as one of the principal sources of violence and affectations against the them during almost the entire the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Kaggaba are not very clear about the origin of the Police Inspector and the wider institutional contexts this figure formed part of<sup>207</sup>. It was part of a wider institutional assemblage oriented towards integrating the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada with the rest of the nation, and formed the backdrop to contexts of violence exercised against the Kaggaba, throughout San Antonio and other territories of the Sierra Nevada during most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was based on an assemblage of public policies directed towards the transformation of land, identity and practices of citizenship.

This set of policies was implemented through the preexisting colonial church towns, just as the “Police Inspector” was a point of articulation between the state and the indigenous people. This

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<sup>206</sup> See summaries of this period in the Sierra Nevada for instance (C. Uribe Tobón 1990),

<sup>207</sup> Many books or articles on the Kaggaba mention the police inspector as the civil authority in charge of the Kaggaba during most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but for the most part simply take for granted this presence in the Sierra.

new version of the church towns in the Sierra Nevada combined schools– to reeducate the indigenous people as citizens, missions – to evangelize them, and a commissary or police inspector – to reassign their lands to colonists and maintain the general order.

Right after Independence, the new Republic proposed the establishment of towns which would function as “reductions” for the integration of Colonists and the indigenous communities. In the Sierra Nevada these towns were the same “Pueblos con iglesia” in existence since the 1700s, now called “parroquias de indios” (Vélez 1891, 39) and later “Colonias Agrícolas” – Agricultural Colonies. As “a small concourse of the civilization of the ‘indios’ (Lanao Loaisa 1915, 25)” in these towns the indigenous people would now have to live together with settlers and colonists as a method to “civilize” and integrate with the rest of society. They were also aware that such contact often “had caused serious harm to these (the indigenous people), because in many cases it made them victims of the cunning and even evil of their guests (Vélez 1891, 39)”, and named “protectores” to ostensibly avoid those dangers. The “Colonias Agrícolas” were a central part of the policies for the integration of the indigenous people, promoted for most of the XIX century.

During the first couple of decades of the Republic of Colombia, the Sierra Nevada remained somewhat isolated from these policies of integration. Apparently, these new ideals of “civilization” did not have much effect amongst the Kaggaba nor the other indigenous peoples in the Sierra. Abandoned after the Colonial period, around 1846 almost all the indigenous churches in the Sierra were still shuttered with the exception of Atánquez (Morales Tomas 2011, 144). Even in the year 1855 the church of the Kaggaba town of San Antonio was “in ruins” with only the presence of government officials (Reclus 1992, 220).

The model for integration started to be implemented in the Sierra Nevada, with norms all calling for the reduction of “those savage tribes” by placing them alongside the “civilized” population (Pérez 1883, 323)”. The first generalized administrative apparatus for that was implemented around 1870 as “Territorios Nacionales”. It directly empowered the national level government to administer these regional processes of transformation of territory and population. In the Sierra Nevada it was “los Territorios de la Nebada y los Motilones” (Delgado Santos 2012, 39) with the same limits as the old districts of San Antonio, San Miguel, Marocase, Rosario, Atanqués y San Sebastián de Rábago (Estado Soberano del Magdalena 1871, 104)”<sup>208</sup>.

These towns now would include a public school as an essential medium for converting “common people” into citizens of the new nation, including the cities and towns around the Sierra Nevada (Saether 2012, 226) <sup>209</sup>. In the Sierra Nevada, “Primary schooling was considered as the most effective means to achieve the reduction of the indigenous people to a civilized life and thus their integration, and transformation into citizens and churchgoers” (Delgado Santos 2012, 44).

By 1870 with the creation of the national “territories”, we find the first references to schools in the principal “church towns” of San Antonio and San Miguel, and in Atanquez (Morales Tomas

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<sup>208</sup>: “Cediendo al Gobierno Nacional los Territorios de la Nebada y Motilones”. Ley 148 de 24 de marzo de 1871 y fomento de la inmigración extranjera (Estado Soberano del Magdalena 1871, 104, 109) .

<sup>209</sup> citing (Bushnell 1996, 224) and (Delgado Santos 2012, 384).

and Pumarejo Hinojosa 2003, 95) (Pérez 1883, 359)". Apparently, many indigenous children learned to read and write (Simons 1881, 711).

The "Mision Guajira" was also established in 1867, to include a priest in each church town of the Sierra Nevada. Priest Rafael Celedón who managed it until approximately 1880, was one of the most mentioned clergy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Sierra. He wrote a book on his experiences in the Sierra, and a Grammar of the "Kaggaba" language. Celedón brought two youths from the ezuamas down to Santa Marta. They returned to the Sierra trained in the catholic religion and to work as teachers<sup>210</sup>, but finally reintegrated into their communities.

After the War of Independence, the indigenous people were no longer legally classified as "Indios" but as "Savages". The law 89 of 1890, further clarified that not only were indigenous people "savages" but children without the same legal rights of the remainder of Colombian citizens. That Law entrusted officially entrusted civil, penal and judicial control, education, discipline, land and every aspect of the "civilization", of the indigenous people (Bosa Bastien 2015, 9-11)<sup>211</sup> to various orders of Catholic missionaries.

In 1905 the Capuchinos officially assumed the direction of the entire Sierra Nevada, as the "Vicariato de La Guajira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones" Over the next 50 years the Capuchinos set up and ran an extensive network of orphanages around the Guajira and the Sierra Nevada<sup>212</sup>, including la Sierrita (Rosario in Wiwa territory) and Nabusimake (in Arhuaco territory), with mission houses in Atanquez (Cordoba Restrepo 2012, 130)<sup>213</sup>.

Their missions and orphanages were especially onerous. They put the indigenous people to work on harvesting crops and animal husbandry. They separated families, forbade parents to see their children in the orphanages, prohibited speaking the native languages, forcibly mixed and married different peoples, controlled access to land based on obedience to the church, and meted out harsh punishments. That was the norm for the Capuchinos all around the country.

The Capuchino missions were also a business to stimulate and modernize the nation. They generated profits by appropriating indigenous lands, and labor, building roads and commercial enterprises all on the back of cheap indigenous labor (Daniel Bonilla 1968). The Capuchinos dreamed of bringing progress and developing the lands of the Sierra Nevada "with each indigenous person baptized" (J. P. Romero 1891, 42), (Real Gandía del 1912, 68-78).

By some accounts, the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada were wary of the Capuchinos (Lanao Loaisa 1915, 21-22). Perhaps because of that, the Capuchinos could never establish a permanent presence in Kaggaba territory on the north slope of the Sierra Nevada (Lanao Loaisa 1915, 22), They only made visits to the Kaggaba church towns to give mass, baptize and marry. (Morales Tomas 2011, 109). Preuss also mentions that the Capuchinos kept a house in Dibulla

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<sup>210</sup> José de los Santos Sauna from the ezuamas of Makotama and Seizhua, and Trinidad Noavita from Palomino.

<sup>211</sup> See also (Morales Tomas 2011, 84) and (Valencia de 1924, 102)

<sup>212</sup> They published extensive descriptions of their activities, for instance (Misiones de la Goagira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones 1891).

<sup>213</sup> From 1914 to 1925 the Nuns of the Order of the Hermanas Laura accompanied the Capuchinos in their missionary work. Apparently were very domineering, subjugated and mistreated women to the point that the Laura Sisters packed up and left. A group of Franciscan Nuns, apparently more submissive to the Capuchinos, stayed on (Cordoba Restrepo 2012, 130).

around 1914 but apparently, they didn't go up to this area of the Sierra so often (Pruess 1993, V1, 32).

#### 4.2.2 "Agricultural colonies", the Police Inspector and the dissolution of the Resguardos.

The first sign of any actual presence government authority in San Antonio was that of the "Comisario"<sup>214</sup>. In the year 1870 as part of the creation of "*los Territorios de la Nebada y los Motilones*", a Commissary was directly stationed in each of the principal indigenous towns or seats of "*los Territorios de la Nebada*", in San Antonio, Atanquez and apparently Nabusimake<sup>215</sup>. The Comisario was the functionary responsible for implementing State policies for the integration of the indigenous people into "civilization" and maintaining order in the agricultural colonies.

The church towns were now called "reducciones" or Colonias as system directly implemented in Kaggaba areas for the integration of the indigenous people. Effectively in San Antonio by 1876 there was a "Government house" for the "dispatch of the corregidor" (Celedón 1886, v, xii). The functions<sup>216</sup> of the Commissioner- *comisario* were:

"In each reduction there would be a government commissioner in charge of maintaining order there. The commissioner, the school teacher, a missionary and a representative of the indigenous people included in the Corregimiento, would form a subordinate Board of the general one (article 7).

The Commissioners were in charge of allocating vacant lands -*Baldios*- to the new settlers and the indigenous people in accordance with the opinions of the General Board of the Corregimiento and in accordance with legal provisions.

The Commissioner and the missionaries would be Protectors of the indigenous people in their relations with the civilized people, with the aim of preventing the Indians from being deprived of the lands in which they were established under any pretext; that intoxicating drinks were not sold to them; that, by means of violence or cunning, the products of their industries would be taken at a lower value than that established in the free market; and that acts of violence against the people or property of indigenous people went unpunished (Vélez 1891, 47)".

The commissary had to implement the principal elements of the policy of integration of indigenes territories and people within the nation being: their reduction in an "agricultural colony". through missionization, school education, and supervising the colonization and privatization of indigenous territory, especially charge with issuing land titles to settlers and indigenous families.

The job included protecting the indigenous people from unfair commercial relations and abuse from the settlers, and having the indigenous contribute to the general upkeep of the

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<sup>214</sup> During 1855 the French traveler, Reclus found that the only authority in San Antonio was the "Cacique" of the pueblo named "Pan de Leche". He had a capped staff of authority, like the authorities from the Colonial Church towns. (Reclus 1992, 221-2). Apparently, there were no "Commissaries" in San Antonio before 1870.

<sup>215</sup> The Comisario of San Antonio administered a territory including the indigenous and settler communities affiliated with San Antonio, principally San Miguel, and after 1870, Santa Rosa, Taminaka, and San Francisco. Pueblo Viejo was a center for settlers.

<sup>216</sup> "Ley 66 de 1874 del 1 Julio "sobre reducción y civilización de indígenas" en su Artículo 6.°



Corregimiento, without talking advantage of them. In practice we do not see the Commissary defending the indigenous people. To the contrary, travelers to the Sierra noted that at least in the Commissary of Atanquez “The only interest is in regard to the exploitation of the indigenous people, but not in regard to their education (Sievers 1887, 140, 227)”.

1891 when the Capuchinos took over the Sierra Nevada, they tried to eliminate the position of “Comisario” and substitute it for their own “Custodia” of the Capuchinos<sup>217</sup>. They thought it was not a good idea to have a “Civilized” authority named as commissary<sup>218</sup>. Apparently however, the role of the commissary subsisted alongside the Capuchinos and transformed into the Police Inspector around 1890. By 1915 the common term was Police inspector<sup>219</sup>. By 1914 for instance, Preuss talks of the “Inspector” as the sole government agent in San Antonio, and who spends the most time there and travelling around the other Kaggaba towns.

The Capuchinos were never permanently present in San Antonio. The Police Inspector was basically left on his own to manage the affairs of the indigenous people according to his whim. According to the Kaggaba, the police inspector had basically the same functions as those of the commissary, especially the assignation of land rights (Machado 2009, 140)<sup>220</sup>. Thereafter it was the Police inspector who named the authorities in the Kaggaba towns. These authorities would respond directly to his orders and did not necessarily have to be respected members of the Kaggaba community. They were also called “Comisarios or Alcaldes, Cabos and Suplentes”, as the Kaggaba still call them today. In practice, the activities of the Police inspector were a mixture of the national integration policies from the 1870s, the authority of the mostly absent Capuchinos, and practices of debt and violence still subsisting from the encomienda, but now with the face of the “Police Inspector”. This apparatus kept on functioning until 1980s when the Resguardo Kogui Malayo Arhuaco was declared.

#### 4.2.3 The privatization of Indigenous Territory.

After the Independence the indigenous people at least in a legal sense, had lost their rights to their territories as communal property or use. The integration of indigenous lands into the market economies and their colonization was the centerpiece of policies for modernization. Shortly after the Independence, Simon Bolivar and other “Liberators” passed legislation for the dissolution of all informally recognized indigenous communal lands around their church towns, and Resguardos. The Government declared most unoccupied and indigenous lands in the nation as baldíos<sup>221</sup> to free them from colonial land structures (Machado 2009, 48, 61).

The indigenous people had the right to receive land parcels from their divided up Resguardos. and then later could sell them off, further dissolving the old Resguardos. The rest of indigenous territory, in the case of the Kaggaba, the forests, mountains and in general their ancestral territory, was no longer protected and could be assigned to anyone (Vélez 1891, 43-5). To obtain

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<sup>217</sup> (Misiones de la Goagira, Sierra Nevada y Motilonos 1891, 68)

<sup>218</sup> (Misiones de la Goagira, Sierra Nevada y Motilonos 1891, 65)

<sup>219</sup> The only reference I have found indicating that Comisario was replaced by the “Inspector de Policía” after about 1890, when the Mision Guajira and Territorio Nacionales was replaced by the Vicariato and the Capuchinos (Lanao Loaisa 1915, 21)

<sup>220</sup> El Decreto Ejecutivo 1298 de 1914 (Machado 2009, 117)”

<sup>221</sup> Baldios are untitled lands owned by the nation.

rights to parcels in their territory or to receive title deeds the government required that the indigenous people must abandon their “errant” life and live in one of the “Colonias Agrícolas” alongside non-indigenous settlers, under the watch of the inspector and the priests.

Legislation from 1868 enabled the State to assign 25-hectare parcels of the “vacant” – baldio-lands of the Nation (Vélez 1891, 45)<sup>222</sup> to the indigenous families who agreed to settle in those towns and integrate themselves into the “civilized life”. Reduction to such a town, integration with the settlers, and obedience to its structure of authority were a requirement for the Kaggaba to gain access to land, even though it had been theirs by default under colonial law.

These policies were condensed into the overarching Law 89 of 1890 which remained in force until 1991. It stipulated that the “civilized” indigenous peoples had the right to their Resguardos, and govern themselves by their own “Cabildos”. However, once the cabildo was established it had the obligation to dissolve itself and its own Resguardos, dividing the land up amongst themselves, assigning each family a parcel, and then the rest could be auctioned off. The Resguardos and Cabildos would be liquidated, their lands and peoples integrated into the nation<sup>223</sup>.

- The privatization of the indigenous territories in the Sierra Nevada, and San Antonio.

Here we continue through the lens of the Kaggaba Colonial Church town of San Antonio, to discern the policies for dissolution of indigenous land and Resguardos. The nation had declared almost all the Sierra Nevada as “baldíos”, including the former Colonial indigenous territories (C. Uribe Tobón 1988), (Acosta 1905, 196). The initial processes of assigning “Baldios” around 1847, in the Guajira y la Sierra Nevada, was especially directed to foreigners (Machado 2009, 64)<sup>224</sup>, large scale colonization and to set up the “Colonias Agrícolas” (Fabrega 1843, 14-5), (Machado 2009, 89). Around 1870, the state attempted to stimulate colonization of its baldios in a more organized way and promoted the rights of the smaller settlers, especially under Law 61 de 1874 (Machado 2009, 94-96, 101). These smaller settlers by 1882 started gravitate to periphery in places like San Antonio, to find land.

A few attempts to set up foreign settlement of “Colonias Agrícolas” did occur in Kaggaba territory of San Antonio with little success. One such Colony was established by a Frenchman, Gaugant in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, around Quebrada Andrea, which apparently failed due to disease. Another case was Eliseo Reclus’ 1855 visit to San Antonio, which he left written account of as explorer and chronicler. He had come to establish a “Colonia Agrícola” in San Antonio under the Government policy of colonizing the indigenous territories and assigning baldios.

From his own experience, in well cited travel chronicles, Reclus explains how these “Colonias” worked. He had applied and paid for his land assignment from Riohacha. There was still no “Corregidor” in San Antonio at that time. Anyone had the right to request a land parcel. He observes that the “The nominal value of the land, sold by the government, is seventy-five cents,

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<sup>222</sup> Ley 40 de Junio 1, 1868 “Ley de la civilización de indígenas”.

<sup>223</sup> That was not the case for “salvajes que vayan reduciéndose á la vida civilizada por medio de Misiones”. They were governed by the ecclesiastical authorities and did not have the right to their own Cabildo nor lands which they would have dissolve by themselves. The indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada were under the tutelage of Capuchinos. This also partially explains the constant insistence of the Capuchinos that the indigenous peoples under their wing were still “savage”.

<sup>224</sup> Another law in 1848 allowed smaller settlers to receive up to 10 fanegadas (Machado 2009, 64)<sup>224</sup>.

but every head of a family from the Granada or foreign family has the right to request the concession of forty hectares of vacant land, which is immediately granted to them, with their commitment to execute in them any kind of work within the next of two years. In practice, many colonists would settle wherever they wanted, without a concession of the land, with no commitments, and could become owners by the right of the first occupant (Reclus 1992, 252)".

Reclus traveled up the path from Dibulla to the mixed Kaggaba – settler population called "Pueblo Viejo"<sup>225</sup> below San Antonio, to select the lands that he thought best for his agricultural Colony, without taking into account, or perhaps without knowing, that they were indigenous lands. He chose his lands "in San Antonio itself, in an almost abandoned garden that we had bought, and in Chirúa (...) the land that I chose on my first trip (Reclus 1992, 248)". These places were Kaggaba lands, and now the settlers could come and occupy at will.

Perhaps for that reason Reclus had the strange feeling that he was not welcome. While walking up to San Antonio to establish his colony, he got sick and collapsed on the side of the path for several hours. He remembers an indigenous passerby who stopped to gaze at him. Reclus in a haze, reflected "Was I not, in his view, one of these execrable men who were going to exploit him and his brothers, load them with debts and make them slaves of continuous work? Surely, he believed that it would be fair for the genies of the Tairona to punish me with illness and death for having helped in the destruction of the... tribe (Reclus 1992, 246)". He made it up the path to Pueblo Viejo, but later he got sick, his men abandoned the settlement and the crops didn't work. They returned home after a few months and abandoned their project. This, the Kaggaba might reflect, was the natural response of the "Law of Origin".

By 1870, the Commissary, and later during the 1900s the Police Inspector, until the 1980s, was responsible for assigning lands both to colonists, and the indigenous people (Machado 2009, 141). They issued the title deeds for each land claim. The Police Inspector had to validate and formalize the claims of the settlers and indigenous people to land to promote the system of colonization and assigning agricultural units to each indigenous family who participated in those combined agricultural colonies and Kaggaba church towns.

The assignment of property deeds of territory to both indigenous people and settlers became a common practice in Kaggaba territory after about 1870. Both settlers and Kaggaba families needed a deed. If they didn't have one, they could lose their land to waves and waves of settlers now pouring into San Antonio. The Police Inspector<sup>226</sup> himself would write up the deed at the bequest of a Kaggaba or a settler. The stamp of the Inspector legalized the document, although they occasionally were registered at the Public Notary office in Riohacha.

The process of getting access to land worked through relationships of reciprocity and debt. The inspector would always charge an exorbitant fee for making a deed, in the form of various heads of cattle or other merchandise. Many Kaggaba families often keep floppy eared land deeds from the early 1900s in the bottom of old trunks. They relate how their great grandparents got lost or

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<sup>225</sup> Pueblo Viejo, meaning "Old Town" is the same ancient Kaggaba town of Bunkuanezhaka, also occasionally occupied by Kamejuna and the Ñañiba in the colonial period.

<sup>226</sup> Sometimes a knowledgeable settler would also write up a deed.

struggled for parcels of their territory in ways that would finally crystalize into a deed, or the loss of the land.

Processes of obtaining land from the indigenous people through debt had started to take place +..... were abolished (Reclus 1992, 236)". These traders had been appropriating indigenous lands through debt and trickery for decades.

In general, the settlers were friends or were in collusion with the Police Inspectors. They all came from the same communities around Dibulla and Riohacha. They would collude to confabulate debts over an indigenous family, and then take their land parcel in payment, make a title deed out of it, and sell it again. Many Kaggaba permanently lost their land through these processes of debt, deception, and accompanied violence of the settlers and the Inspector. The Kaggaba also fought to keep the rights to their land through deployment of these same links of debt leading through wider assemblages of reciprocity linked to the Law of Origin. Such strategies of resistance and domination through reciprocity is the topic of the remainder of this Chapter.

As Michael Taussig observed, the topic of "baldios" in Colombia, opens up a space of violence and contingency in which access to land is "a hazy morass of words that work through lies and subterfuge the benefit of large landowners", a "Charade... meaning deliberate falsification on the part of large landowners, corporations, state officials and armies of lawyers" (Taussig 2018, 3). The charade was certainly part of the settlers' tactics to gain land and power, a charade of the trickery of the master and the slave, but that also in a relationship of reciprocity with the "Law of Origin", could be turned around.

### **4.3 From tribute to Abuse: "Civilization" and Resistance in San Antonio.**

#### **4.3.1 Colonial connections from Dibulla: Settlement of Kaggaba territory and Tribute.**

These public policies of integration and transformation of land, people and "nature" into the Nation did not always turn out as expected. How people actually implemented and transformed law, through diverse micro-practices of power, often immersed in social relations inherited from the colonial period, produced unexpected results. A transformation of much of that territory from a space protected from settlement by colonial law, to one permeated with settlers and traders, generated severe pressure on the indigenous people. Most Kaggaba mention the time of the inspector and of the invasion by "Pueblo Vlejeros", as one of violence leaving scars on Kaggaba communities that persist today. Simultaneously the indigenous people from the "church towns" implemented strategies to attenuate the effects of occupation and transformation of their territory.

Within a few decades after Independence, the colonial prohibitions which had limited the presence of settlers and traders in the Kaggaba territories of Cototama, now renamed as the "Corregimiento of San Antonio", had completely fallen apart. Settlers mostly originating from the town of Dibulla started to occupy and trade around much of the territory of San Antonio and by the mid-1900s had permeated many Kaggaba communities, lands and church towns.

These shifts in settlement and administration of the Sierra Nevada are visible as transformations in political geography, including the region of San Antonio. The Spanish "pueblo" of La Ramada, the seat of the encomiendas of the "Jurisdiction of the Ramada" had subsisted as a small

forgotten settlement since about 1650. In 1848, this settlement was formally renamed Dibulla and designated as the seat of the Municipality of Dibulla, from where it would promote the colonization of its territory in the Sierra Nevada (Cardenas and Uribe 2007, 76)<sup>227</sup>.

Then in 1869 Dibulla was declared capital of its own “district”, comprising San Antonio, San Miguel and Punta de los Remedios. Dibulla had a Public Notary for keeping land and other records (Estado Soberano del Magdalena 1871, 80 -97)<sup>228</sup>. As a Parish, it started to maintain baptism and marriage records, which show that settler families had been residing in the towns of San Antonio and San Miguel since at least 1869, and were part of a growing community from Dibulla who lived in the region of San Antonio and remained there until the 1990s (Cardenas and Uribe 2007, 79). The Police Inspection of San Antonio continued on, with the same territory and indigenous church towns as the Territorios Nacionales, extending from Dibulla, to Palomino, up to the snow covered peaks<sup>229</sup>.

Certain transformations in spatial distribution of the Church towns reflect the advent of these new regimes of power to the Sierra. The principal colonial church towns, like San Antonio were designated as the centers for the administration of colonization, but their spatial distribution did not radically change, as a Colonial “pueblo de indios”, now with a school and “casa de gobierno” for the Corregidor or Inspector, next to the church.

There was, however, a significant transformation of the “Pueblos de Indios”, into spaces shared between indigenous people and settlers, in accordance with the model of “Colonias Agrícolas”. Celedon’s descriptions of San Antonio in 1876 evidence these continuities and changes. It had “a population of 150 indigenous people and a few dozen civilized people, poorly accommodated in some 30 or 40 houses, several of them circular. In the middle of the town is the church, in front of it the government house, and between one and the other, was a traditional Mission Cross in the middle of the square, as if asking for a missionary! The government house also serves as the Corregidor’s office, it acts as a school, attended by one or two dozen little ‘indios’, of whom there are some who moderately know how to read, write, and count, and also pray (Celedón 1886, 6)”.

These spatial transformations became more manifest after 1890 when San Antonio was burned down and the police inspection was transferred to the nearby site of Pueblo Viejo. Pueblo Viejo replaced the town of San Antonio as the de facto seat of the inspection. It was a mixed space with mostly colonists and some indigenous people, and not built as a church town. It later becomes the largest colonist settlement in the Region.

When Reclus arrived in 1855, he mentioned Pueblo Viejo as neither an indigenous nor settler town, but a disperse “Agricultural Colony”, with only a very few “Colombian” settlers. By 1886 European explorers still encounter Pueblo Viejo as “disperse houses of settlers” who had

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<sup>227</sup> citing (de la Pedraja 1981).

<sup>228</sup> Dibulla was named a district of its “division” territorial around 1869 (Estado Soberano del Magdalena 1871, 80). Ley 136 of 1871 opens a public notaries office in Dibulla (Estado Soberano del Magdalena 1871, 91). and ley 136 of 1971 declares Dibulla as the capital of its district that comprises the “sections” of San Antonio, San Miguel and Punta de los Remedios (Estado Soberano del Magdalena 1871, 93). as part of the Department of Patillal.

<sup>229</sup> The town of San Antonio was also designated as capital of the “Territorio Nacional de la Nevada” in 1871. This was only briefly, and the capital was transferred to Atanquez (Morales Tomas 2011, 91).

“immigrated” from Riohacha and Dibulla establishing farms and trading with the indigenous people. Around 1930s Pueblo Viejo had become a small town of settlers with numerous houses and streets. It had become the center of activity for the settlers in the region. From Pueblo Viejo the police inspectors traveled all around the Kaggaba territory of San Antonio. By about 1920, settlers had started to occupy the upper reaches of that territory, all the way up to the towns of San Miguel, Palomino, and another new Kaggaba town called San Francisco. That situation remains the same until the late 1980s (Cucchiella 1995, 173).

Some settler families apparently had longstanding family relationships with the Kaggaba territories perhaps from the colonial period. They traveled along the path from Dibulla or “La Ramada”, which from pre-Columbian times linked the sea to the upper ezuamas passing through Bonga and Bunkuanazhaka (Pueblo Viejo). The Kaggaba mamos would bring down their “Shala” spiritual offerings to the Black Line sites on the sea while other lineages would come up to visit the ezuamas along those routes of reciprocity with the Law of Origin embedded in the sacred sites of Kaggaba territory. It also linked the other more remote ezuamas of Kaggaba territory, like Palomino, Mamarongo on the Rancheria River and Suribaka near Valledupar<sup>230</sup> (See map 3).

The Dibulla route was also basically the same path that the encomenderos and their mayordomos used from “La Ramada” to connect their chain of debt, tribute and domination with the indigenous “Pueblos” and caciques in the Sierra. It was the path the Dibullero settlers and merchants used for the colonization and occupation of indigenous territory. Dibulla had never been abandoned as a village, and neither its trade with the indigenous people in San Antonio.

The group of “Puebloviejeros”, all the way up to the 1980s, were usually the descendants of the same families that were recorded in the baptism certificates of the newly founded Parish of Dibulla after 1869. They included families like the Valdeblánquez, the Cárdenas and the Núñez who became regionally famous in the 1970s as protagonists of vendettas and drug trafficking operations around San Antonio. Some authors speculate that the Dibulleros were a mixture of Spaniards, Wayuu indigenous people, and Africans migrating through the region. The Dibulleros in Pueblo Viejo maintained a clear sense of historical continuity dating at least from the 1860s, with memories of clan and shared community (Cardenas and Uribe 2007, 76).

Effectively, what the Kaggaba call the “Law of Kamejuna” resurfaced after the Wars of Independence. Somehow, many of these Dibulleros from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries embodied the same practices of mayordomos and other collaborators of the encomienda from the Ramada during colonial times. During his fieldwork in San Antonio in the 1980s, Carlos Uribe got the feeling that the Pueblo Viejeros of the 1970s, were the descendants of the Spanish administrators, still “travelling to the mountainous massif with motives very similar to those of their predecessors (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 266). The settlers perhaps unconsciously reproduced the “chain of debt”, that linked mayordomos, the caciques and the rest of the people linked to the encomienda, subjecting the indigenous people in the Sierra to the debt and the misrecognized violence that went along. They traversed through the same relationships and

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<sup>230</sup> Interview, Mamo Andresico de Bonga de 2013, for Shikwakala and POMCA Rio Cañas, OGT.

even traded the same hammocks, string, and agricultural which the Caciques paid their “Tribute” to the encomienda.

#### **4.4 The Law of the Police Inspector: legitimation of illegitimate authority.**

This section of the chapter presents how the institutional apparatus of administration of the indigenous people and their land, chains of debt and reciprocity inherited from colonial times, and indigenous practices of the ‘Law of Origin’ came together as forms of violence misrecognized and normalized violence. The law did not give the Police Inspector, the right to charge tribute to indigenous people. Nonetheless, they continued to do so in the form of exorbitant fines, forced work and commissions, reviving a system of tribute that perhaps unknown to the indigenous people, had legally disappeared after the Colombia period.

The formal policies of civilization and integration of the indigenous people into the nation, masked and normalized these processes of violent extraction of wealth from indigenous forms of production. The policies of the new nation were supposed to create new citizens who through their work could create wealth and value. This did not happen amongst many settlers in San Antonio involved in those forms of debt extraction. They continued to rely of extracting wealth from the indigenous people, though debt structures accompanied with physical violence and force, unwittingly appropriating and at once rejecting the “Law of Origin”.

These practices of extraction reproduce fundamental principles of the contradictions or paradoxes of the inscription of the self as violence, and which could become healing, the we have developed through this dissertation. In San Antonio, the “civilized” attempted to destroy the same “savages” they depended on. The civilized settlers were in fact the savages attempting to destroy the civilized. Likewise, the civilized rubber traders of the early 1900s in the Putumayo misrecognized their own savagery, violently projecting it on the indigenous other (Taussig 1987).

Observers like Carlos Uribe who were in Pueblo Viejo at the end of the time of the Inspector, conclude that this sort debt system enabled the Dibulleros to extract “economic surplus”, at the expense of the indigenous people (1997, 170). That “surplus” was extracted from indigenous social relations of production, from their relation to territory, though debts with the Law of Origin, transformed into money, similar to how Kamejuna converted the indigenous peoples’ relationship with land, nature, and the Law of Origin, into gold. Those same links of reciprocity generated the conditions for resistance to violence and healing. First, we describe how the Police Inspector system played out, and its severe effects on the Kaggaba.

##### **4.4.1 The law of the Police Inspector was not a law at all.**

From the start, visitors to San Antonio were often taken aback by the brutality of the practices of the law of the inspector combined with those of the settlers. Reclus in 1855, reports how In San Antonio the merchants and the settlers had the indigenous people “azotados” from debts. The Dibulleros tricked the indigenous people with “adulterated rum”, and would make them pay 10 times more than their merchandise and rum were actually worth. That way “They never get out of debt and the vice of drunkenness, which is carefully fomented amongst them, never lets them get out of the abyss” (Reclus 1992, 235). The debts were handed down from parents to children, and this, according to Reclus had been going on well before 1855.

Like the system of the “Law of Kamejuna” the extraction of wealth during the times of the Police Inspector, was made possible through application of a law of violence that assumed diverse forms. Some other anthropologists and visitors do mention those events, but what these written references perhaps misrecognize is the extent of this violence, while leaving out the Kaggaba’s own perception of the situation.

Many Kaggaba Mamos remember the times the Police Inspector”, as the people who lived under the effects of this system of domination. Several Mamos narrated some of their memories specifically for the book *Shikwakala*, which I redepoly here. The harsh content of these histories also makes them difficult to repeat, but the mamos told them to be told, to help people recognize what happened and what still happens in those types of situations, so as to avoid them.

Mamo Felix Coronado lays out the idea of what he calls the “Order of the Police Inspector”, which I have rephrased as the “Law of the Inspector”. The assemblage of reverse debt, misrecognized as law, and associated with violence is enacted through the settlers, the police inspector and even by some Kaggaba authorities. The Police Inspector, who was legally responsible for meting out justice and establishing fines, kept it working under a veneer of legitimate authority. *Mamo Félix Coronado* shares the following memories about how settlers kept the Kaggaba in debt and used the authority of the Police Inspector to do so.

### **The Law of the Inspector**

Not even the Mamas could invalidate the authority of the inspector, the *suplente* and the *semanero* because they are speaking from the highest authority. This is something that harmed the community. When an indigenous person has a debt, the day we goes to pay the setter, he has to pay double, and when he pays, he gets paid back with a beating. The *panela* that one brings is turned into a punishment and they put it on your back and make you hold it all night, then you have to bring a “donkey” of firewood (equivalent to 40 backpack loads of firewood) then they do not receive your *panela* saying that it is no good, and instead you have to bring an ox that’s worth twice as much.

An indigenous person who has a debt goes to the settler to pay at the moment when it is due, and then settler gives him a few dried fish, and a drink of alcohol and then tells you that you had agreed to buy the fish and the alcohol for some very high price. And that’s how the indigenous people never can pay off their debts to the settlers. They will also just take your pig, wherever they find one tied up, without any justification. Whenever they feel like it they beat the indigenous people without any cause, and the inspectors benefit even more.

When an indigenous person dies, the next day the settlers show up at the family’s house saying ‘that person who died had a debt with us so they must pay us. If at that moment they see an animal they take it: ox, donkey, pig, chicken. When an indigenous person goes to the inspector or his Kaggaba ‘*suplente*’ to file a complaint, neither of them will pay any attention to you, they only tell you that if you have a debt then the settler has the right to collect it from you.

Sometimes when a settler sees an indigenous woman walking along, they chase her and rape her. When the husband goes to report to the inspector, the inspector



will respond that this problem is not up for debate because they both did it for pleasure, or that she did it out of necessity because you as a husband don't take care of her very well. And you can't argue anything else and they have the last word. Who else are you going to file a complaint with? This was especially true for the settlers of Pueblo Viejo.

Not even the Kaggaba 'suplente' is going to help you because he has to help the inspector, and if he doesn't, he also has to go to jail or pay a fine. That is the origin of why of the 'semanero' and the other Kaggaba authorities have to help the settlers and punish the indigenous people, because it emanated from the **order of the inspector**<sup>231</sup>.

““The inspectors, were the highest authority to resolve our Kaggaba problems of internal justice, or to resolve our community problems, even though those could be resolved by the Mamo and consultation with the Zhatukuwa. When the inspectors became familiar with the people from San Francisco, they started to rotate the post of 'semanero' to be filled on a weekly basis amongst the Kaggaba, there. The semanero had to carry a staff of authority, when he was sent to search out a Kaggaba who had debts or a problem with the settlers. When a mamo is dancing in the Ezuama, he cannot leave, but if he is chosen as the weekly 'semanero' has to immediately take off his dancing costume and go comply with his duty as a 'semanero'. If he does not come down, then he has to pay a fine in the form of an Ox or a very large pig, and then they put him in the stocks and then in prison. That's why the semanero had to sow fear and respect amongst the rest of the indigenous people of his community<sup>232</sup>”.

It was violence and debt passed down the links of reverse reciprocity, just like the times of the encomienda. As we remember, the “Conqueror” Pedro de Lerma came into the “Valley of the Tayrona” and made deals with the indigenous people to give him gold, in exchange for respecting their lives and, as sort of a fine for having lost the war. His soldiers were now ostensibly allied with the indigenous people, but they treated them with more violence. The same relationship to debt and subjection at origin of the encomienda, lives on and repeats itself in the practices of the Police Inspector and settlers, as the debt and violence that propagates itself down the generations.

In situations, the double tricks of debt are reproduced over and over. The settlers would trick the indigenous people into thinking they were in debt, and then when they tried to pay it off they would charge many times more than what its value was. When the Kaggaba returned to pay the debt or bring the firewood, the settler could hit and beat the person with the excuse that he had not brought enough. Kamejuna would do the same, punishing the Kaggaba bringing him gold, doing what he told them to do.

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<sup>231</sup> Interview *Mama* Félix Coronado, 2014. For Shikwakala, Archivo OGT,

<sup>232</sup> Interview *Mama* Félix Coronado, 2014. For Shikwakala, Archivo OGT,. *Sipu* means “The stocks”.

The Police inspector forced the community itself to apply his law of violence. Kaggaba authorities often had to enforce the same Law of the Inspector against their own communities, against their own people, mamos and “Law of Origin”. They had no choice, if they didn’t comply then they would be punished by the Inspector.

The Inspectors not only charged fines and citations, they also imposed harsh physical punishments. They kept stocks and other torture devices in the church towns, and would beat and otherwise torture the indigenous people. This was accompanied by a shared complicity amongst the settlers of the normalization of extreme violence and humiliation against the Kaggaba.

What previously might have been a manageable situation during later colonial times with the presence of the catholic priests in the “pueblos de indios”, and some recourse to the “Leyes de Proteccion de los Naturales” now became a space of terror, “state of exception”. There was no authority to remedy these acts of violence, except for the Law of Origin itself. The stories that the mamos tell of the abuses of the community at the hands of the settlers abound.

#### 4.4.2 The Law of the Inspector attempts to civilize the “Law of Origin”.

It was not only the physical and material violence, but their effects on the Law of Origin, that were of the most concern to the Kaggaba Mamos. The earliest histories from this time that the Mamos tell of how the Police Inspectors and the Settlers affected the “Law of Origin” itself, and of how the Police Inspectors specifically persecute the Mamos, and women. These narrations of abuse, both make manifest the affectations the Kaggaba suffered during this time, and how that violence and its origins can be recognized and transformed. The topic of misrecognition of violence and the inability of the settlers to cure or recognize that same violence they commit runs through these histories.

After the 1890s apparently the priests, Capuchino or Catholic, were only sporadically present. Now in the hands of the police inspectors, it was no longer religious crusade, of catholic priests persecuting the indigenous people as idolators, but a persecution of the “civilized” against the savage. Apparently, the persecutions of the Mamos became more intense after the dissolution of the “territories Nacionales de Nebada y Guajira” in the 1890s. Mamo Juan Conchacala narrates the histories of how some of the most well-known Mama from that time were persecuted by their own Kaggaba authorities, now coopted under the orders of the police inspector. These events that the mamos narrate for Shikwalaka probably took place around 1890, just before the founding of the church town of San Francisco.

The Inspectors and many settlers positioned the Mamos and the Kaggaba in general, as “Savages”. They publicly humiliated the mamos for being mamos, compared them with forest animals, and thieves, who lived out in caves on their own. The inspectors justified themselves saying things like, “Studying in nature was for the inspectors, to have lost all civilization” For this very reason, the Inspectors would send the Mamos to jail in Riohacha, saying that what the mamos were doing is “witchcraft”. Mamo Felix reminds us that this is totally the opposite, that this kind knowledge, studying from the caves, is the basis for spiritual work, to help life, to make it rain, to care of all the species in the forest, and for people.

It was very contradictory. The people in Riohacha would ask a mamo to help curing them and their problems, while accusing that mamo of being a savage, keeping him in jail precisely for being a Mamo. Asking a jailed Mamos to make it rain, to cure them for their ails, of having jailed the Mamo in the first place, was reproducing those same disjunctions of reverse debt, along the spaces of Colonialism misrecognized as curing.

Mamo Juan Conchacala goes on to narrate memories of several other cases, passed down to him and other mamos by their grandparents who had suffered these same persecutions. He tells of Mamo Jose de la Cruz, one of the principal mamos of Makotama. The Police Inspector forced the Kaggaba authorities to bring the mamo from his ezuama to the nearby church town of San Miguel. There, they sentenced him to death in the central plaza at the same pole where the cattle are slaughtered for the fiestas. He was very scared. A settler called Sibiabi intervened and said “why are you doing that? He is a mamo and he is good, he cannot be given the death penalty”. The Inspector released the mamo. But Sibiabi didn’t miss a beat. He turned to the Mamo, and said, “since I saved your life, you have to go find six big oxen in recompensation and pay me”. The settlers, and the assemblage of reverse debt they formed part of, just like the Spanish “Conquerors” and Kamejuna, put a price of life.

Mamo Juan then told of Mamo Silvestre from Makotama, who was tortured and put in the stocks, but the community of San Jose and San Antonio came to his rescue. Next, he told of Mamo Ceballos who had three ribs broken by the inspector and his Kaggaba authorities and of other mamos who had their nujues burned by the authorities and then were tortured by the inspectors. But the Mamos would later go back to their ezuamas and rebuild.

There was the story of Mamo Namanku, and how the inspectors seized his sewa and gold pieces, his ancestral tools from the ezuama. They forced him to do hard physical labor, an affront to the role of the Mamo, always concentrated on spiritual work, by repairing the path all the way down to Mingueo. They would say “Let’s see how much power you have”. “Since you have so much knowledge and spiritual power then it’s not going to hurt when we hit you with a shovel”. And then they would hit him, alongside the other Kaggaba who were forced to work on the path. They took all of his sewa and hit his wife. He never wanted to return to his Ezuama in Makutama and died. At a physical level this affected the mamos and their ezuamas. Many mamos start to lose their ezuamas due to the persecution of the Police Inspector and from debts the settlers invented. The effects on the Law of Origin went deeper.

- The Police Inspector: Law in Reverse, and the Law of Origin.

The mamos who Mamo Juan Conchacala just spoke about, were amongst the most well versed and respected mamos of the ezuamas from about 1880 to 1950. The Kaggaba still talk of them today. They were the ones who helped keep their communities together and had founded church towns to defend their ezuamas. This way of ferreting the Mamos out of their caves and ezuamas is very similar to how the Nañiba , searched out the Kwibi in the Ezuama and or lured them down to Bonga to be converted into ashes, or how Romero went to burn the “sanctuaries” in the 1690s. Both the inspectors and the Nañiba knew that the Kaggaba mamo formed part of their territory and kept it healthy, linked to the ezuamas, sacred spaces, and the “Law of Origin” and they went after them precisely to not recognize their own misrecognition of violence.

Mamo Juan then explains about the spiritual work of the Mamos, and how they must be concentrated and articulated with the assemblage of the Law of Origin to produce its results of “paying” or “giving food” to the principles of life, of healing. “This kind of work cannot be done by mamos who are not complying with the norms of the origin of people and things” and under those kinds of duress and problems.

The Mamos would then go back up to their ezuamas, would try to do the spiritual work to heal the damage that their own authorities had inflicted on the mamos, and really on themselves. But it was very difficult, those same affectations damaged the way the Mamos could do their work, and instead of creating a positive result it could “generate many problems instead of the desired results”. Mamo Conchacala reflects that the mamos when doing their spiritual work must always be thinking positively, always articulating with the principles of origin of life.

He had just returned with number of Kaggaba Mamos from to “Pueblito” in the Tayrona Park to do a consultation. It was a public event. The subject of the consultation was to define the spiritual basis of the Management Plan for the Tayrona and Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta National Parks which the OGT and CTC were writing at the time. “Management” for the Kaggaba mamos and authorities meant managing the health of nature from its spiritual principles, the law of reciprocity<sup>233</sup>. They were asking themselves why springs as “sacred sites” - the spiritual mothers of water, were drying out all over the Sierra Nevada. The forests were losing their vitality, not only around Pueblito, but all-over. Springs and forests grow out of the spiritual principles of life. Something was going wrong and it wasn’t only because of climate change.

The mamos consulted and arrived at an explanation. The causes of the springs and forests drying out, and the other problems in nature, originated from the time of the inspector when the Kaggaba authorities had abused their mamos under the Inspectors orders. This was abuse going through the Law of Origin itself. The Mamos are like mountains, they are inextricably connected to the spirit, to the caves from where they were trained to hear the voice of the mother.

These “negative” actions started to flow through the assemblages of spiritual and material connections between territory, nature and people that the Mamos embody, charging their reverse debt, and creating responses from the assemblages of reciprocity at a material level. The inspectors and the Authorities who made these mistakes “bought” future problems for themselves and others. The mamos in that consultation concluded: “The power of the Law of Origin and the “Sewa” has turned against us”, affecting everyone involved.

For the Kaggaba to resolve these problems they would have to spiritually repair the damage that their grandparents had done to themselves, spiritually pay the debts that they had generated to the principles of origin. This was all the more onerous in that the very Kaggaba authorities had applied this treatment to their own mamos, meaning that part of the debt was that they violated the very principles of life, that they had to uphold, even if it was against their will, and, did not care for the principles that keep the assemblage of the Law of Origin together.

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<sup>233</sup> See (CTC - PNN 2020) for more information on these encounters and the relationship between the Law of Origin and environmental management.

The “law of the inspector” had coopted many ancestral authorities and their responsibility to enforce the Law of Origin. The Kaggaba governors of the OGT at their meetings, constantly remind the communities, and authorities, of what the consultations of the mamos say. The exercise of Kaggaba traditional justice is not based in the type of physical punishments favored by the police inspector, but on the spiritual work of compliance with the Law of Origin. Our authorities cannot blindly reproduce those kinds of violence from the times of the police inspector, as though it was our own “ancestral” justice<sup>234</sup>, when it is not.

In summary, the inspector system had the effect of extracting material wealth from the Kaggaba through their relationships with territory and nature and the Law of Origin itself. This transformation of the natural relations of production into money and violence, as something to be extracted from that system and simply used and not to be shared again with the Law of Origin, created an additional level of debt with the land and territory itself.

#### **4.4 Finding a Path to salvation: The Church towns defend the Ezuamas.**

4.4.1 The Statue of San Pedro continues its path, to the church town of San Francisco.

During the rest of the Chapter, we will look at how the Kaggaba attempted to maintain their relationships with the “Law of Origin” to resolve their problems with the Police Inspector, and forms of resistance based on non-violence and reciprocity. By the 1880s the effects of the persecution of the mamos, physical abuse and attacks on the community had become almost unbearable for most Kaggaba communities. In the face of all these problems, the Kaggaba attempted to respond to the Law of the Inspector and the effects of the settlers in a number of ways, all of them based on strengthening the practices of the Law of Origin itself.

The principal strategy that the Kaggaba utilized was to again deploy the statue of San Pedro to establish more church towns, to strengthen the relationship between the church towns and the work of the mamos in their ezuamas.

- Escape to the Church town of San Jose in Valledupar, and the Ezuama of Suribaka.

Alternatively, the Mamos also would escape into the mountains and set up communities in more isolated areas. Under pressure from the police inspectors and their authorities, many Kaggaba mamos and communities started to seek refuge in other areas of Kaggaba territory the Sierra Nevada territory, after about 1870 (FPSNSM 1990).

Many emigrate south from their Ezuamas around San Antonio and San Miguel to areas located above Valledupar and its more isolated ezuamas of *Surivaka*. There, the Kaggaba mamos, alongside the Wiwas and Kankuamo from the region participated in establishing a new church town above Atanquez, called San Jose as part of their resistance to the Police Inspectors. The Church’s “Prefecto” encountered these Mamos on one of his visits in 1872. He apparently

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<sup>234</sup> I draw on the documents (OGT 2011), (CIT 2011) for these concepts and descriptions of “repairing” the Law of Origin and forms of Ancestral Justice affected by violence.

convinced them to participate in the founding of that church town. (Morales Tomas 2011, 94-96), (Celedón 1886, xix).

The Kaggaba mamos experience of exodus and establishing the new church town in San Jose apparently was a factor behind later processes of resistance in San Antonio, as we will see next. Effectively, the area around San Jose functioned to some degree as a refuge from the abuses of the Police Inspectors and later the abuses of Capuchino orphanages in Nabusimake and Marocaso. The nearby upper Kaggaba Ezuama of Surivaka was also refuge for indigenous people (Morales Tomas 2011, 110, 116)<sup>235</sup>.

Another escape route from San Antonio was towards the west, over the upper ridges of the Sierra towards Cienaga, and Aracataca from the ezuama of *Jukumezhzi*, where they set up the towns called “San Andres” and “San Pedro”, and a few others (See map 1). Although they were named after saints, they were not church towns and did not have “fiestas”. These were the first Kaggaba communities that Riechel Dolmatoff went to study some 60 years later in the 1940s. The mamos there attempted to organize their communities around the ancestral practices and not the church towns (Chaves Chamorro 1947).

Finally, during the 1950s, the settlers came to remove the Kaggaba from those rich coffee growing lands of the upper Tucurinca River. Reichel Dolmatoff and Chaves helped to set up the first indigenous “Model Reservation”, in 1949 in that area (Asamblea Departamental del Magdalena 1949). It was to no avail, the settlers finally burned down the communities of San Pedro and San Javier<sup>236</sup>, again dispersing the Kaggaba.

- The statue of San Pedro: a figure of Unity and Discord.

Apart from escaping, of the main strategies of resistance the Kaggaba employed during the times of the Police Inspector was to expand their existing Kaggaba church towns. Expanding a disciplinary assemblage that exploited the Kaggaba and subject them to the domination of the Police Inspector and the missionaries was apparently quite contradictory. However, the church towns still provided spaces that which enabled the Kaggaba to position their relationships with the vestiges of formal law and recognition that still subsisted around the church town.

Until 1870 the only church towns in Kaggaba territory were San Antonio, and San Miguel. After that, they started to proliferate, with new church towns including San Francisco, (upriver from San Antonio), Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz (downriver from San Miguel), and San Jose in Valledupar.

Mamo Juan Conchacala describes San Antonio as the “original town”, based on the model of authority from the ezuamas. It was first established around the year 1690 with the figure of Kukutabe, disintegrated, and around 1720 was reestablished using the figure of San Pedro. He

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<sup>235</sup> Confronted with the pressures of the church and inspectors, the Kankuamo of Ataquez had lost most of their land and language by first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to (Morales Tomas 2011, 94-96, 107) it was around then when the last of their mama invited the Kaggaba to occupy and care for their territory and knowledge. Perhaps the emigration of Kaggaba mamos to San Jose was part of a resistance movement that included safeguarding Kankuamo territory, but it probably started much before, around 1680 as we mention in chapter 3.

<sup>236</sup> Plan de Salvaguardia, Pueblo Kaggaba (OGT 2016).

calls the other Kaggaba church towns, “new” towns, that replicate the same model of San Pedro. The Statue of San Pedro continued to play an important role in the founding of new church towns as a strategy of articulation between the ezuamas and the church towns

The difference was that each church town would now correspond to a more localized set of ezuamas. San Miguel united the ezuamas around Makutama, and Palomino. Then the Kaggaba from the ezuamas of Palomino, broke off from San Miguel, “tired of suffering pressure against them from the authorities of San Miguel (Celedón 1886, vi)” and set up their own church town of Santa Rosa so that their own authorities could deal directly with the police inspectors. By 1880 San Antonio was left with only its original ezuamas of Ableizni – Sancona and Kuamaka.

One of the largest and most important of these new church towns was San Francisco, initially associated with the ezuamas of Kuamaka. Mama Santiago Moscote, from Kuamaka was one of the principal authors of this new church town. He had escaped from San Antonio in the 1870s to Surivaka where he participated in founding the town of San Jose. In the late 1880’s he returns and established the town of San Francisco, together with other Mamos, and Celedon’s priests<sup>237</sup>.

They established the Kaggaba town of San Francisco in the midst of the fierce competition between the towns of San Miguel and San Antonio to keep the Statue of San Pedro. Mamo Felix explains that San Pedro had a dual nature. “I do not know why that Saint was so important. It was just a simple wooden figure, but they fought over it between the towns of San Antonio and San Miguel each one saying that it was theirs. They would knock a hole in the church wall and take the saint back, to the other town”<sup>238</sup>.

In the midst of that competition, San Antonio somehow burned down and San Miguel got to keep the Saint. San Francisco was founded in that void. San Francisco took over the communities and lands of both the ezuamas of Kuamaka and Sancona / Ableinzhi. The people of San Antonio were left with no church town. This led to even more conflicts over land and authority between them that lasted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 24)<sup>239</sup>.

Getting access to San Pedro itself implied participating in a system based on violence and oppression of the Kaggaba themselves under the “Law of the Inspector”. Having to emulate the “Law of the Inspector” started to separate the Kaggaba communities into more isolated units competing amongst each other for survival, legitimacy and access to land. The Ezuamas increasingly competed amongst themselves for the right to protect themselves with their own localized church town. At the same time, having access to San Pedro provided a certain level of legitimacy and rights within the the “Territorios de la Sierra Nevada y Goajira”, and each church town was linked with the Law of Origin embedded in territory. It was a delicate balance.

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<sup>237</sup> San Francisco already existed when the Capuchinos “took possession” those territories in 1889 (Misiones de la Goagira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones 1891, 32). The mamos remember Mamo Santiago founded San Francisco on his return from San Jose

<sup>238</sup> Interview *Mama Félix Coronado, Tungueka*, Julio 2014. Translated by Arregocés Coronado. OGT archive for Shikwakala. They used a “*Sukuizhi*” is a rock like a tuma that is the base of all tumas, of all spiritual “payments” through which the population is connected to the origin of the territory.

<sup>239</sup> The Kaggaba set up San Francisco using a tuma or figure similar to that of Kukutabe, enabling them to do their spiritual work relating the church town of San Francisco to the Ezuamas of Kuamaka like the original founding of San Antonio.

- San Francisco arises from the persecution of the Mamos.

As Mamo Santiago perhaps had observed during his time in San Jose, that being part of a church town provided alternatives to survive under “Law of the Inspector”. Mamo Juan Conchacala continues to give his version of why Mamo Santiago wanted to set up his own church town as a method to control the effects of the Police inspectors and the settlers.

“The Santo Sanpizhu was just a simple piece of wood, but people were always fighting over it. And because of that many Mamos left for the town of San Jose. Mano Santiago from Kuamaka was very mistreated by the authorities, and they would say that he did negative work. In reality, he worked for the good of the people. Under the inspector's orders, the authorities of the town of San Antonio detained him in the njué. They told him that they were going to cut off his head to scare him, but they didn't. He escaped to Riohacha and later to San Jose. Many Mamas also mistreated by their own authorities. Mama Santiago later returned from San José to establish the town of San Francisco<sup>240</sup>”.

Evidently, Mamo Santiago established San Francisco as a response to the experiences of violence that the indigenous authorities of San Antonio subject their mamos to. The establishment of San Francisco was based on the organization of ancestral territory that maintained a connection between the authorities of the towns, and the authority of the ezuamas, with figures like San Pedro. By having one's own Church town, it was possible for the Kaggaba authorities to manage their own communities, who apparently treated themselves less violently than from other completing areas.

Mamo Santiago and the other mamos established San Francisco based on several forms of spiritual work that defended them from the “Law of the Inspectors”, including the use of the Statue of San Pedro. Also, the Mamos consulted that spiritually the arrival of the Inspectors and settlers was like a legion of destructive leafcutter carpenter ants. As the reflection of the police inspectors, these ants were getting well up into Kaggaba territory. The Mamos would defend against the ants, as outsiders, and attempted to do spiritual work to keep them out. Mamo Santiago did this ‘spiritual’ work to set up the town of San Francisco, from in the lower areas of the territory from “Black Line” sites on the coast from Tapias, Mamo Santiago attempted to control the effects of the Police inspectors in San Francisco and the rest of the territory<sup>241</sup>.

- The “Path of Nuanasangwi” - Ants dressed as Inspectors invade Kaggaba territory.

For the indigenous people, for the Mamos, this method of protecting community by working through the church towns came at a great cost. Immediately after Mamo Santiago set up the town of San Francisco, the Police inspectors invariably, like the ants, went up to that new town and got out of control. “Spiritually it came to us in the form of the Law of the Inspector”, and with such force and through the Kaggaba authorities that it started to invert the work of the mamos. Right after Mamo Santiago founded San Francisco, the Police Inspectors named their Kaggaba authorities- The Police Inspector set up his stocks, subject the indigenous people to long

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<sup>240</sup> Interview *Mama* Juan Conchacala, Casa Indígena. Archivo general OGT, Santa Marta. Shikwakala

<sup>241</sup> Interview *Mama* Juan Conchacala, for. Shikwakala, and Mamo Andresico de Bonga de 2013.



punishments, fined them, abusing and subjecting the community to the “Law of the Inspector”, causing innumerable problems for the Kaggaba<sup>242</sup>.

The Law of Origin started to work in reverse. This is the same system of negative debt from which the form of extraction of wealth from the Law of Origin had operated from the times of the *encomienda*. Inspectors increasingly had the Kaggaba authorities adopt this same “Path” in order to be able to manage their own towns and communities. It was for this reason that Mamos like Mamo Santiago, when they were doing their spiritual work to keep the inspectors out of the territory, had difficulties.

According to Mamo Juan, Mamo Santiago, was aware of this paradox. At one point he declared “I am bringing the ants, bringing the inspector up to the territory, and you will remember me. It was not that the mamo was trying to bring the inspector, but the very participation of the Kaggaba authorities made the law origin function in backwards, just like the reverse debt that the settlers subject the indigenous people to. The ants kept marching in. Those problems generated to the same Law of Origin, that occurred some 100 years ago, are what the Mamo consult that still have to be healed today at the spiritual level, to deal with their effects that subsist on a number of levels of land, people and nature.

#### 4.4.3 The Church town as unit of unity and unit of conflict.

Despite the drawbacks, this was one way for the Kaggaba to deal with the problem of competition for land between the indigenous people and the colonists, now converted into “Baldios” of the nation. The church towns, now also called “Colonias Agrícolas” were the units from which the policies of distribution of “empty land” took place. Participation in these towns enabled the Kaggaba to maintain access to at least some of the land, and often legalize it through title deeds given to specific Kaggaba families associated with each town. The authorities of each church town had access to wealth, especially in the form of cattle, and a certain amount of political position through which they could reclaim and maintain the lands around their respective *ezuamas*, and purchase new lands that the settlers had taken from Kaggaba families.

The church towns were accompanied by a permanent state of conflict amongst themselves, instigated by the system of violence they had to coexist with. Each town became a unit that competed with others for access to land and exercise of power through its own authorities. The more powerful the authorities of a Kaggaba church town were, the more chance of success they would have when confronted with other Kaggaba authorities or with the settlers.

The stronger the violence against them, the stronger the reaction of the indigenous authorities of each church town. This contradictory situation was a motivation for gaining control over the statue San Pedro and setting up a church town. As mamo Felix had observed in his mention to the founding of the town of San Francisco, San Pedro personified conflict and competition at many levels, as external violence internally.

This strategy of church towns related to specific sets of *ezuamas* as a method of defense against the police inspectors and their perpetuation of violence lasted well up into the 1980s. For many

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<sup>242</sup> Interview *Mama Félix Coronado*, Comunidad de *Tungueka*, 2014. published in *Shikwakala*.

participants, it was patently apparent that the police inspectors intended to weaken the unity of Kaggaba governance, to atomize relationships between Kaggaba communities and ezuamas through the application of conflict. In the 1970s, Ramon Gil Barros a Wiwa, was named the first police inspector in Pueblo Viejo

For Ramón Gil it was clear, that the way that the police inspectors exercised their authority through the figure of the church town was a strategy to divide and rule over the Kaggaba people. When I first came to the Sierra in 1989, I worked with Ramon in a new Wiwa settlement in the Guachaca Valley that he had established. As Governor of the OGT, Ramon related to me what the inspectors would say to the Kaggaba in the 1970s, “San Miguelero, you are separate, you are in charge here and you are not going to go to San Francisco to give council. And you people from San Francisco are those who are in charge here. No one from San Miguel can come to do anything, not even to talk. And everyone would start fighting (Rawitscher 1992, 23).

Most observers who arrived to Kaggaba territory in the 1980s did not have Ramon’s same clarity. They interpreted the situation of conflict and atomization of Kaggaba towns as the norm, and not the result of 150 or more years of resistance to the violence of police inspector system, to defend their mamos and ezuamas. Such was the case for Carlos Uribe in 1987 when he was in Pueblo Viejo and San Francisco for his fieldwork on the Kaggaba. He both noted that to have access to land, the Kaggaba family had to pertain to a “village” as he called the church towns, which he described as a set of disassociated Kaggaba “units” each represented by their own authorities, subject to “fragmentation and conflict”. He perceived this as their natural state (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 195-6)<sup>243</sup>. The Police inspector and other settlers would be apparent mediators of natural conflicts between the Kaggaba (1990, 178), and not the source of the conflicts.

From that perspective, Uribe felt it would be quite difficult for Kaggaba communities to represent themselves as a unified organization of all the “villages” unite by all Ezuamas at that time, as the recently established Organizacion Gonawindua Tayrona was attempting to do. Uribe concluded that due to the isolated nature of each indigenous town, political strategies of unification “cannot and indeed do not become a ... political alternative for the Kaggaba” (1990, 215). Finally, the Mamos did unify the Ezuamas, as an alliance based on the Law of Origin, giving rise to the OGT.

This was no fault of Uribe’s. Violence itself had created a veil of misrecognition and normalcy around that situation of conflict. While anthropologists like Uribe did recognize that the mamos transform “mystical knowledge” into “political power” (1990, 257) amongst their communities, they did not recognize the church towns as centuries long process of resistance based on law of organ itself. But a profound transformation was underway amongst the Kaggaba. The OGT being born from the unification of all the Ezuamas. However, under those conditions of misrecognition, It was difficult to see that a revolution was underfoot. Orin Starn might say, they “missed the revolution (Starn 1992)”<sup>244</sup>.

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<sup>243</sup> Uribe did note that participation in the unit of the “Village” enabled its families to have access to the territories associated with that village and certain rights to production, but the historical context was not clear.

<sup>244</sup> No anthropologists until about the year 2000 used the term ezuamas and instead used the individual names of each ezuama, such as Noavaka. or terms like “centro ceremonial” (Pruess 1993, V1 76), with lineages of mamos living there, related to a nearby river valley (Pruess 1993, V1 61), evidently the same concept.

#### 4.4.4 The Dance of the Ezuamas and the town “Fiestas” - Are they really traditional?

Since pre-Columbian times, specially trained mamos have performed their dances, in the ezuamas every year, according to the solar calendar. Through these dances the Mamo can or become part of and interrelate the principles of origin, they embody the spiritual mothers and fathers of territory. These dances are a central part making “spiritual payments to maintain the health of people, nature and territory, as a form of reciprocity. As we will remember, during the times of the first founding of San Antonio with the figure of Kukutabe the Mamos adapted those dances for the exercise of authority of the Law of Origin in the context of the church towns.

The Kaggaba later called those dances done in the church towns “pita”, a pronunciation of the Spanish “fiesta”. The dances form an important part of Kaggaba practices of resistance associated with the assemblage between the Church towns, the saints, and the ezuamas. The Kaggaba “fiestas” share the basic elements of “Patron Saint” dances.

Different versions of patron saint festivals are celebrated all over Latin America as part of hybrid Catholic church ritual, often incorporating indigenous traditions<sup>245</sup>. Anthropologists have been studying the “fiestas” since the 1930s in Mexico, often finding in them the origins of indigenous “traits” expressed in those present day “beliefs and practices” (Brandes 1988, 3). For Brandes the fiestas are regular structured ritual events that serve as “Controlling processes”.

They operate as “mechanisms of social control” through which the authorities, especially the Catholic church, and the priests exercise power by their ability to apply sanctions, and through the force of supernatural beings or religious authority. In this sense fiestas exert judicial authority (Brandes 1981, 215). This authority or “power” is also based on the “supernatural”, “designed to capture and retain divine favors” (Brandes 1988, 4).

The question is, who is exerting power over whom? Which judicial or legal authority is being exerted? Is it the church over the indigenous people, or the other way around, or is it power that emanate from the very forms of force of the supernatural beings? Such events, like the fiesta, or the Day of the Dead in Mexico may appear to be “on the surface a conspicuously apolitical event”, .... but in reality, can assume increasingly political connotations (Brandes 1998, 259). Reciprocity is at the heart of the fiesta, the at heart of the exercise of power at far reaching political levels, from the times of the Catholic church in the Sierra Nevada up to today.

In 2007, I attended one of those fiestas in Pueblo Viejo. On the first night I had the fortune that the Mamos of Pueblo Viejo put me into the same hut with Mamo Santos, the elderly chief Mamo from Kuamaka in charge of those fiestas as the “principal staff dancer”, and nonetheless, the grandson of Mamo Santiago. We had both arrived late that evening and having walked quite some distance, got some rest before going into the fiesta, especially Mamo Santos, who was going to dance for 7 days and nights nonstop.

While comfortably perched in our hammocks during the evening, I asked him about the fiestas. Mamo Santos talked for quite a long time about that. The fiestas were a bit different but also

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<sup>245</sup> The Kaggaba church town fiestas could can be seen as practices of “hybrid” identities (De la Cadena 2015 )

the same as the traditional Kaggaba dances in the ezuamas. They were to “Pay” the catholic saint, to spiritually feed the church. During the fiesta we only eat food from the Yali – the “whiteman”, beef, plantains and things the Spanish brought in, not our traditional food. The churches, and the saints have accompanied us a long time. Those Yali saints also have a principle of origin”. And then we fell off to sleep.

The next day the dance started. During the night, within the *nujue* the *mamos* danced and played ancestral songs with tortoise shells, flutes and drums. During the day they and the community danced songs together with titles like the “snake”, the deer, the tiger, the frog, the vulture and many others, to the spirit of origin of those animals. The *Mamos* sat apart in a group on the side of a hill, some dancing with their staffs, and others sitting while the musicians played.

What I participated in was quite similar to the very complete description of the fiestas that Carlos Alberto Uribe writes up. The Kaggaba tell him that the “fiesta” is linked to the center of the territory in Chundua (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 230). The series of dances enable the crops to grow, the community to prosper. “Our wisdom has increased. We have taken but we have given back. That is the Law of the Mother. That was what the priests and elders of olden times have taught us (C. Uribe Tobón 1990, 253)”. Although Uribe does not mention it explicitly, the fiesta is based on reciprocity, giving back spiritually what “we have taken”, and this is the Law of the Mother.

Mamo Juan Conchacala was quite clear that these “*pita*” dances in the towns have the same objectives of the “traditional” dancing in the ezuamas. “In the church towns, the dance is a ‘higher authority’, and it is with these payments, that we collect the spiritual debt -*shala*- for the food and everything and we bring it to the dances in Ezuamas”<sup>246</sup>. Before we had established San Antonio with the “*Ñiuba Santo*” gold piece, Kamejuna had been forcing the people to pay him with that same sort of gold”.

The gold piece, the “*Ñiuba Santo*” in 1690 took the form of the Statue of the Saint Kikutabe and then in 1720 of San Pedro. It helps to transfer those spiritual payments, that “*shala*” to maintain the relationship with the Catholic church and transform the violence. Years later in 1987, the dances in the church towns were still working to displace the police inspector and the settlers. The dances paid for spiritual use of nature and the debt, generated by affectations of the priests and the police inspectors, linking them to the assemblage of reciprocity of the Law of Origin

During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, while the police inspectors attempted to eliminate the relationship of the *mamos* to their ezuamas, the Kaggaba church towns upon which the Inspectors depended, also depended on the work of the *mamos*. The fiestas irreparably linked the ancestral practices of the ezuamas to the church towns. Each one of these church towns maintained its relationship with its respective ezuamas, and their principal *mamos*, despite or alongside, the abuse suffered at the hands of the very same Kaggaba authorities. The church needed the fiestas as part of the process of missionizing and the Police Inspector needed the

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<sup>246</sup> Interview Kasiki Shimata de Juan Conchacala Abril 21 2017 p. 3. *Zhona* means spiritual food to be given to the mother though thought, music and dance.. *Shala* literally means debt to the mother that people must repay for having used her water, air, and other forms of her life force.

church towns as part of organizing land and extracting wealth, and those towns could not subsist without the participation of the mamos from the ezuamas.

The fiestas provided the church towns with the legitimacy that the Kaggaba needed to represent themselves as subjects within the law of the inspector with access to certain rights. The structure of Kaggaba authorities and ezuamas organized around church towns, in spite of the problems this implied, enabled this relationship to grow and transform into new ways of protecting territory after the 1980. They grew out of the same principles and articulated non indigenous forms of government with the Law of Origin.

The Kaggaba are still hold those “fiestas” every year in those church towns where they were started centuries ago. There is always a mamo from the nearby Ezuama who has inherited the role as the head of the fiesta and lead dancer in each town. The “pita” was a strategy through which the mamos over the centuries would condition the space of the church towns to articulate with the ezuamas. In this sense they transformed the towns into a successful space through which the practices of the ezuamas accompanied the church towns during many years, and incorporated many of those same aspects of the mask dances. These were practices of resistance. This does not mean that these church towns were more or less Kaggaba, but that they are strategies to maintain connections with the Law of Origin, based on the same Law of Origin thought the Kaggaba have been able to navigate through external processes of violence for centuries or millennia.

#### **4.5 The “fabric” of Ancestral Territory withstands the Privatization of Land.**

In this section we bring in aspects of territory, and relationships between territory, Law of Origin, people and nature as reciprocity. We look at how the organization of ancestral territory was affected by the regime of the police inspector, and the strategies the Kaggaba used to defend it. Effects on the practices the Law of Origin also transformed territory, both at a material level and its “spiritual” connections, as something that needed to be “healed” which we will see next.

After 1820, Kaggaba territory started to become privatized, and transformed into a commodity to be bought and sold. Imposed processes of privatization of land, within the whole assemblage of the church town and Police Inspector system entailed numerous and severe problems for the Kaggaba. It affected the organization of territory. the network of “sacred sites”, related to the environment and people of each Ezuama. Kaggaba forms of territorial organization were increasingly interrupted when confronted with practices of the use of nature and territory for profit and not as an exchange with the Law of Origin.

The Kaggaba deployed a series of strategies to defend against the privatization of land. Through participation in church towns indigenous families could have the Police Inspector write deeds for their own farms, protecting them against setters. Over time the use of deeds assumed great importance amongst the Kaggaba communities to assert ownership, and even today those old land deeds are sometimes still used as for resolving land disputes amongst families.

To start this section, at the same public meeting in Pueblito, a Kaggaba Mamo from the church town of San Jose related an instance of how title deeds and church towns could be used to defend Kaggaba lands. He told the following history about how his great grandparents were able to save thousands of acres of territory from the Police inspectors.

My grandmother, was a Kaggaba, and very rich. She owned seven big parcels of land distributed around the Guatapuri valley from San Jose all the way up to the paramo. Each parcel had about 1,000 head of cattle. She had inherited these farms from her husband who had them titled to himself years before. At that time there was lots of land and very few indigenous people. All her husband had to do was get the Police Inspector to write the deeds, and give the Inspector a good commission of cattle in exchange.

But today, all the land and the 7.000 head of cattle are totally gone. Nothing is left. When my great grandmothers husband died, she got married to another man and they had a son. That son took everything and left none of it to his half siblings, my mother. He gradually sold everything and he spent it all on drinking. He didn't know how to work and finally ended out with nothing. "It was charging the debt of the mother". When he died the community occupied that land, and it never got back into the hands of the Police Inspector.

The Mamo further elaborated that his grandmother was from a lineage of recognized Kaggaba with access to land, whose sons and grandsons even today are amongst the principal leaders of their communities in the region. Their grandparents were able to use their wealth and knowledge of land and cattle management, to recover and safeguard Kaggaba territory from settlement by having it titled. He privatized it but then it returned to the community.

The Mamo remembers that his grandmother was at least 100 years old, when she died, and that was 40 years ago. Her ex-husband was even older. The story must have happened around 1900, when the inspectors started to title land. Well off Kaggaba families, often educated in the mission schools, defended land against the incursions of the police inspector and settlers. While these strategies were often very effective for the defense of territory, they were immersed in permanent processes of colonization that would deprive the Kaggaba of their land and extract as much wealth as possible, through violence and subjugation, severely affecting the Kaggaba relations of production through reciprocity with territory, as we see in the next section.

#### 4.5.1 The Ezuama of Sugulu, privatization and rescue by the Kaggaba authority of San Francisco.

To tell that story of the effects on land as resulting from spiritual effects over the Law of Origin, it is necessary to return to the Ezuama of Sugulu. This section analyses how Kaggaba land use was affected by the Catholic church and the Inspector, and how the Kaggaba defended their territory though reciprocity with the assemblage of the Law of Origin. It is a story of how the Police Inspector system affected the capacity of the mamos to manage their Ezuama, while simultaneously participation in church towns helped to hold the ezuamas together. We also show how the territory of the Ezuama is organized as part of the assemblage of the "law of organ".

Sugulu is located below the Ezuama of Sancona, and close to the church town of San Francisco. It is the same Ezuama from where Mamo Juan Pablo had confronted Padre Ventura in the first church town of *Kuintemula* around 1690. Mamo Juan Pablo had lost his masks, and Padre Ventura lost his town.

These histories of resistance in Sugulu surfaced while we were working on our second European Union Project and form part of the book *Shikwalaka*. For the project groups of Mamos from

each major Ezuama in Kaggaba territory would come down from their ezuamas to their OGT office in Santa Marta. They would explain the principal sacred sites in each of their ezuamas and how they related to the management of the water, forests and animals in their territories. We would sit for several days together marking out maps on Google Earth as the mamos located and described each sacred site, and through those sites, the spiritual principles of their ezuamas.

The areas in their ezuama that the mamos of Sugulu were concerned with were some special ancestral “Kunzshi” forests and their related sacred sites. The mamos of Sugulu were worried that some families were cutting down parts of the forest, which was not to be cut at all and asked for assistance from the OGT to help stop that. The authorities and mamos of the OGT Kaggaba team, decided that they would visit the Ezuama and its mamos, to find out what was happening to the sacred sites and forests, and how the situation could be remedied. I was to go on the visits, collect the information, write the reports and make the maps, which were later published in the book *Shikwakala*. Sugulu is a 2 day walk up the mountain from the Kaggaba town of Bonga and we visited several times.

In one meeting the issue came up of who had been cutting down the Kanzhi forests<sup>247</sup>. The mamos explained they were the descendants of a Kaggaba named Uribe who had purchased all the territory of Sugulu some 120 years ago. Recently, his grandchildren inherited the land. A few of them had forgotten the traditional land use of Sugulu and considered the land to be “private”. They and mistakenly thought it was theirs to use as they saw fit, and not in accordance with the Law of Origin. The origin of these problems was in the police inspector.

- Mamo Ambrosio loses Sugulu to the Police Inspector

The mamos of Sugulu told the following story about privatization of territory, damage to the ezuamas and the Law of Origin, and the resulting loss of forest. It is a sequel to when Mamo Juan Pablo lost the dances in Sugulu, during his confrontation with Padre Venturio in the Church town of Kuintemula. It starts with Mamo Ambrosio Chimunkero, who was mamo Esteban’s great grandfather. He and a few other families took care of the Ezuama and its Kanzhi forests. His son was Silvestre Chimunquero. He liked to drink and was tricked by the Police Inspector into incurring a big debt with the settlers. The inspector charged the debt, and Silvestre gave him the entire part of the Ezuama that could not be inhabited by people in exchange, the Kanzhi forests all the way up to the paramo, even they could not be given to anyone.

Another Kaggaba, from the town of San Francisco, named Uribe Zarabata got news of the problem. He wanted to rescue those forests and return them to the governance of the Ezuama, before the Inspector deeded them out. Uribe had a lot of cattle. He paid Silvestre’s debt and rescued all the public forests in the Ezuama<sup>248</sup>.

This was a story of resistance. Uribe Zarabata was an authority of San Francisco, and used the church town and inspector system to defend Kaggaba territory and its ezuamas. His role as a

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<sup>247</sup> Kanzhi is a tree endemic to some Kaggaba ezuamas that produces a large edible nut, very important for people wild animals.

<sup>248</sup> The lineage goes from Mamo Juan Pablo a Mamo Zhuishu, Mamo Jinzhi, Bacilio Chimunkero, Ambrosio Chimunkero, Silvestre Chimunkero, Zalekun Chimunkero (Saga), Francisco Zarabata Chimunquero, and now Mamo Antanasio Zarabata Simungama and his brother Esteban Zarabata Simungama. The original name of the lineage is Nubi toje, the Jaguar.

Kaggaba authority was partially based on his ability to articulate with the context of the police inspector and the settlers through the church towns. Raising cattle enabled certain Kaggaba leaders to generate enough wealth to recover their territory from the Colonos. Uribe was also one of the Kaggaba who learned to read and write in the schools of the “Territorios de la Nebada and Motilones” during the 1880s (Cucchiella 1995).

Uribe was committed to being a part of the recovery of the Ezuama both at the level of territory and ancestral practice. He married into the lineage of the Mamos of Sugulu with Mamo Ambrosio's daughter, Salekun Maria Nicolasa. They had a son, Francisco Zalabata, who became Ambrosio's apprentice to learn to dance with the masks. Mamo Ambrosio still remembered where Mamo Juan Pablo had hidden the masks and objects that he used to dance in the Ezuama before the problems in Kuintemula. Ambrosio still practiced the knowledge of how to care for entire territory of the Ezuama, its waters, land, forests, animals and people and how to make the spiritual payments. Mamo Ambrosio taught that to Francisco so that his lineage could keep on managing the Ezuama and one day recover the masks he had hidden away. But it didn't work, and the whole mask recovery idea fell apart.

Fortunately, Mamo Juan Pablo had given the other masks from Sugulu to the Mamos from the ezuamas of Seizhua and Makotama for safekeeping. As was the case of the Kankuamo after Fray Romero's destruction of the sanctuaries, the Mamos of Makotama had agreed to return those masks to Sugulu when a Kwibi could again be trained to dance. Today the mamos of Sugulu are again trying to train an apprentice and recover the masks and dances<sup>249</sup>.

A few members of Uribe's family, as the new “owners” of the entire territory of Sugulu, felt they could do what they wanted with it, now feeling exempt from the norms of traditional land management. Some of his descendants started to forget about that ancestral responsibility of returning those forests to the Mamos and a few started to cut down some patches of forest. Cumulative effects of “Privatizing land” started to become materially visible, expressed through some environmental transformations of the forests, springs and grasslands. In spite of all these difficulties, when we visited Sugulu in 2014, most of the forest was intact. These incipient transformations were of great worry to the mamos of Sugulu and an indicator of alterations in spiritual order of the Ezuama.

#### 4.5.2 The Ezuama as the embodiment of the “Law of Origin” and Ancestral Territory.

##### - The Kanzhi forests and the law of life.

On our visits to Sugulu, the Mamos wanted to show how the order of the Ezuama works to preserve the organization of aspects of nature and how the alterations in that order relate to affectations to the Kanzhi forests and other elements of nature, like an assemblage of reciprocity. We went on very long treks through Sugulu. The mamos made clear that the Kanzhi forests, as is everything else in the Ezuama, and in the entire Sierra Nevada for that matter, are held together by sacred sites that underpin the forests and other ecosystems through their spiritual

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<sup>249</sup> Report on Sugulu European Union project September 2015, RKMA.



connections, and spiritual and material practices of reciprocity. The Kanzhi forests cannot be used in ways that affect the spiritual principles that keep them together. The relationships between the ancestral practices of the Kaggaba, sacred sites and taking care of nature as an interconnected part of the same “Law of Origin”, is the subject of a chapter I wrote for the book *Shikwakala*. Here I draw from that to give some examples of how the Mamos from Sugulu express and live embodied relationships of reciprocity with territory.

According to the Mamos of Sugulu, the whole territory of the Ezuama is attached to the umbilical cord of the mother of the origin of life. Mamo Antanasio explains “The Mother of the ezuama of Sugulu is the sacred site of Jaba Malkaka. She is the mother of the birth, the belly button, of all the animals, especially jaguars, and the people. From that Origin, the Ezuama also received all types of large trees, specially the Kanzhi forests, their animals and birds.

The principal spiritual organizers of this valley were the father Nukshalua and the mother Sé (a very old rock). From there the thought, the spirit represented in the Ezuama, from before dawn is materialized... through the sacred sites. ... That is where the spiritual force originates to maintain everything that exists in the Ezuama, the animals, plants, fruits, birds and knowledge. In those sites is where the debt originates for all those forest animals, to be distributed around the world (OGT 2014, 1)”. Those forests have their sets of sacred sites that form part of the forests, associated with the birds, animals, water, soil, and the activity of dancing from the ezuamas. Through that network of sacred sites, the Mamos do the “Spiritual work”, give spirit, to maintain the relationship between what they call the “spiritual and material order” of the Ezuama.

One morning, we were walking up a path through the Kanzhi forests with Mamo Jacinto. His uncle - Mamo Antanasio was coming down the path. He stopped and gave the group some advice, “gwiaba” in Kogian, “you have to think very well in this part of the forest, you can only have positive thoughts, so as not to affect the forest, it is very sacred, we are connected to that spirit” (OGT 2014, 14). Mamo Antanasio was quite right. Just a few minutes before, outside of his earshot, a couple of people had been saying things that were not very nice. We all heeded the advice, kept silent and maintained our thoughts on nature itself, listening to the birds and the forest. In the Sierra Nevada there is a relationship between thought, spirit and things. If you think or say something, it can have an effect on the forest, get given to the spirit, and might generate a material response. That forest is connected in spirit to people, so people have to be careful with what they think and say.

We continued up the ridge a bit more and arrived at the sacred site of Nungala, the mother of birds. This is where the mamos pay spiritually to use the feathers of the birds that eat the Kanzhi, and shed the feathers for the Mamos to put in their dancing crowns. Then we went to another site, Nukasá, the father of the Armadillo. This is where the mamos pay for armadillos, and the other animals who eat the Kanzhi, and whose meat the mamos also eat when they do their dancing. The Mamos took us to several other sites, rocks and springs, the mothers and fathers of everything in that forest. In this vision, the forest is an interdependent assemblage, and people give back spiritually things that they use from it. All the sacred sites are connected to that assemblage, people, things thought and spirit.

The mamos explained that If the Kanzhi forests are cut down, then the people would be destroying the sacred sites that maintain their connection to the center of the Ezuama. If you cut it down, then you would be damaging that entire assemblage of reciprocity, including the spiritual aspect, and then as a result, other things would start happening. The forest could only be used for collecting nuts, and other things the mamos used, and those nuts had to be “paid for” spiritually through the work of dancing in the ezuamas and the payments at those sites. That is what this forest was for, in addition to everyone being able to eat those nuts.

In the Ezuama there are ancestrally designated areas where people can cut down other types of forests for agriculture, and which have their sacred sites for agriculture, for spiritually returning that food to the forest so that it can regenerate. These are places for maintaining communities, families, for living well and paying the spiritual debt generated from personal disputes and emotions, all that associated with living in community and family. One cannot be separated from the other, forests and people all grown out of the constant tension between principles of life and the conflicts associated with using nature and living in family. It is all the same thing.

One spring, a mother sacred site, made a particular impression on me. We walked down a rather steep and long path through a flank of the Kanzhi forest. It was a spring called “Shunkuakua”, a creek with a little pool, the mother of water for the Kanzhi forest. It was surrounded by big humid trees emitting vapor. Shwizhimaya frogs sang to make it rain. It was also where hummingbirds came to take their baths. They would hover, dive in for a moment, and pop right out, purifying themselves, and the water. They had left a few feathers around the edge. It was a very special and silent place where the spirit of water was renovated.

I took a couple of photographs of the pool. Immediately a “Shimukuzhi” bird started to cackle at us, rather distraught. Birds carry the message of the mother. Mamo Jacinto turned to me. “You should not have taken those photos. This mother needs to be left in peace to do her work. The bird is telling us we need to leave now, we might be affecting this mother. Her spirit is water for the animals and the forests. We can come back again another time”. We left, silently.

- The buried histories of Cutting down the forest.

The mamos also took us to see a couple of sacred sites in the Kanzhi forest that had been affected. The first of those places also made quite an impression on our group including a number of Kaggaba authorities. We had been walking about an hour through the tranquil forest along a ridge. Then we came upon a clearing of recently burned and cut prime Kanzhi forest. Everyone stood around aghast. The reminder was clear You cannot cut down Kanzhi forest. It is a violation of its principles of origin. I kept myself silently busy, taking the photographs and the GPS locations for our OGT report. We continued along to a few more damaged sacred sites.

Those “affectations” to the forest of Kanzhi, were also related to the “affectations” on the Law of Origin, had started during the times of Mamo Juan Pablo, well before of the police inspectors. “Privatization” of the land had caused a disconnect with ancestral forms of management, with the spirit of the Ezuama, resulting eventually in the destruction of the forests and affectations to the sacred sites they formed part of. This was something in the making for centuries and was only now starting to emerge from the land. The affectations were cyclical from spirit to land, to trees, and back again to spirit.

5.5.3 The ezuamas prevail: curing the Kanzhi forest.

The Kaggaba authorities with the OGT commission and the Mamos from Sugulu were quite clear on what had to be done for the recovery and protection of these forests. A direct relationship exists between the exercise of the authority of the mamos, and their ability to manage the Ezuama through its sacred sites, and their dances. It would not be necessary to complain to the Parks office nor any other public agency. The Kaggaba were fully responsible for the management of their own land, and had to exercise their own Law of Origin, and try to spiritually “repair” or “pay the debt” of the damage that had been done to their authorities during the times of the police inspectors, which is where the spiritual affectations had all started. The consultation of the Mamos concluded that the Ezuama of Sugulu had not lost its knowledge of how to manage its system of sacred sites and forests. However, its authority needed to be “reinforced”.

The consultations indicated that the solution was to recover the principal *nujue* of the Ezuama of Sugulu, itself an ezuama called *Munúa*, where the origin of the spirit of Sugulu resided. *Munua* was the principal dancing Ezuama for Mamo Juan Pablo, but which he had lost during the first raids from the Catholic churches. The solution was for the OGT to repurchase the possession of the ancient terraced site of *Munua* from a Kaggaba family who had taken it generations ago.

The OGT was not the first to try to return the lost ezuamas to the mamos. It was part of a long and continual processes of recovery, of healing. As we have mentioned, Uribe and Francisco Zarabata attempted to recover the dances, in the early 1900s. Mamo Francisco later inherited the ezuama to his son the present-day Mamo Antanasio. Then in 1995 Mamo Valencio whose Ezuamas of *Seizhua* and *Makotama*, had been keeping the masks and passing the dances from Sugulu down the generations of mamos, restarted the work of the Mamos to return the dances.

In 2016 OGT did repurchase *Munua* and returned it to the lineages of mamos from Sugulu. Finally, the Mamos recovered *Munua* some 300 years after Mamo Juan Pablo was forced out. The authorities from the nearby church towns collaborated. They had their communities rebuild the *nujue* for the mamos, refurbished the nearby natural savannas for roof thatching and held meetings with the communities to support the mamos spiritual work to repay the debt. They had people stop cutting down the forests, and keep focused on their spiritual relationship with the land. The mamos of Sugulu are training their apprentices to recover their dances and their masks. The basic relationships between sacred sites, water, forests animals and land still pervade and this is the case with most Ezuamas in Kaggaba territory.

- A stopover at the Ezuama of *Kuamaka*.

One of the other Ezuamas we visited was *Kuamaka*<sup>250</sup>. It was at least another days walk up from Sugulu and we made a special trip to visit its sacred alpine lakes. Our commission would go past *Kuamaka*, and then up to its lakes in the paramo, visiting those ecosystems and their sacred sites. On the third day of the hike, we were getting close. We were just about clear the ridge and get the first view of the *nujue* of *Kuamaka*. But, tight there on the path was Mamo Santos, the head mamo of *Kuamaka*, looking quite imposing, sitting on a rock, with his staff, and accompanied by a younger apprentice.

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<sup>250</sup> We will remember that *Uamaka* is the same *Uamaka* that appears in the Pueblos of the *encomienda* of *Sancona* in the *encomienda* documents from the archives.

To go any further, we needed to ask for permission spiritually. The rock was “Jate Dukukua” which Mamo Santos explained and Jose Antonio translated, was the father where the Kaggaba leave all their negative thought to spiritually heal themselves before going into the Ezuama of Kuamaka. It was a large flat rock with a hole in it. Further below near the river there was another site called “Ajuinua”, where indigenous people from other groups, and non-indigenous people go to do that same work. “Alijuna” means “white person<sup>251</sup>” in Wayuu language from the Guajira. We did that spiritual payment with Mamo Santos. It was already quite late, noon, and we had several more hours to go to get to the Paramo. A few people in the group were quite tired and didn’t think they could make it in one day. He told us there was no other option and that we would make it. He could spiritually hold the lake open for us during one night, and then we would have to come right down. That is what happened. After doing that payment, everyone got a second wind. We walked another 7 hours and got up to Mashin, a set of small Kaggaba houses at the base of the alpine lake. The next day we went up to the lakes called “Ukundziwe’, the mother of life of that whole river valley. At about 12 noon a large cloud appeared and chased us down the path with lightning bolts, thunder and rain all the way back to the Ezuama of Kuamaka, just like Mamo Santos said.

Mamo Santos now deceased, was a very respectable Mamo in the OGT, and one of the founders of the organization. I knew him well. Before we left Mamo Santos’s “confession”, on the rock, I told him a bit about our work. Mamo Santos responded, that yes, the ezuamas had suffered a lot of affectations. The forests have suffered, the mamos have suffered and the authorities too. But these were not the main problems of the Kaggaba, those affectations were not the fault of the Kaggaba. It is not the fault of the ezuamas, nor the mamos. The problem is with the people, inspectors, settlers and priests, who had for centuries had tried to destroy the ezuamas.

Just like Mamo Antanasio in Sugulu, Mamo Santos reminded us that the Mamos have been caring for the Law of Origin in territory since the start of time. The affectations that we might find in the ezuamas, problems with forests and grasslands were minimal. The real affectations to Kaggaba territory, are not in the ezuamas but the ones that the “Yali”, the non-indigenous people had been doing around the lower areas of the mountain. The destruction of the sacred sites on the “Black Line”, climate change, mining has seriously added up to all the problems that have been confronting ancestral territory since the times of Kamejuna.

Mamo Santos reminded us that “you should be writing your book [Shiwakala] about how we Kaggaba care for the Law of Origin, that is the essence of being Kaggaba, and not focus so much on the problems”. That is where your focus should be: “shibulama” the practices of the Law of Origin. We do not deviate from that. Caring for the Law of Origin has been the focus of the Kaggaba over the last 500 years and as I was to find, have been at the root of the Kaggaba practices of resistance to violence for all that time. The “Law of Origin”, is the thread that leads us through this dissertation.

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<sup>251</sup> Meaning any non-indigenous person, regardless of their skin color.

#### **4.6 Conclusions: Resistance to violence, the Law of the Inspector and the Law of Origin.**

The times of what Kaggaba remember as the Police Inspector supposedly were to offer liberation from colonial debt and oppression. However, in practice the Colombian nation implemented policies to transform the indigenous people, in this case the Kaggaba into “Mestizos”, integrating them into capitalist economies and “modern” forms of management of territory and population.

These new policies by the 1870s, had fused with a series of practices of domination and abuse that would seem to have reemerged from the times of the *encomienda* in the Colonial Period. The Law of the Inspector combined with the practices of violence, domination and debt inherited from the *encomienda*, moving up the mountain along well traveled pre-Hispanic routes from the sea up into the heart of Kaggaba territory. These hybrid situations of structural violence, resulted in recurrent states of exception which the Kaggaba had to coexist during over those next 100 or so years until the 1980s.

As a form of resistance, the Kaggaba persevered with the church town system based on the figure of San Pedro. The indigenous church towns, alongside their patron saint dances, had enabled the Kaggaba to position themselves within contexts of legitimacy of the law that provided certain advantages, including having authorities from one’s own church towns, and improved chances of Kaggaba access to land around those church towns. At the same time by extracting debt from the Kaggaba the *encomenderos*, the Catholic church, and later the Police Inspectors and the settlers were implicitly linked to the Law of Origin itself tied to the center or origin of ancestral territory creating openings to relationships of resistance back through though the links of reciprocity along those routes of domination.

The figure of the church town, the saints and the fiestas, enabled the Mamos to protect their *ezuamas*. The Kaggaba were able to maintain their own law, which we loosely call the “Law of Origin”, based on generating debt as reciprocity with the principles that sustain life. Participation in the Law of Origin involves specific body, and spiritual practices and forms of corporal “contiguity”. These practices that enable articulation of people with that assemblage of the Law of Origin are held together with chains of reciprocity that return or give back to “the mother”, so as to enable life to flourish.

By forcing the Kaggaba, and other people to work and produce wealth through diverse forms of violence and subjection, the Police Inspectors, Settlers and *encomenderos* entered a sort of reverse debt system with the principles of life. People like Kamejuna extracted gold and wealth from the Kaggaba, that form of extraction produced more violence. Those practices of violence usually covered themselves up, justified themselves so that the participants in that violence would not recognize that the acts they were committing were at the end, against themselves.

They would justify their actions with more violence, and often making those subject to their violence reproduce it down the links of reverse reciprocity, through an abundance of misrecognition. Seen as assemblages of reciprocity, including the spirit, those exchanges, can have results and effects on the persons who generated that violence by having given and received those forms of debt without their recognition and processes of healing. The Kaggaba mention diverse instances in which people who perpetuate those relationships of reciprocity based on violence can be subject to the response of the “mother earth”. The effects are wider including

everyone and everything involved, including aspects of nature and people and even the spiritual principles of origin themselves. The principal concern of the Kaggaba Mamos is healing.

Indigenous practices of resistance involved the recognition and reconciliation of these fundamental contradictions between life and violence. The fact that the Kaggaba authorities were able to participate in the church towns, enabled them to access socially or legally legitimated subject positions, to be able to navigate through and transform the “Law of the Inspector”. For instance, though a certain degree of articulation with that system of violence, they could repurchase land that the settlers had obtained, and in many cases reintegrate that land back into the ezuamas. That relationship maintained certain key aspects of Kaggaba territory as a space intertwined with the Law of Origin. The people, sacred sites, forests, water, and grasslands of ancestral territory are still there after so many centuries of problems.

The Kaggaba as a people, refused to relinquish their practices of the “Law of Origin” in spite of the onslaught of Spanish armies, priests, and later settlers and police inspectors. That would be simply inconceivable. Just as often as those processes of violence went shrouded in a veil of misrecognition, the processes of healing based on the Law of Origin also went unrecognized to many observers. The Kaggaba never became Catholic. From end of the colonial period and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century many visitors saw the Kaggaba’s adoption of the Catholic faith in the church towns, as rather ambivalent. Rafael Celedón in the 1880s also suspected that the indigenous communities went to Catholic mass only a requirement, and in reality, continued their traditional practices. He wonders: “It would be difficult to know whether these superstitious practices were a sacrilegious imitation of the Holy Sacraments, or if they existed prior to the introduction of the Christianity in the Nevada” (1886, xii)<sup>252</sup>. Certainty they were both.

In Chapter 6 we will return to the topic how Kaggaba finally threw off the chains of reverse debt imposed on them during centuries after the arrival of the Spanish. Before that, Chapter 5 talks more about the practices of healing and brings to light some of the often-unseen principles through which the Kaggaba liberate themselves, based on the “Law of Origin”, as resistance, reciprocity and healing. Those principles are based on a permanent recognition of the interrelatedness of the person, the self, to the origin of life.

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<sup>252</sup> It is also probably not a coincidence that the Capuchinos and other Catholic missionaries were never able to establish the missions and orphanages they hoped for amongst the Kaggaba, and as they had succeeded to do in other areas of the Sierra, like Nabusimake, Atanquez and “La Sierrita” near the Wiwa community of Achintukua.

## **5.0 Reciprocity as Healing: Turning Violence Upside down.**

The Mamos who relate these histories of resistance from the colonial period, all through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries always come back to same conclusion: that practices of the “Law of Origin” are based on principles of generating life, and invariably transform violence. The indigenous peoples of the SNSM, the Kaggaba mamos, and authorities, as permanent practice, attempt to transform the relationships of debt that they were forced into through the Spanish conquest, the encomendero system, the Catholic church and later settlers and the police inspectors.

In this chapter, we will address what we have called the Kaggaba Law of Origin, based on practices of reciprocity, the exchange of gifts or “debts” with the principles of origin embedded in “Nature” assemblages that include territory and people. Through Kaggaba “spiritual work” the mamos and other members of the community “pay” the debts of having used those principles to the respective spiritual “mothers” and “fathers” of each principle of the Law of Origin, embedded in territory. This is based on permanent processes of recognition, and “chains of reciprocity” with those same principles of the Law or Origin, both at the level of spiritual and material exchanges.

We will also incorporate the concepts of embodiment and contiguity as part of how the Kaggaba mamos and most Kaggaba in general, work with the Law of Origin enabling then to articulate with the those forms of reciprocity. The Chapter moves through examples of work from the Law of Origin, from the Kaggaba mamos themselves have provided, to get closer to Kaggaba work in spiritual reciprocity. It would be difficult to describe something “spiritual”. It is possible to reference the context in which these practices of healing and embodiment of the Law of Origin take place without really being able to talk directly about that. The narrative practices of many mamos often bring the listener into the world of reciprocity based on spirit, to make reference to something that can be embodied and articulated but perhaps without actually describing it, so as to be able to participate in its care.

### **5.1 Reciprocity and the Law of Origin.**

We are going to talk of embodiment in territory through the example of the Ezuama. The essence of the ezuama is “spiritual”, and links into embodied practices of mamos taught to articulate with this type of reciprocity with the spirit though very precise techniques handed down many generations. Many of these “ancestral” practices take place from the ezuamas, as specialized work of the mamo, but they also take place in all aspects of daily life.

One day in the OGT office, a group of mamos were reflecting on ezuamas with the Kaggaba Governor, and they explained it to me. Ezuamas, are where the mamos, from their particular lineages, heal and cure all the plants, people and nature in their territories<sup>253</sup>. In Ezuama from the beginning of time is where, the spiritual parents of the origin of the world<sup>254</sup> would heal their spiritual brothers and sisters. The Kaggaba Mamos and Sakas, up in their ezuamas spoke Teyuna. and the language of rocks “Jarkela”, meaning the language of the principles which never

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<sup>253</sup> Conversation in meeting with Mamo Saleb Nolavita from Jukumiezhi. August 21 2006.

<sup>254</sup> Mulkueke, Seizhankua, sintana, seikukwui, and others were the fathers who healed, the ñañiiba or the people who needed healing were called Juwaklda. Kogui y Ñañiiba y Kasougwi. Kashingwui, Ulabangwui, Teishu Mamougwi, Namaku. These were the brothers and sisters of the Kaggaba.

change<sup>255</sup>. They would heal their interrelated Lowland lineages, so that they would not embody behavior of reverse reciprocity, as was the case for the Nañiba who did not comply, like Kamejuna or the Police Inspectors. Those people complied with the Law of Origin became Kaggaba, as those people who respect the principles of care.

- The Ezuama of Sugulu: Embodied assemblages of reciprocity.

The Ezuama is a clear example of the embodiment of assemblages of place, spirit and things through reciprocity. An especially clear example is how Mamos Esteban and Antanasio Zarabata describe their Ezuama of Sugulu through lineages, territory, spirit, nature, words and sound, all part of the same assemblage. To give an idea, here we include parts of what they said for the book *Shikwakala*.

“The lineage responsible for managing Sugulu es called Ulda Toke as the original lineage of the mother that organizes this Ezuama. Its origin in the Ezuama is at the place called Uldamá, also called Jaba Senumé, which is materially manifested as a ceramic pot in the form of a jaguar buried underground. The next spiritual person who represents the Ezuama is **Jate Shimanani**, the father of the threads or spiritual connections to the origin with the bodies of the animals. Then we have **Jate Duanakshe**, another “sacred” place which is also the material manifestation animals, especially jaguars, their skin and placenta where they are born. That is the same place where we pay our spiritual ‘tribute’ to the Kanzhi forest”<sup>256</sup>.

In summary, Mamos Esteban and Antanasio explain that they are lineage of the Jaguar, lined to territory at the navel of the ezuama, Ulama, mother of origin of Sugulu. These places connected to “Jaba Sé”, meaning the mother of all spiritual creation. In turn they are linked to Siokukui, Seizhankua, Sintana and father Mulkueke who are the four spiritual fathers of the world, the four cardinal points of all ancestral territory. The mamos talk of these spiritual links as the veins, the threads of the animals, plants and everything in the Valley of Sugulu and its network of sacred sites embodying those principles. Animals, nature, people, territory and their spiritual origins are all linked together.

Mamo Esteban talked about how he takes care of his spiritual origin, “My origin is the lineage of the Jaguar, and from that origin in the place of Ulama I have to take care of the Jaguar, and from there my lineage has to take care of all the jabas and jates in my Ezuama. That is how we take care of the water, the animals, the trees, and all their principles. My lineage has cared for those principles since the beginning of time, and we still do all the spiritual work required by each jaba and jate. Mamo Esteban embodies that Ezuama, and is part of that territory, of its spiritual principles and the things in it.

Mamo Esteban then reviews the manifestation the spirit in territory, how we perceive and form part of spirit. He says that spirit becomes manifest from the sacred site called Munua, also as where the mamos’ principal ceremonial house, *nujue*, is originally located in the Ezuama. That spirit is reborn at every moment, when in talk, in vision, in hearing, and in thought. That is where

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<sup>255</sup> The Kaggaba assert that rocks have language, and the Kaggaba can speak it, as the unchanging principles they embody.

<sup>256</sup> (RKMA 2014) used in (Mestre and Rawitscher 2018).



the same principle of plants and animals is born and is connected to all the sacred sites”. The spirit as a vision can also be heard as a sound in the ear, the ringing sound of a little animal called a *ñeque*.

Mamo Esteban then reexplained some of the relationships between nature and origin of spirit that the Kaggaba work with. “We talk of *Se* – from the word “*seuza*”- breath, a principle that can be felt or imagined. *Munua* is where that spirit was born, that is why that place is called *Munua*”. Spirit, “*seuza*”, is the breath of life that flows through all elements of nature, its people and the *Ezuama* itself. It is also a sound. “When water was born the sound of water could be spiritually heard. That is the principle of when the connections were born, the veins”. The sound of water exists, so that we can see or hear the spirit of water in the material world. The origin of water has a sound, and it makes up our own bodies and that of nature itself. We are connected to these principles through the spirit of water. The same spiritual principles of origin are part of people, sound and nature and flow through the sacred sites linking it all together<sup>257</sup>.

It is from the *Ezuama* sites of *Ulama* and *Munua* that the *mamos* spiritually “Pay” for their use of these principles, they give back what they took to heal them. They articulate with these principles through dance, music and the right kind of spiritual payments, in reality thought and spirit, returned at each of their sacred sites. Sounds and music maintain the connections with the mother. “When we sing and play the *carrizo*, the spiritual world sees that as people, who understand each other. That is why we are *mamos*, and learned to care for those sacred sites where the origin of nature is, of all the plants and animals so they do not lose their force and get sick (RKMA 2016, 32)”. Sound vibrates like a spirit through the entire assemblage<sup>258</sup>.

Mamo Esteban goes further, and affirms that he forms part of Law of Origin, as an authority for its care, in the chain of reciprocity that is the Law of Origin. To do that, the Mamo must maintain certain practices, *habitus* or bodily work, certain stance, and correctly perform the practices of spiritual payment with nature. He states that he embodies those same principles of the spiritual “People” the mothers of the trees and water he is giving back to.

These relationships of reciprocity and contiguity repeat themselves in each of the *ezuamas*, and all their sacred sites and territorial jurisdictions. Each of these *ezuamas* in turn, are linked together at the level of the entire territory. They must receive and pay all of their collective debt, “*shala*”, to the center of ancestral territory, in the mountain of “*Gonawindua*”, the origin of the “Law of Origin”. The whole mountain, through the network of reciprocity between *ezuamas*, sacred sites, people and things “pays” this chain of collective debt to nature, as the *Mamos* have explained time after time in this dissertation, and most of their public presentations.

## 5.2 Chains of Debt as Reciprocity, Marcel Mauss.

The Kaggaba “Law of Origin” has many similarities with concepts of “the gift” or “systems of reciprocity” that Marcel Mauss reflected on many years ago. Mauss observed reciprocity at the

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<sup>257</sup> (RKMA 2014) used in (Mestre and Rawitscher 2018). A *carrizo* is a reed flute

<sup>258</sup> The description of the spirit as a sound that flows through all aspects of an assemblage is similar to the concept of “sonic spaces ... constructed on the basis of reciprocity “that connect place with spirit (Pooley 2023, 20, 23).

heart of virtually every aspect of what we can loosely call “traditional peoples,” and also of modern societies. Practices of reciprocity may link people through multiple dimensions that go well beyond the exchange of material goods, to encompass “physically and spiritually, that essence, that food” which exerts a “religious hold” over people (Mauss 2002, 16). For Mauss, reciprocity is based on a “**chain** of users (15)<sup>259</sup>” and includes “spiritual ties between things” ultimately as a “constant exchange between spiritual matter (18)”.

For Mauss, “Reciprocity produces an affect not only on ...[people]... but also on nature (18)”, and its spirits or “gods” which are the “True owners of things (20)”. Reciprocity links goods, people and nature through shared spiritual essences, and implies connections between material elements with a spiritual “place of Origin (16)”. Exchanges at a spiritual level can produce effects at a material level in nature, as what nature gives back to us, and the other way around. The gods must be paid for the use of nature (21). A gift can have “an immediate effect on the mind of this spirit (21)” and can produce material tangible results (26). The idea that contingent results can be produced from spiritual participation in reciprocity is key to what I call here as articulated assemblages of reciprocity or the Law of Origin. As such, we can also postulate that these forms of reciprocity and response are communicative practices that can transform context.

Another element of importance is that the elements within an assemblage of reciprocity become indivisible, part of the same body. “The nature and intentions of the contracting parties, the nature of the thing given, are all indivisible (77)”. Mauss gives the example of dancing with masks in which the shamans are “the masked incarnations, often Shaman priest-sorcerers, possessed by the spirit whose name they bear (50)”. In this sense all the elements in these chains of reciprocity are part of a shared spiritual origin. Likewise, Kaggaba mamos tell that their dancing masks, actually come to form part of the principles of origin, as do the dancers, when they adopt the correct “habitus” or corporal and mental practices to participate in those forms of reciprocity.

At another level, for Mauss, reciprocity incorporates the Law”, as part of a “much more general and enduring contract (7)”, and establishes obligations between people, nature and spirituality. When a person participates in a “system of reciprocity”<sup>260</sup>, she or “binds” or pledges themselves to that chain of gifts, and the obligation to keep participating in and perpetuating that system, at once forming a part of it all. The participant in the system becomes an authority, and must care for the system, as that person inherently becomes a part of it. If reciprocity is linked to giving to and receiving from nature, that same gift gives back to people. This relationship with nature, becomes the law and legitimates the exercise of authority within that chain of reciprocity.

These chains of reciprocity can either be a medicine for life, or a “poison” says Mauss. Participation binds a person to that debt system, and to its spiritual origins. In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, we mentioned that the legal finds its roots in Nietzsche’s concept of ‘legal obligations’ (Nietzsche 1996, 47) based on a long chain of debt relations and guilt leading back to an original founding figure. For instance, the debt system of the police inspector that the Kaggaba found themselves enmeshed, links to an origin of debt found in the Spanish conquest and the encomienda expressed as tribute. The indigenous people are forcibly inserted into the

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<sup>259</sup> The highlight is mine, emphasizing relationships between chains of people and chains of debt.

<sup>260</sup> Mauss uses the term “system of total services”. I apply the term “assemblage”.

encomienda as a never-ending chain of debt in which they must pay gold and work for the right to live, occupy territory, and to maintain a place within this debt system. That form of reciprocity perpetuates a sense of fundamental guilt as the dominated people that can never be fully paid back, as was the case for the Police Inspector system.

A chain of debt leads back to the king himself and his “divine right”. As Walter Benjamin suggests, in “Critique of Violence” such legal order is held together by “mythic violence” (Benjamin 1996). This sort of law is not based on reproducing the life of the collectivity, of the common good, but of extracting personal interest without giving back to the origin of that system of reciprocity. All those involved try their best to extract personal advantage from each level of debt.

Such assemblages are based on “reverse debt”. The more the person receives from that assemblage, or participates, the more is extracted from the person. Kamejuna never gives back to the community, nor participates in practices of reciprocity with the ezuamas, based on the Law of Origin. He extracts more gold and work from the Kaggaba, linking their payment of their inextricable attachment to the “guilt” at the origin of the gift. The very act of paying confirms the person’s essential guilt, reaffirms the debt.

Mauss replicates. “The brutish pursuit of individual ends is harmful to the ends and the peace of all, to the rhythm of their work and joys—and rebounds on the individual himself (2002, 9)”, unable to give back to the collectivity. The person who receives “the gift” from these systems without participating and following that law of giving back to the same collectivity, is placed at a disadvantage. Those people who abuse the Law of Origin, can also receive undesired back from the same assemblage of the Law of Origin, within which that initial value was violently extracted. Those reverse chains of debt are inextricably in relationship with other people and with nature through the “Law of Origin”. That “reverse debt” is always articulated with the principles of life.

The histories the Kaggaba relate show similar articulations with reverse debt happening all the time. When the Nañiba attack the Kaggaba *kwibi* around San Pedro, it is the Nañiba who finally lose out. Kamejuna ends out buried, as a sort of spiritual payment, under a swamp. Something similar happens to the police inspector and the settlers, who charge their debt to Kaggaba, negating its payment and charging it again. By extracting wealth from that assemblage, they become inextricably linked to that same assemblage. The priests, the settlers and the police inspectors are engaged with that same debt chain which forms part of the Law of Origin itself, with its corresponding consequences or “results”, as Mauss implied.

Part of the Kaggaba practices of compliance with the “Law of Origin” are based on recognizing appropriate ways to participate in this chain of reciprocity so that it creates a collective benefit for all involved including nature itself, a medicine for life. As Mauss sums up in a sort of message to “modern” society, “relationships of reciprocity between people, objects and nature implies a permanent sense of “care” (2002, 88, 16-19). The spiritual payments that the Kaggaba realize are in theory, oriented towards keeping the chain of debt aligned with the “Law of Origin”, its care as the spiritual origin of Authority.

Participation in reciprocity implies permanent recognition of appropriate forms participation in that same assemblage. Paying a debt within an assemblage in which the person is extracting value for personal benefit without giving back “the gift” can happen in many ways that are easily misrecognized. A person can participate thinking that he or she is contributing to the collective

good when in fact it is not. Recognition is tricky. The Kaggaba mamos, or people in general, try to guarantee that their participation in the links of reciprocity go back to that same Law of Origin, and not, by accident or by design, articulated to some other debt chain, that leads elsewhere, as is the case of the “Law of Kamejuna”. The stakes are very high.

Law of Origin implies maintaining an assemblage of practices, or bodily habitus, which form part of that same assemblage, and which is embodied in people. For the Kaggaba, this requires mental concentration, and certain bodily practices, like dancing, fasting or breathing which both enable people to become part of that assemblage and are part of the same. The mamos who were tortured or attacked by their own authorities, or by others like the Police Inspectors, had no option but to “heal” themselves based on their work with the Law of Origin. They could not respond to those problems by getting mad, or employing violence. By assuming that same stance of reverse debt, they would embody the “Law of Kamejuna”, or the “Law of the Inspector”, with its respective consequences.

- Food for the law. Reciprocity with the land, nature and people

Those concepts of assemblages of reciprocity mesh very well with Kaggaba practices of the Law of Origin we just cited from Sugulu. In the book *Shikuakala* other Kaggaba mamos continue these descriptions in great detail on this multidimensional assemblage of the spiritual origins of the world from “Se” – thought, the founding mothers and fathers embedded in territory as sacred sites, and how they are manifested ancestral territory in the form of mountains, lakes and rivers in a circle around the central peak of the Sierra Nevada (Mestre and Rawitscher 2018).

Here I am going to present further aspects of this assemblage that comprise the Kaggaba Law of Origin. The Kabalda dances at the ezuamas are a good example. With elements like masks, gold and feather headdresses, the mamos dress like some of the spiritual mothers and fathers and embody them, like an imprint. We could say that when the mamos dance, a sort of mimesis takes place between the person and the principle, bridging the gaps between the self and other.

I have never been to such a dance, but the mamos occasionally talk about them. In 2007, while doing some work the governor of the Kaggaba sent me up to do, I went to the Ezuama of Takina, to talk with the mamos there. I went with Mamo Manuel, from Takina. We walked up and slept the night near the church town of San Miguel. With the first rays of dawn, we continued up to the highlands of Takina. Along the way, Mamo Manuel showed me places that were important to him. We visited alpine terraced gardens and he introduced me to some of the families, elderly mothers and their children, his friends, who were working them. He gave the names of each native Kaggaba crop, only cultivated in the Sierra: varieties of beans and corn, each with its own colors, fruits, different potatoes, yams, and all sorts of other tubers. Mamo Manuel talked about all the sacred places, with their names as what they do from the Law of Origin. The mountain of the father of authority and lightning, the mother of the spiritual bath in the pool of a spring, the mother - kaguba, of the bean plant. Every place is named for its spiritual mother or father of origin. The mamos of Takina and the Kaggaba communities around San Miguel know them all.

Mamo Manuel decided we would stay the night in the Ezuama of Takina, which ended out lasting three nights. He talked about the dances in the ezuamas. The authorities of each Kaggaba community related to the Ezuama, collect a piece of each kind of food and the seeds that each family produces, until they have assembled a sample of everything that is eaten or used in the

ezuama. The Kaggaba authorities bring all that to the dance as “a gift”, of fruits, palm hearts, insects, meat of wild animals from the forests, and all sorts of other goods that the Kaggaba to use or produce from nature through their work of spiritual reciprocity at the sacred sites. Each family also gives their “Shala”, their spiritual gift to the mothers and fathers, to pay the “debt” for their use of all that food and its spiritual connections. At the dance, the Mamos receive these gifts to baptize each of these “seeds”, to “repay” and maintain the strength of the forests and principles of nature upon which they were extracted, and so the community can use them again and again and they grow stronger every time. These are gifts of food from nature and the spirit.

Mamo Manuel went deeper into the topic. Each member of the community is required to ‘pay’ for their own spiritual faults and problems, at the sacred sites in the Ezuama that the mamos consult as the spiritual principle that was affected by of that person’s action, causing a spiritual debt. That is the responsibility of our authorities, the *Jukwuwki*, to make sure that everyone participates and complies. I was quite impressed. The work of the mamos, and the Law of Origin as reciprocity at all levels. The concept of community widens beyond human community to include the “jabas” and “jates” as a spiritual level, embedded the territory as sacred sites and manifested as plants, animals, water, and everything, held by exchanges of gifts in spirit as part the Law of Origin.

Almost everything in Kaggaba life is based on these interrelated chains of reciprocity. From a male gendered perspective, the form of greeting between Kaggaba men, is based on reciprocity. All Kaggaba men have poporos, “sugi”, that they carry all day in a “sugamé” cloth knit mochila, that has within it another carefully wrapped mochila called a “Jañu Kame” with a day’s supply of “jañu”-coca leaf- which they chew all day with the aid of the poporo and the lime in it. All men must greet each other with a small handful of leaf which you put in his jañu bag, and he returns another handful to your open bag. Women often greet each other with an exchange of food during a visit<sup>261</sup>. Whenever you come into a new space, you always greet people that way, otherwise you come off as really rude.

Once a Mamo friend of mine unexpectedly showed up at a farm where I was staying. We had not seen each other in a couple of months and I got up without my mochila, and greeted him with only a handshake. He stood there for a while, just looking at me, until I went and got my mochila and we greeted each other with a bit of leaf. I excused myself. “My apologies, that was not civilized”. He smiled and having done the greeting, he walked away. Civilization for the Kaggaba means participating in the exchange of gifts, right down to the principles of origin. Other ways of greeting like a handshake are more superficial, with no evident exchange involved that would draw people and the spirit together.

When you walk into a *nujue*, the ceremonial meeting house, each person who comes in is expected to greet everyone with *jañu*, even if there are 100 people sitting on their respective benches in the dark. Most Kaggaba navigate around to greet everyone, with night vision, sorting their way around the invisible obstacles. In my case, sometimes people will stoke up the fires a bit so I can see better and not bump into something. If for some reason, I don’t greet everyone,

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<sup>261</sup> These permanent exchanges of “the gift” are what the Arhuaco call *Makruma* (Ferro Umaña 2012).

but just sit down, then people excuse me, “Ok, he’s just a ‘Yali’” – an occidental person. When I properly greet everyone, as I usually do, then sometimes someone out of the dark will say “He knows “Shibulama”, education”. And that starts off another level of exchange.

It goes further. One morning I arrived at Casa Indígena in Santa Marta together with an elderly mamó friend who had stayed the night at my wife Bibiana’s and my home. Another elderly Mamó was sitting on a step near the entrance. They hadn’t seen each other for a while. The two mamós had worked together for decades. Their trust went way back. But recently there had been problems arising between their two indigenous communities. My elderly mamó friend held out his hand in greeting with some leaf. The other mamó, responded, “I didn’t bring my mochila” which effectively he hadn’t, and didn’t receive the leaf in greeting. My mamó friend’s face dropped in shock and sorrow. He turned to me “He didn’t give me to eat, that’s the end. I can see we will never be able to work together anymore”.

The coca leaf is a greeting, and is a gift, reciprocity right down to the origin of the earth. As Mauss mentions, reciprocity can bring about the sacred in material gifts. For the Kaggaba the leaf is sacred, it is a spiritual mother. As the Kaggaba say in Spanish “la hoja” has its own tuma, a tayrona stone bead called “jaktashi”, that links the person who carries it to the spiritual place of origin of the mother of the leaf. By eating the leaf, using it, men can concentrate their thought giving it to the mother earth, in a circuit of using and paying for the leaf and its spirit. The leaf forms part of a chain of exchange, or reciprocity, between wife and husband both spiritually and materially. The leaf is mostly collected by the women. If your wife or the women in the family do not pick the leaf for the husband or father, then he has none. He has nothing to greet other people with, an outcast.

The leaf depends on your adherence to the laws of reciprocity with your family, have you treated each other, right? Have you grown the crops, and given food to your family? Taken care of them so they can take care of you? From there, it goes down the links of parents to children, reaching the origin of each person’s lineage. The work with the Ezuama, the payments he or she does to grow crops, to build houses and to support their children and all based on caring for this lineage of reciprocity with the origins of life. Eating the leaf or exchanging food is just one part of eating the spiritual food of reciprocity that goes along with what links everyone in a community. Exchanging food, leaf or things is more than a simple greeting. Everyone, men, women, children, participate in these links of reciprocity through all sorts of exchanges.

### **5.3 Healing from the Heart: Jananulzhi Izhgakuwi.**

And this brings us to the idea of reciprocity as healing. In this section, certain Kaggaba mamós presenting a few basic forms of Kaggaba spiritual “healing”. For instance, Mamó Luis and his wife Jaba Josepha like to come visit my wife and family in our house in Santa Marta, every so often, and always says, what work are you doing? We tell them, we give a report, and Mamó Luis usually says, we must cure it, we must cure the water, the air, the food, the trees, all the principles that you have used, even in thought, to do it. Then Mamó Luis sets down to do a “Payment” with us, to cure or heal, everything that we are doing, because to do anything we must inextricably use and sometimes take advantage of the principles of the mother. The work of the mamós is based on that recognition. It was also Mamó Luis and Jaba Josefa who inadvertently gave the title for

this dissertation “Jananulzhi izhgakwui”, healing from the heart, words and practice, territory, people and things as all sharing the same heart.

These “payments”, or what the mamos call “spiritual work” *aluna anguashi* - giving thought, often take place in very specific interaction frameworks, or, speech frames, with evident participants, spatial contexts and referential grounds. In general, spiritual work - doing a payment, occurs at a specific sacred site, mother or father, where the mamos have consulted that can receive the kinds of spiritual food, or thought, needed to pay back the debt. The participants sit or stand around the site, concentrating their thought into cotton or other pieces of material, sometimes silently or often speaking, giving the words and thought as spiritual payment. The speech is directed to the Mamo, but also to the spirit of the place. The mamo receives this material, and gives it to the sacred site, often inserting it into a crack in the rock, or in under plant near a spring, so that the mother or father receives it.

The process of doing a spiritual payment can take many forms. Often can they be very quick, just a few minutes. When people are arriving to a place usually, they must give their food to the mother as permission to be there, or at sacred sites specifically selected to receive food to so that the mother earth will give specific results or responses at many levels of healing nature, people or political situations. Some payments can take hours or days. The Mamos and Sakas sit on rocks or on the ground in a designated sacred site, a mother or father site who will receive the food. With a little fire to keep the insects away, they consult for hours until their zhatukuwa indicates the payment was done right. Everyone is concentrated, giving the right kind of food, and intervening with words. These payments can take also place anywhere at any time, when the person is consciously connected to the spirit, which most mamos say, should be all the time.

Sometimes the healing can be very specific, to heal a person or resolve a situation, but almost always links into a wider context, often political. It is expected that by the end of the payment, a collective idea or solution to the problem will have emerged amongst the participants, that arises from the mother of the site having given a thought or idea to the people participating in the payment, which they can transpose into words and decisions, as spiritual food given back to the mother, that arises from the mother. Likewise, the payment is expected to have an effect. The mother gives something back, curing people, or any number of responses. Thought and spirit as gifts within assemblages that include material things, can respond.

What is common to all these situations is that they involve territory, and its articulation with an expanded ground of reference, linked with spiritual principles, nature and people, through reciprocity. This implies that there are forms of communication or relationships, occurring with could be considered as inanimate things, like rocks, which now however, that have spiritual and material agency. The Kaggaba are clear that rocks and inanimate things in nature also have life, and that way of conceiving the world differentiates us from many other people, sometimes making it difficult to understand each other.

- Healing by paying the debt: Shanankala.

There are many practices of Kaggaba healing based on these payments, and one of them is called *Shanankala*. This is perhaps one of the most basic forms of healing. The Kaggaba who shared it were quite comfortable that these techniques could very useful for anyone interested in daily

practices for health, sort of like meditation. They do it all the time. “Shala” literally means “the debt” in Kogian. It is the debt that the person accrues in daily life by thinking the wrong thoughts, doing the wrong things, or just by hearing about that done by other people or situations that have also affected you, or even your ancestors and they didn’t recognize it and is silently gifted to you down the generations or through links of reciprocity in general. It is also the air, water, food and thoughts you use.

If you don’t return those thoughts in return for the permanent production of damage as implicit in living, to their places of origin, they will “charge” their debts in other ways. Things don’t work out well or people can get sick, etc. Some “debts” can be more serious than others if not properly healed. At one meeting, a Kaggaba leader reflected, “You know, the reason why we go to these meetings is not really so much what we talk about, but the spiritual food that we give to the jabas and jates in each place. We are offering our words and thought all day long, while we talk about the Resguardo, or whatever business is at hand. We always should to be concentrated directing our thoughts to the sacred spaces. That is how we heal territory and our own problems.

He went on, “Sometimes people in the meetings always say ‘yes’ to the proposal and ideas that as leaders, we make, but really in the back of their minds they are saying ‘That is silly, I’ll never do it’. They are criticizing without admitting it, accumulating negative thought. That is shala. Whatever the proposal is, it won’t work because people are not being sincere and they are not giving back that negative thought, that shala stays with them. We need to give back to the mother all those negative thoughts so that we all really can be in agreement or sincere, at least with the spiritual mothers and fathers. That is where healing is born”.

During the early mornings we would get ready for the day, and go and sit near a sacred site, a mother with a nearby cave at the fork of the river. “OK, now sit and concentrate, on all the problems and negative thoughts you might have. Send all those thoughts down your spine, to your place of origin where you were born where your placenta is buried, your connection to the earth, right down your lineage to your grandparents and before. Clean out all those thoughts and give them to the Jaba, the mother here”. And we would concentrate, and talk, recognize problems and give those words, and send all these thoughts to the mothers and fathers who were charging them, who had been making those thoughts emerge in our minds and dreams. You give back that damage to the mother, and she is healed, and will give her food back to you, to nature and to other people, collective healing.

That, she said, “Is healing, is curing, that is how we prevent disease in ourselves and in nature. It is the Kaggaba vaccination. Do it every day”. And after about an hour of concentration, the leader herself would consult spiritually and if the consultation said we had given all the thought that we needed to, we could go back to the meeting. Many Kaggaba authorities and leaders are also trained as mamos or Sakas to orient their work, but they just don’t mention that. This form of articulation of the self to context leads to spiritual health and physical health. And the Kaggaba insist, it is the whole assemblage of the Mother Earth that does it, not the person. The person only has to maintain the appropriate practices and stance of reciprocity with spirit.

That kind of healing is based in the exchange, the gift, giving back the food in the form of concentrated thought to the mothers or fathers who were charging that debt. Paying back the debt, is the essence of many other practices of Kaggaba “spiritual work”. Very complex forms of



concentration, music and dance in the ezuamas are also payments. But our Kaggaba leader friend insisted, everyone with the right attitude and practice can participate and grow, given the occasion and the personal disposition. Over the years, I and my family have done many of these payments, at the start of meetings, at the end of meetings, for work on projects, treks to sacred sites, with the family, for births, for curing disease, and for the Kaggaba projects in the OGT, legislation with the government that we are working on, so it will emerge as a response from the Law of Origin. All Kaggaba work, personal and political is done that way, and is the same thing. Of course, it also involves physical or mental work on whatever is to be done, like writing a book.

- *Mama S̄shi* and healing territory: *Jananuldi izhgakwui* healing from the heart.

One day when I was busy writing field notes, Mamo Luis and his wife Jaba Maria Josefa specially came to our house for just the afternoon, with their daughter Rosa. He wanted to hear what I was writing and also wanted a 50-kilo bag of dried fish, to bring back to their family to share. It just so happened that we had one. And I asked, in my faltering Kogian and Spanish, “Mamo Luis, could you please tell me a bit more about ‘curing’ tell me what ‘healing’ is in Kogian”. Jaba Josefa and he consulted, and then gave their words in Kogian, aided with a bit of Spanish, and the interventions of Rosita<sup>262</sup>. Once done, they were quite satisfied with their work. We packed up the fish and a friend came to pick them up, and take them back up the mountain.

What Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa told us that day, healing from the heart, was all very simple. We all share the same heart, the same principles of origin and life. To heal our own heart is to heal what is outside and within ourselves as one interrelated and interdependent, embodied whole. We don’t have to go too far to search for healing, because it is inside ourselves. At that level it is simple. Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa shared this experience on healing with us, using Kaggaba context and terminology. They try to make it as concrete as possible, but is also extremely complex as it goes down the links of contiguity, of embodied, embedded reciprocity of the spirit and things, which the Kaggaba are experts on. I hope that I transmit what Mamo Luis and Jaba Josepha are saying, although Mamo Luis did most of the talking. They say this is only the surface of something that is “invisible and silent”, which is at the heart of practices of resistance to violence.

A few days later I listened to the recording of Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa with a Kaggaba friend from the OGT office also named Luis for a full translation. We went over it pretty quickly. He exclaimed, “Peter, you asked the wrong question to the Mamo!!!, they gave you a much too simple answer”. Mamo Luis said that you have to do a “payment”, “sabi”, to give back what you have been using from nature spiritually. You are paying back a debt, at a spiritual level, in “aluna” in thought, to “nature”, said Luis, ‘what you took away or affected, or what was affected before even you existed but that was passed on to you’.

So, I offered him my hypothesis that I had been working through. “Luis, OK, that would be the same with, for instance, the settlers during the time of the inspector. They applied violence to the Mamos, and their wives, and subjected them to debt system, of taking away from life, debt

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<sup>262</sup> Interview, Mamo Luis Noevita, Rosita Dingula. Jan 15 , 2007, Santa Marta.

with a negative origin, and the mother earth responds by generating ever more problems for them”. Luis responded. “Peter, you are wrong”. “Those colonos, they are not stealing life. They are unknowingly responding to a debt which those same Kaggaba already had picked up down their lineage and which was charging him, or her, and which they hadn’t paid correctly” I asked, “so nothing happens to that settler?” “No”, said my friend. Then he thought about it for a moment “they get charged triple!!!”. The settlers are left with the consequences of their own response to the violence they did, which is even worse.

I was quite impressed. ‘Triple reverse debt’. The results for the settler would be additional violence, debt charging the lack of debt, and never paid for, never cured, at least for that person who lets himself unaware, be carried away by that river of debt. Evidently it was all in the same debt network, but the underlying context of violence made the settler unknowingly respond to that debt itself, moved by avarice and greed, without that recognition, without trying to spiritually pay it back as a mammo would. The person who pays for that debt in this way does not necessarily recognize the system of the Law of Origin, but still plays a role in it. Meaning, the reverse debt is charged within the same chain of reciprocity of the Law of Origin, putting the whole system on its head. It was hard to think about. My mind popped me into a sort of void, a short circuit. “Well, OK Luis, that makes sense”, and I wondered to myself. “Was that void the space of articulation, of healing?”.

We concluded our discussion that night, getting down to the fact that whole concept of the Ancestral Territory of the Sierra Nevada, called the Black Line - in Spanish, and its spiritual principles - Mama Sæshi, are the basis of healing. The work of the Mamos is to heal territory through the connections of the sacred sites, the forests, nature people and their spiritual origins. It was not really to resist violence, but to heal through relationships of reciprocity.

I was sure that Mamo Luis and Jaba Josepha had given more in-depth illustrations of curing and went back over their words with another Kaggaba friend, also named Luis. My second Luis friend also likes to directly accompany the Mamos in his community, and is very attentive to what they teach him. We carefully went through each word of Mamos Luis’ recording, Luis patiently helping me to interpret<sup>263</sup>. Mamo Luis had given several examples of what healing is for the Kaggaba.

Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa are specialists on recovering nature and ecosystems through spiritual payments. Effectively, the first example Mamo Luis had given was on the basic ‘procedure for doing spiritual payments to heal the mother of trees, and thus trees themselves:

<b>Example 1 Healing and connecting with the mother of trees</b>	
<u>Literal translation of Kogian to English</u>	<u>Gloss of translation to English</u>
<i>Izhbutegua tuma kalkakwitxzi asi...</i> Circling the tuma kalguakwitxzi - like this	Circling the tuma kalguakwitxzi <sup>264</sup> around the place of the tree - like this. (Mamo Luis makes a motion with his hand as though he was holding a tuma and circling it around a sacred place of a tree)
<i>Kalzhi kangua gin guakwa</i>	So that the tree will not dry out and die.

<sup>263</sup> Please note that first we translated to Spanish, and later I translated the Spanish to English.

<sup>264</sup> A tuma kalguakwitxzi is a brown colored quartz Tayrona bead that links to the spiritual origin of trees.

Tree not dry out to make it.	
<i>A Jaba nugalzhi isubi guacha, kuchaldula</i> Where mother is pay her so to fecund her	Pay where the mother is, so as to fecund her
<i>Junchi bien atema negapana a jaba ikualzhi</i> Good big will grow, mother where she is	With the payment the mother will grow big where she is
<i>a jaba ikualzhi numantua</i> Mother in her place is cared for.	That way we care for the mother in her place.
<i>Numuntu gwakwe a jate a jaba arze izhogalzdi</i> Care for mother and father in their invisible place	That way we care for the mother and father in their invisible place.
<i>Ezua mokuwe nikwitzzi mebangukwi nugazhi</i> Like again the nikwitzzi <sup>265</sup> for a lake. underground	That place is like the essence of an underground lake.
Ibe nazine nike molukwe a jaba ninekan, Then we bring it to the mother of water	Which is connected to the sacred place of the mother of water
Nulgazi Muleto izubiji Function well I pay here	I pay that here so that it can keep working well.
sealzukwi numatuakwe	That is caring for the spirit.

Mamo Luis illustrates by picking up a hypothetical tayrona quartz bead, -tuma- in Spanish, *shimana* in kogian, of a type called *kalguakwitzzi* that is used to connect to the spirit of origin of trees. He waves it in a circle around a hypothetically present sacred site of a tree, connecting to its invisible place where the mother of the tree is to give her spiritual food. make that mother grow big. By doing this, Mamo Luis says that he is “caring” - *numantua* - for the mother and father of the tree in its invisible spiritual place of origin, giving it spiritual food in thought. That invisible place of origin is the spirit of trees, underneath that sacred site. It is an invisible space- *arze izhogalzdi*- of great value.

By doing the payment we care for the mother and she cares for us. *Numantua gwakwe* means care for her, by giving her food, so that her essence will always be there”. It is not so much the tree itself that is cured, but the invisible spiritual essence of the mother of the tree which grows in her own spiritual space, and the end result makes the tree grow. That relationship includes people. We “take care of the connections between ourselves and everything else as something that helps us all”. The term is *-sealzukwi numatuakwe-* as almost the same word as caring for the mother in her invisible place of origin but now in the sense of caring for everything.

Mamo Luis also talks about “*mebangukwi*” the underground lakes in the paramo that are the mothers of water and spirit, the invisible base of the spirit of water. Mamo Luis with hand holding the tuma nikwitzzi – the transparent crystal that is the origin of water, waves his hand around that far off lake and with that connects to the mother of origin of water, Jaba Niñekun so he can pay her. He is also spiritually linking and healing those invisible places of water which trees need. Next, Mamo Luis does his best to describe this invisible spirit that needs to be healed.

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<sup>265</sup> A Nikwitzzi is a transparent quartz Tayrona bead that contains the spirit of water, and helps the mamo who has it to connect to the principle of water in territory.

<b>Example 2: The essence of curing, the fathers of the origin of trees.</b>	
<u>Word by Word translation of Kogian to English</u>	<u>Gloss of translation to English</u>
Ji arzanzi kaguba kalzhi The importance of the original Tree	The importance is the spirit of origin of the tree
Monzenga tudla kaguba Dawns the guayacan original	The original guayacan tree arises to light
Monzenga zubi jika kalzhi cucheldula, From the past pay to work the tree for constructions.	We pay the past of the tree so that it will be stronger and make more seeds so we can use it for building.
Numuntun gwakwe Caring for food	To continue caring for food
Nalgazhi ejiekuwe	So that what we eat does not become sick.

Here Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa talk of the spiritual origin of trees, “Ji arzanzi kaguba kalzhi”, to “understand the origin (kaguba) of trees (kalzhi)”. Kaguba means the mother plant of origin of each plant species. “Ka” means– foot or the base, “gu” – that which receives the semen, “ba”- the word spoken from the origin. Kaguba is the mother of origin that is fertilized with the words that emanate from that same origin. That fertilization is the “Payment”. The Kaguba has its place of origin in the earth, its placenta, combining the origin of the tree and the person and that invisible space of spirit. Mamo Luis uses the example of the origin of the Guayacan tree. “We do the payments to that origin so that we can use the tree for its wood, and for it to produce good seeds, for us to be able to build houses with, so we can have food, and the trees, so we can care for each other”. The exchange of spiritual food and material food ensures that trees and people can mutually care for each other.

Next, they talk about this invisible place of the spirit of territory

<b>Example 3 The invisible place of Origin in territory, Mama S̄shi</b>	
<u>Word by Word translation of Kogian to English</u>	<u>Gloss of translation to English</u>
Mama S̄shi	Mama S̄shi means a silent place, or rock that speaks, a silent connection to the origin that speaks.
Kega Jui	Our house that silently protects us, who talks through the signs of nature or the bubbles of the zhatukua.
Jaba jai akpanuka	Like the mother earth.
Mama S̄shi is the origin of territory who talks through silence, and is the house which protects us like as mother earth.	

Here Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa are referring to S̄shi as the silent essence that is also the spiritual the house which protects us, and is also territory, the mother earth. S̄shi is silence. It is like a person, and a spiritual mother or father who quietly listens and learns, as the spirit of origin. It keeps silence and from that silence speaks. S̄shi talks through the bubble of the Zhatukua, through indicators like certain natural phenomenon, bird song or thunderclaps, or through people’s intuition and bodies. It is the spiritual essence shared with the Law of Origin, and is the

same as the invisible place in the sacred sites of territory and the origin of the entire territory. Although the spirit is silent, it must be recognized, alongside its presence in the entire system of reciprocity, so it can be healed, spiritually “paid”.

#### **Example 4 Healing from the heart of territory, from the essence of the spirit.**

This final example is healing as the embodiment of spirit, territory, and people, which I summarize. When Mamo Luis makes a circle around something with his tuma in his hand, he is recreating the same principle of the circle of ancestral territory Mamo Səshi, in that sacred site, as the essence of silence of the spirit, embodied in territory and people<sup>266</sup>.

Mamo Luis goes on to explain. “The Mama Səshi draws out a circle around the spiritual origin of trees. The Səshi encircles the origin of all the trees and things we use, and cares for them, in our territory. That is where the care is. We always should be thinking well, that is what the circle of the connection is drawing out, our taking care of that spirit, from the principles left to us in the four cardinal points of territory. It is only from that origin of care we always have to be connected in aluna, in thought, and always be paying there, always connected, because that same spirit is in us, we always give and take with it”.

“As mamos and Sakas we were left sitting here to do these payments, to always be connected. That is why they left us the Black Line to circle our territory. The Mama Səshi does the work for the us, the mamos. That’s how it is. In our valley, an underground lake called Jaba Nabukaiuman is the mother of water and forest animals, and it is where I seeded some quartz crystals for the Danta. Spiritually it is like a garden with avocados, and food, for her to survive here, for the fruits and turkeys to keep on reproducing. Those animals are the children of that spirit of Jaba Nabukaiuman, we are her children and they are our children.

The Kabosankua mountain (in the center of the Sierra, alongside Gonawindua, the mother of the origin of territory from where the Black Line circle of ancestral territory is drawn out) is the heart of the circle, it is the heart of territory the spirit, and it takes care of the space of the places (all the sacred sites). It is the heart of territory. It is also our heart. We are also connected to that silent place, and we cure by “Jananuldi izhgakwui”. We work by healing from our hearts.

With that Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa finished their explanation of healing, quite simple, and quite profound. We heal from our heart. Our hearts are connected to the heart of territory, in that invisible space of the mother, spirit that is at the heart of everything. Words, thought, action and things are permanently linked to that spirit, to the origin of territory, the self, and people and are food for the mothers. It is a garden of food that takes care of the animals, the birds and everyone, in a chain of reciprocity of feeding and care, all interconnected in spirit.

Here Mamo Luis and Jaba Josepha are explaining how always to maintain an attitude of caring, or healing. Care should be always taken to be responsible for thought, action, and words, they are all linked to the spirit, and all form gifts with the spirit that we depend on. It is something that they say requires a certain awareness, recognition. When words are produced from the origin of

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<sup>266</sup> Please see page 211 of this dissertation to see how Arhuaco manos explain these same concepts through diagrams.

the spiritual mothers, they are its very incarnation and are “payments” or gifts. When words or things are returned, they are also returned spiritually. This is why we should always be careful of what we are returning spiritually and to what origin. The body of the person is the same as the body of territory and spirit. They are all linked together. Mamo Luis recommends to be always focused on those principles of care for the spirit. That is the essence of curing. These are practices of care that Kaggaba have been using to cure or heal territory, people, and selves for many generations.

They remind us that everyone can work or heal through their heart, that this is the principle of Mamo Seshi, of caring. Mamo Luis and Maria Josefa, of course as a mamos and Sakas trained down the line from generations brought up in caves to listen to the spirit, do take care to add that the difference is that Mamos and Sakas have sewas – beads, that officially delegate them, and earned by years of trial, test, and training since infancy, to do complex work in their territory and help connect them with it. They are authorities in the space of reciprocity and spirit, trained on how to focus that thought, and how to “pay” for each instance of debt, at the appropriate sacred sites, as the embodiment of origin that makes up territory and the whole.

Healing has an order, that embodies the same order of the spirit, the “Law of Origin”. The Law of Origin is also the form of care or healing for that entire assemblage, everything linked to that spirit, through exchange. Healing is based on reciprocity. Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa used another word for curing “Ishkabeishgui”. That is giving back what we took, as healing, giving back to the spirit what we took from her. “We care for her and she cares for us”. “Ishkabeishgui” means reciprocity in Kogian. And reciprocity has rules, or laws, of how to give back to and heal the spirit. That is the Law of Origin, the law of reciprocity.



Figure 5 Mamo Luis, Saka Josefa and family, Photo Peter Rawitscher

Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa say the spirit talks to us and tells us how to take care of her. It starts with *Kwualakwuen*, as the healing of the spirit in things and yourself, by spiritually giving back to that spirit what we damaged in it by its misuse. One you have done that, or have healed, *Ajalakuwuen*, is the state of the person giving and receiving based on that same spirit of origin. There is no need for healing. It is the state of reciprocity giving and receiving from the same origin. *Akalasunzama* is negative form of spirit, when we use words or do things that give back something that takes away that spirit. It is reverse debt, violence, or affectation. To cure that the person goes back to *Kwualakwuen*.

The person goes back to *Kwualakwuen*, to relink the self with the origin, back to the Jaba Aluna Se. And yet again, “*Akalasunzama*” negative thought that does not give back to the spirit, in a moment of forgetfulness, carelessness, or misrecognition, it can happen, and again, we pay it

back to be able to sit in the state of Ajalakuwuen, giving and receiving from Aluna Se. The circuit of healing, is staying articulated with the spirit, and recognizing the form of that articulation.

While translating, Luis Alimaku mentioned in passing, “Ishkabeishgui”, the moment of reciprocity, is also a moment of forgetfulness, a “blank spot in memory”. It is when we link to a negative spirit and forget our link to the principles of origin. It happens in a split second. You can shift into the embodiment of assemblages of “reverse debt” without even noticing. This is akin to “Euphemization” those moments of rearticulation and constitution of the self from context, for healing or violence. The recognition of the misrecognition is part of healing. In these moments we link and relink the “self” to the assemblage, context, through reciprocity.

And I asked Luis, “Is it only spiritual? what about in material reciprocity, like for instance if I invite you to lunch and in exchange you translate this for me?”. “Yes, it is the same. For instance, Jañu iskiüşhi means exchanging Jañu, equal exchange of things, reciprocity, also with its spiritual aspects. it is all linked to spirit, I receive from you that food but I don’t know where it is coming from, what money bought it.

We finished our translation and discussion about healing. We had been working during lunch time, in the OGT office. And an unexpected moment of healing happened. I was sitting in the seat of a colleague who worked there next to Luis. That person had returned, and was looking at me. I thought our xxx wanted their seat back and felt a bit embarrassed. ... “I’ll give your desk right back”. But xxx responded, “Why are you swearing at me?”. I had not and always make it a habit of not swearing. A bit surprised I responded, “Why would you think that? not at all, I was just saying I will give your seat back”. I thought for a second, and asked our colleague, “It was my tone, right?”, who nodded Yes. I looked at Luis, “It was me thinking that xxx was bothered because xxx wanted the chair hack”. Luis reflected, “There it is Peter, **Ajalakuwuen**, negative thought”, a moment of recognition of misrecognition leading into a moment of healing. These principles of curing are complex yet simple. They are also at the heart of centuries of Kaggaba political practices of resistance to violence.

#### **5.4 Triple reverse Debt and articulation with the origin– Jate Kalashe, the Father of Trees.**

Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa did not really concentrate so much on reverse debt, but healing more as being permanently connected to the principles of origin and our awareness of that as a permanent practice of reciprocity. We still could go further into the topic of reverse debt, damage to the spirit and its healing, what my other Kaggaba friend Luis had exclaimed as ‘Triple reverse debt’. This form of reciprocity, is also key to healing and resistance to violence at many different levels, from the political to the spirit. Since it happens in the space of the spirit, talk about healing and healing itself also can take the form of a “myth” or a story of events that take place from the world of principles that happened in spirit. The people in these histories are spiritual people, all embedded in the sacred sites, hills, and rivers of territory. What happens in these stories are guides of the application of the Law of Origin, embedded in personal lives.

Often, when I hear mamos of Sakas talking about realizing a payment, it strikes me that it is not the principle itself that is being paid or given as spiritual food in retribution, but the lack of that principle, or the act of having taken from that principle, that absence, taking its food to use it without giving back what was not returned. In my experience Kaggaba mamos and Sakas often

work though this sort of short circuit, a triple reverse debt. It cures by articulating a the lack a problem generated, like violence, back into assemblages of reciprocity of the Law of Origin, thus transforming that violence. For me, these are spaces of rearticulation of the self to the other, and to context, but as soon as I think about it, that is where my brain cells go short circuit. I sometimes like to think that participation in these circuits of reciprocity, involves referring to, or embodies those spaces of invisible articulation between body and spirit, perhaps as form of invisible euphemization.

At one point, the Kaggaba people in coordination with the National Parks Office, decided that they would make a map of sacred sites in the Tayrona Park<sup>267</sup>, and their relationship to caring for the environment. It was part of an OGT proposal, to include indigenous land management practices as part of the Tayrona and Sierra Nevada Park Management Plan. This was a way to make visible the indigenous “Law of Origin” as care for nature, that would extend indigenous government over the Park as a form of care and conservation.

Part of the work was to make a series of visits and “payments” to the sacred sites in the Park the Kaggaba Mamos consulted as the most important for the care of territory. We had already spent a good part of the last year doing long treks through the mountains and streams of the Park. On these trips, the Mamos would describe the mothers and fathers of each site, and their importance in caring for people and nature, and “paying” or healing the territory from each sacred site. To inaugurate the cycle of visits to the sacred sites for the 2021 year, the Mamos in charge of the team consulted the first sacred site, the father, *Jate*, that we would visit to start off the work. They consulted it would be Jate Kalashe, the father of the spirit of forests.

To start that trek, we took a car to Bahia Concha in the Tayrona park. We walked to Jate Kalashe which is a big rock formation covered with thick forest, abutting out into the sea, with an ancient “tayrona” terrace on top. It is a Black Line site, one of those sites which Mamo Luis was mentioning that encircle ancestral territory. There, the group of Mamos was clear that Jate Kalashe, would have to receive their confession, in the form words as food for healing.

The large flat rock of Jate Kalashe was the spatial focus, where the words, the payment would be received. The eldest Mamo, from the principal Ezuama, oversaw the healing, talking, and giving the right words to Kalashe. He sat on the highest part of the rock, right in the middle. Kalashe was embedded into the entire space of ancestral territory, out to its four cardinal points, located in the context of that wider frame of reciprocity. The rest of the group were comprised of Kaggaba mamos, Saka, authorities, two “professionals” from the OGT and park rangers. We distributed ourselves around the main rock, finding flat spots or tree trunks to sit on.

The Mamo started the payment by telling the history of Jate Kalashe to us, which in reality he was telling to Jate Kalashe as payment to heal ancestral territory in general. He gave those gifts to the origin of Kalashe as words and thought, performed, and embodied from the spirit of

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<sup>267</sup> The Parque Nacional Natural Tayrona is located on the northern coast of the Sierra Nevada. It is part of indigenous ancestral territory within the Black Line but not part of indigenous reservations. It contains many sacred sites important to the indigenous people often associated with Tayrona terraces.



Kalashe. The rest of us listened, also concentrating our thought to give it to Kalashe as payment. Everyone had to participate, do the payment together.

While the Mamo told the story, he consulted several times with his Kashiwintukuwa, his hands, to see if the spirit of Kalashe had received enough and the right words, to be healed or if something was wrong or had been left out. After about an hour, the consultation indicated that he had spoken enough of the right words and we all had listened and delivered enough payment. Having done that, we could set off to visit the next site called Jaba Kasuma. It was about 20 minutes down a path, a large rock as the spiritual mother of the birth of plants. We gave her our words and thought. We kept visiting sites, like that for several days over very long walks, sleeping on empty beaches and huts in the woods<sup>268</sup>.

- Jate Kalashe and Jaba Kalawia, and the creation of the Law of Origin.

The history that the Mamo told on the rock of Kalashe has a lot to do with the payment of reverse debt. Here I summarize that history and cite parts. It is different from most of rest of the histories in the dissertation, as it is not based on historical fact, but took place in spirit. Versions of this history are cited in other publications<sup>269</sup>.

At the site of Kalashe, the Mamo talked about three phases of creation in general of the world and of trees. The first phase was in *aluna*, from “Se”, when the ideas of trees appeared at the level of spirituality. The second phase was the creation of kinds or classes of plants and trees, and their spiritual organization amongst themselves. The third phase of creation is the material birth of each kind of tree and plant, from which the law of origin, or of the use of plants was created. People would need trees and vines for building houses so they needed a law to be able to make use them at their spiritual levels.

Jate Kalashe had developed the law for healing trees. He was a Mamo, and every night Kalashe would dance in his Ezuama with his mask to regenerate the trees that his children had cut the day before. So fast would the forest regenerate, that no one could grow any crops and their work clearing the forest was in vain. Alwawiko was Kalashe’s stepson. He asked his mother, Jaba Kalawia – the mother of forests, what he should do with his stepfather, Kalashe, to have him stop making all those trees grow back. No one would be able to eat. She told Alwawiko he was responsible to organize the “Law” that would making the payments necessary for using the forest, for using plants and wood, otherwise “if we do not create that law, then we would not even be able even to walk, nor eat, nor use the land. We would not be able to live. Each time we cut down a tree, of kill it, that would be violence, and its spirit would make is sick. We need to be able to make a payment each time we cut a tree. That is how Alwawiku made the Law of Origin, of reciprocity between life and destruction.

Alwawiku got the tuma necessary for doing the work of healing trees and learned how to do it. Alwawiku went and found Kalashe dancing in his ezuamas, and killed him. He made a puppet in

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<sup>268</sup> Described as part of the public process and visits related to the Parks Management Plan (RKMA 2021).

<sup>269</sup> The Jate Kalashe is often related by Kaggaba mamos and cited, including (Reichel Dolmatoff 1949/50), (Parra Witte 2018).

the exact likeness of Kalashe and had that puppet dance every night with Kalashe's mask, so people would think that Kalashe was still alive doing his spiritual work for regenerating trees.

The other sons and daughters began to get worried asking, 'where is my father?'. But Alwawiku would tell them that he was busy dancing, and they had to keep on sending him their "shala" spiritual payments, as that is what Kalashe had asked them to do. Meanwhile the trees that the people were cutting in the forest, now stopped coming back to life the next day. They could finally grow their gardens and food, and build houses. Everyone could not pay their spiritual debt for cutting down trees, and could use them.

Alwawiku started to feel guilty. He had killed his own stepfather. He had also been lying to his half brothers and sisters. He went and asked his mother if it really had been all right to do that. (5). She replied, "you will be just fine. Keep on making those puppets dance and receiving the shala. Kalashe's sons also wondered if it was OK but saw that Alwawiku had organized everything from the ezuamas so people could live and eat. They understood that Alwawiku had not broken the law but "the reverse, he had organized the use of the forest as the Law of Origin so people could know how to live and eat" (6). After that the sacred sites for the use of nature started to extend out from the Ezuama, all around territory, so people could use trees and all aspects of nature, so that people can live "in equilibrium (RKMA 2021, 6)".

And there the story ends. This was somewhat like the "triple reverse debt" my first Luis friend had exclaimed. This debt, pays for the damage done to the principle, but not to Kalashe, the father of the trees himself, but to a stuffed puppet, a husk that was his mimesis. That is how the Law of Origin was organized, around a foil, that was pointing to something else, standing in as the likeness of Jate Kalashe as the spiritual principle of trees in aluna. And Kalashe wasn't dead, he is still in the ezuama in spirit. For people to be able to use trees, they had to be able to pay for the damage to the principles of the trees, for the lack of trees, to heal the spirit of trees.

The mamo telling the story explains a bit. "The person herself becomes the law. If one complies with the law, then we are connected with that father or mother and his or her knowledge. Jate Kalashe and Jaba Kalawia were the ones who worked to establish that law". The principles of origin, the spirit, the Law of Origin are linked together, the person "assumes the spirit of Kalashe", so that his or her words emanate from that origin and become a gift, a payment. And the spirit of Kalashe is the origin, the authority of receiving the gift of those debts, and later of their transformation into the material use of trees.

This is not only the law of trees, but the law of maintaining the principles that provide for all things that people use. This is reciprocity with the assemblage of spirit and things. It also implies a fundamental sense of guilt and debt to a founding father of the law, perhaps as reminiscent of Nietzsche's founding father. Alwawiko killed his stepfather to be able to live. The mamo summed it up "this means asking for forgiveness from the Ezuama so we can use that spirit. That is healing. Thanks to that history we can live, because we now know how to follow the Law of Origin (RKMA 2021, 8)".

The mamo reminds his listeners that this fundamental cycle of guilt and life is constantly reproduced over and over, "There life is constantly reborn, those spiritual parents gave the rules, the order, to organize and maintain life, as the knowledge of how to work. Those are principles that have always existed, and constantly present themselves over the stages of creation (7)".

These are practical rules about how to coexist in reciprocity with the origin of life. They are forms of articulation based on the reconfiguration of relationships that permit life and implicitly involve a level of violence and guilt, always recognized and continuing a permanent process of creation, transformation, and recognition.

This again is reminiscent of the fundamental paradox of life and violence of the moment of inscription of the child through the mother (Aulagnier 2001, 121-122). From the moment of birth, violence, and life form part of the same assemblage of reciprocity, part of those same moments hidden under euphemization. These Kaggaba practices of Law of Origin recognize and transforms such paradoxical moments through reciprocity to always pay back the debt for that moment of guilt implicit in living, without that violence becoming too extreme.

- The Kasougui and the empty husk of life.

After visiting the sacred sites, we spent the night in an abandoned palm hut on the beach. Everyone strung up their hammocks. We set up a fire in the middle. During the evening the senior Mamo announced to the Kaggaba authorities and the other mamos, and everyone else, that we still had to offer more spiritual work to Kalashe and Kalawia to be able to move along to next trek tomorrow. We could do it right from the hut where we were sleeping.

From the comfort of his hammock, the Mamo continued to talk about healing and reciprocity. The “payment” during the night took the form of another history from the “principles” of origin, that of the Kasougui, the father of each species of tree. Trees and people are all the same. It was another tale of reverse reciprocity, of paying to the void of having used the principles of life. It is also a story of abuse of the law of reciprocity.

The Kasougui adopted the attitudes of “negative” people like Ubatashi. He always transformed into those people. He would go into the nujue, and suck the life out of a man. He would then trick women into thinking that he was their husband. And the women would notice that their husband acted a bit different, and would ask: What happened to my husband? So, the women would go to the nujue and pull out their husband with a stick, but there was nothing left, only an empty sack, a husk, that Kasougui had taken the life from.

The wife then went to complain to the maximum authorities of the Kasougui, who said they would enquire. But since they were all the same Kasougui, they would cover up each other’s lies, and they would still invite the wives to live with them. Jaba Kalawia and Jaba Kasuma took note of this, and saw it wasn’t right. The wives were receiving the “shala”, the debt of the Kasougui, but reciprocity given wrongly, based on lies and trickery. The Kasougui had killed their husbands.

Jaba Kalawia went to talk with the other fathers, like Mulkueke, and the mothers who worked from the Law of Origin, and asked them what do to, where should he “pay” for that damage he is doing? They went to accuse him of bad conduct, but he always denied it, saying It wasn’t him, saying it was the other trees (the husbands) who were the guilty ones. But the authorities finally saw that he was lying. The father went and interviewed all the trees, and saw that they were properly organized from the principles of life. “They as trees helped maintain life, to help humans. That is why the humans had to “pay” for them, and care for them. But if the humans didn’t “pay” for the trees, comply with that law, then the trees would charge the debt to the

humans. This was also lesson about compliance with the Law of Origin, and make sure that these forms of reciprocity were not based on a lie, but were based on the spirit if Kalashe, so they could heal themselves correctly (13). Everyone is responsible to some degree.

It was in that way that Jaba Kalawia organized the life of trees as the Law of Origin. The wives had been tricked into making their payments, giving their spiritual food to the Kasougui. The payment goes to the absence of the person, to the empty husk of a tree, to the lie or guilt, to repair the debt to the principle of origin.

While the mammo was telling the history of the Kasougui, everyone had to think if they were not working from the wrong principles, behaving abusively, like the Kasougui. Finally, around 2am the consultation indicated that we had properly paid what Jate Kalashe needed. We could continue with our visits. The next day we got up early and walked some 6 hours to next Bay, and visited and “paid” the group of Jabas and Jates there. For the rest of the year, we did treks through many of the Jabas and jates, the mountains, forests and springs of the Tayrona park, making the map, the Punkatza of the Tayrona park, while the mamos “healed” the territory.

### **5.5 Invisible Spaces of Healing.**

In this Chapter we have looked at several ways the Kaggaba practice spiritual healing. They are all based on giving or paying “shala” – spiritual debt- engendered by having used something and not having given it back to the same spirit of life it was taken from, and thus healing that same spirit. These are practices of healing through reciprocity with the spirit, situating the self within links of reciprocity based on the spirit of life, and not the empty trickery of violence.

Key is the question that Alwawiku asks his mother, Kalawia when he tricked his brothers and sisters with the dancing puppet was, “Am I doing the right thing?”, and she responded, “yes you are, keep on making those puppets dance”. That is the Law of Origin, as a form of reciprocity to heal the use of the principles of origin, to make life grow and care for those same principles. The Kaggaba mamos, sakas and most Kaggaba permanently orient their lives around this kind of healing, usually though payments at the sacred sites in their ancestral territory.

The key part was to insert the Kasougui within that same system of reciprocity, through a sort of reverse debt, into a unifying assemblage that includes the principles of origin. This is the norm for healing, for paying the damage, to make something useful out of what apparently was a problem. The practices of healing require that the links in the chain of reciprocity do not lead to trickery, but be associated with a result that will take care of the Law of Origin itself. The mamos and people who work with this system must maintain their focus on the Law of Origin otherwise it will not work at all. The Kaggaba Mamos and Saka need to be clear about which debt system they are operating from, because they, or anyone else, becomes part of it, of the silent principles of life of curing, or reciprocity based on violence. They are spaces of embodied articulation.

In this sense, the work of identifying points of articulation between assemblages of reciprocity is key, for instance in the form of Santo San Pedro, the Kukutabe gold piece, church towns and strategies employed by the Kaggaba. These points or spaces of articulation are also the elements that constitute parts of assemblages of production in permanent states of exchange and transformation. Through sacred sites as spaces of articulation, spirit is transformed into word

and action and then exchanged back again to spirit. The elements in the assemblage and its forms can change but the basic principles of reciprocity of the Law of Origin do not.

Words and concentrated thought are the one of the materials or the “food”, which make up the “payment” given to spiritual origin of these assemblages. Words and thought, aluna, are gifts to the jabas and jates. Through deployments of “indexical footings” in speech frames, participants and situate themselves within a “horizon against which the act takes place” (Hanks 1990, 200-1) and that can shift as part embodied practices of indexical reference. Corporal stance, embodiment or habitus enable articulation with chains of reciprocity based on assemblages of the Law of Origin, that create the conditions for those assemblages to prosper and thrive or to fall apart.

Healing implies the possibility of generating responses from the Law of Origin, as like forms of communication that produce effects in the world. Practices of spiritual reciprocity with the Jaba or Jate can produce results in the rest of the assemblage. These responses can become evident in many ways. Often the effects of a properly done payment are immediately clear for the Mamos and people who are versed in this language. It might start to rain, a thunder clap, or a bird appears. At another level, the sites themselves, the Jaba and Jate, can talk or communicate with people who know how to listen. It was not only the Mamo himself saying those words. It was the words that the site embodied in him that came from his mouth.

The formulation and exchange of words, as communicative practices are framed within chains of reciprocity in the Law of Origin. Those words do not necessarily have to be understood by the mother as communication, but they do have to be the right ones given with the right positionality to get the right response. Words do not have to fully express or describe these principles of origin, but are produced through and form part of that same context. In this sense, these words and practices are not separate from the spiritual principles, but are the embodiment of those same principles. As the Mamo said, the person embodies father Kalashe himself or mother Kalawia herself. Not only do these words and practices index or point to a frame of reference that is the “Law of Origin”, but they are that frame of reference.

Here communicative practices depend on mutual reciprocity as that which is recognized or at least “distributed amongst the participants”. These spaces surpass physical speech frames as spaces of reciprocity between elements that include the “spiritual” and have a set of rules called “Law of Origin” as a set of ancestral practices which enable reciprocity to continue. The means of communication within such a system of reciprocity does not necessarily have to do only with human communication.

The spiritual principles of reciprocity that hold the assemblage together are difficult to describe. As Mamo Luis and Jaba Josefa say, they are in special invisible places, in the breath, in silent sound, in the center of territory, and is in people’s own hearts. People are part of this system, in body, practice, thought and territory. That is why the Kaggaba call their territory “The heart of the world”. To describe with words this silent space of communication is difficult. However, through embodied indexical practice, it is possible to determine if the person is participating in those chains of reciprocity linked to the care of life, or if the person is participating in other forms of reciprocity, like those of Kamajuna, the Kasougui or the Police Inspector, and from that recognition comes the possibility of healing.

Goffman talks of how the use of actual “masks”, also as a “face on loan” projects the self in context (Goffman 1956). The Kaggaba during millennia have used masks for dancing ceremonies in the ezuamas, to articulate with the Law of Origin. Recently, in June 2023, the President of Colombia, Gustavo Petro, returned to the Kaggaba their masks Pruess had stored away in the Berlin Ethnological Museum<sup>270</sup>. At the repatriation ceremony a Mamo from Palomino mentioned that the name of one of those masks is “Mulkuakukwi Guage”, literally the “face” of the father of the sun.

The Mamo clarified that day that the masks are a reverse imprint, of the face of the spiritual father. Literally the mask is an inverse face on loan. By dancing with that reverse imprint, the Kaggaba mamos can articulate themselves with the spiritual entities in those assemblages. To connect with the reverse imprint of the mask of the sun, as articulation. Not only dancing with masks, but many other practices, as forms of facework enable people to position themselves to articulate with aspects of expanded frameworks as assemblages of reciprocity.

Practices of reciprocity involve forms of strategic articulation with these wider assemblages, and are at the heart of Kaggaba practices of healing violence, both at personal and political levels. The fact that the Spanish also received tribute from the indigenous people integrated them into the relationships of reciprocity of the Law of Origin. The same thing happened with the Kaggaba church towns. The Police Inspector, settlers, and the Catholic church all depended on reciprocity with the Kaggaba to be able to exist. Figures like San Pizhu, and the “fiesta” dances were points of articulation between the Kaggaba and colonial law, as strategies for resistance to violence.

Recognition is key. How people take care of that origin is a continual topic of consultation amongst Kaggaba Mamos, as to be centered in appropriate assemblages of debt. In the next chapters we will talk about responses from forms of reciprocity as expanded speech frames based on territory and spirit. Healing as the deployment of forms of reciprocity is the basis of Kaggaba practices of resistance to violence.

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<sup>270</sup> Pruess had left these Kaggaba dancing masks in Berlin Museum of Ethnological Museum (Oyuela Caycedo and Fischer 2006). Through an agreement with the president of Germany, Colombian president Gustavo Petro had those masks returned to the Kaggaba mamos at a public ceremony in June 2023.

## 6.0 The Path out of the Tunnel: Ancestral law comes to light.

We now return to the history of how the Kaggaba managed to get out of the cycles of violence and debt operative since the police inspector. At least since the 1870s and to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the indigenous communities in the Sierra Nevada were still under that debt and violence system under the guise of the Police Inspector. By the early 1960s, the intensity and accumulation of the affectations and violence of 150 years of the “law of the inspector” had gotten much worse, unbearable for most Kaggaba.

This chapter traces through key moments and strategies the Kaggaba deploy to emerge from what in effect was a “State of Exception”, during the 1960s and 70s. They were able to shake off the chains of eternal debt of the law of the inspector inherited from the Spanish conquest. The intensity of these problems began to surpass the usefulness of the church towns, “fiestas” and the associated practices of the mamos to defend their Kaggaba communities. At least by the 1960s, and well before, the Kaggaba had started to look for new ways to articulate the Law of Origin with external forms of power, to be able to directly maintain their ancestral practices and relationships with the Law of Origin.

Over the next 20 years, indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada were able to radically transform these seemingly unending cycles of violence, rooted in the Spanish Conquest. The Kaggaba, in alliance with the Colombian government, were able to buy out most of the settlers from San Francisco almost all the way down to the sea, and displace the violence in their territory from the police inspectors, settlers and the Catholic church. During the 1980s, the Colombia government and the indigenous people establish indigenous reservations and their own Organizations<sup>271</sup>.

There is no one single response to how this happened. The indigenous people say that it was not themselves who were responsible, but it was the response of the Law of Origin itself, to that violence itself in the context of indigenous strategies of deployment of reciprocity within the Law of Origin. At another level after the 1960s, new Colombian legislation started to incipiently recognize indigenous peoples, their law and territory. The topic of recognition moves to the forefront. The indigenous people respond more directly to the problems associated with the settler and police inspector system, while openly recognizing the violence exercised against them, and the validity of their own ancestral laws. The Kaggaba started to concentrate on forms of articulation with more legitimate forms of law, and reciprocity within the Colombian state, and in general that were more compatible with the Law of Origin.

In this Chapter we also pay closer attention to the role of territory in practices of reciprocity. We look at instances of transformation of context through communicative practices embedded in territory as strategies of resistance to violence. The chapter especially focuses on how the Kaggaba, and the Arhuaco, reframe forms of articulation of their Law of Origin with other fields of power, though work in expanded frames of reference based on ancestral territory which they call Mamo S̄ushi, or the “Black Line”.

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<sup>271</sup> The Resguardo Kogui Malayo Arhuaco - RKMA was established in 1980, and in 1987 the Kaggaba, Wiwa and Arhuaco formed their own governing organization, the Organizacion Gonawindua Tayrona OGT. The Resguardo Arhuaco de la Sierra was formed in 1983, and the Confederación Indígena Tayrona – governing organization of the Arhuaco, in 1978.

## 6.1 The Kaggaba and the “State of Exception”, 1960.

- The Law of the Inspector transforms into the Mafia.

One of the important contexts that pushed the Kaggaba to find new strategies to resist violence, were the almost untold dimensions of the abuse the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada were exposed to. By the 1960s, the Police Inspector – Settler system had transformed into something much more sinister. Almost all the Kaggaba, especially the mamos who contributed their memories to the book *Shikwakala*, remember in detail, of how the “Law of the inspector”, forced debt and associated assemblages of violence and abuse took a great toll.

These memories are painful and difficult to repeat. It would be best to summarize them into a nutshell. Mamo Andresico while telling the history of the Nañiba in the community of Bonga, does that. He recounted how the settlers would come to the Kaggaba towns, or along the paths and in the forests, and nonchalantly commit severe abuses all the time, and almost anywhere. “First, they beat the men and then they raped the women. And then they started giving liquor and getting people drunk, hitting them when they were drunk and deceiving people.” “The same inspectors began to bring liquor to San Miguel, and when they began to get rowdy, they would put them in the stocks, then they said that they had to give them their cattle, their pigs and give them food and take care of these inspectors as if they were who knows what”. These kinds of abuses, random killings and violations became more and more commonplace as time went on, tacitly accepted amongst most settlers as the norm and silently suffered amongst the Kaggaba.

From Bonga these problems had expanded to the upper reaches of Kaggaba territory. They became a classic case of structural violence in which the dominated misrecognize and project the violence of the aggressor upon themselves. At that time “the settlers would shoot, the people would run away, and they would steal all their food, or they would just steal the indigenous people’s animals on the paths, and the same indigenous people, through the Inspector, would start to accuse and charge debts on each other<sup>272</sup>”.

During the 1960s, the same settlers from Pueblo Viejo had started to directly harm the territory and the environment. They started to produce cocaine base and later grow marijuana for export. At first, they would raid Kaggaba farms and steal their coca leaf to processes it and then they started to produce their own coca leaf. They would cut more and more forest to produce more coca and marijuana, all the way down to “San Pedro” - Bonga, where the settlers in the past had never cut down forest. For the Kaggaba mamos, these were major changes in forms of violence and affectations against the Law of Origin. Not only did drug trafficking involve massive cutting of the forests, but affected the spiritual principles of Origin, embedded in territory, given that converting the sacred leaf into drugs affected the links of reciprocity with the principles of life.

Now as drug traffickers and mafiosos, the “setters” from Pueblo Viejo and Dibulla started carrying around heavy weapons and getting involved in vendettas. The drug production economy was not only supported by the Police Inspector, he was part of it, and would cover up those illicit activities. The settlers, now inserted in a cycle of violence associated with the vision of extracting extreme riches from the territory, became immersed in cycles of massacres and violence. The classic

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<sup>272</sup> *Mama Andrés Siko, community of Bonga, Historia “Nujué de los Nañiba”, for Shikwalaka, October 2013.*



example in Kaggaba territory, is a vendetta that ensued between the Valdeblanquez and the Cardenas, both extended settler families living in Pueblo Viejo and Dibulla. The revenge for one killing led to another, until both families almost annihilated each other (Cardenas and Uribe 2007). These families had distinguished themselves as the ones who most abused the Kaggaba, for cutting down forests for drug production and as avid- treasure hunters. The mamos would say that the mistreatment that those settlers had unleashed on ancestral territory came back against them, the mother earth had “charged the debt”.

Such intensity of violence, made the settlers treatment of the Kaggaba even worse especially since the indigenous people refused to participate in marijuana and cocaine production. As time went on, much of the Sierra Nevada was transformed into a scenario of armed violence, powered by drugs and global inequalities and “moral economies” of embodied debt, traversed by the mafia, and later by paramilitaries, the guerrillas, and the army. By the 1990s, Colombia had become one of the largest drug producers in South America (Rosenblum, Unick and Ciccarone 2014). Structural violence spanned between the United States and drug producing countries like Colombia, to “reproduce and morph itself along its structural/ normalized-routinized/symbolic continuum (P. Bourgois 2010)”.

To compound problems, during the 1970s, waves of new colonists started to arrive in the Sierra Nevada, fusing with the older assemblage of settlers in Pueblo Viejo, fueling the Marijana Bonanza. These settlers were escaping violence from other parts of the country. Stimulated by new land reform laws they started claiming territory in the “baldios nacionales” of the Sierra Nevada, displacing the indigenous people from their lands. Meanwhile, the government of Colombian President Alfonso Michelsen enacted policies to open the Sierra Nevada to development (Viloria de la Hoz 2005, 26). The construction of the Troncal del Caribe highway along the coast from Riohacha to Santa Marta further facilitated access of settlers and extraction economies to the mountain.

The settlers’ interest in drug production extended to treasure hunting. As “*Guaqueros*”, they would loot the Tayrona tombs and sacred sites of their gold and other objects buried underneath, destroying many sites important to the indigenous people. For the mamos, it became more “difficult to do our payments due to the looting, which reached all the way up to San Miguel. The settlers looted the mother of the Snake, the jaguar, everything, and those objects are what organize territory spiritually and because of that, more disease and disaster would follow”<sup>273</sup>.

- Subjects of a “State of Exception” and silent Genocides.

If it were possible to situate the level and the characteristics of the violence in which the Kaggaba were immersed along a “Genocide Continuum” (Scheper-Hughes 2002b) their situation was getting close to one of genocide. What was happening to the Kaggaba during the later times of the Police Inspector, had had all the trappings of the Nazi Holocaust. In fact, during much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Kaggaba lived a “state of exception”, of “bare life” with no protection from the law. The Law of the Inspector was not even a law at all<sup>274</sup>. Structural violence, violent elimination

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<sup>273</sup> Mama Andrés Siko, community of Bonga, Historia “*Nujué de los Ñañiba*”, for Shikwalaka, October 2013

<sup>274</sup> Even at a formal level, the Colombian constitution of 1886 excepted the indigenous people from most rights of citizenship.

of the other, misrecognition of the “heart of darkness” in the self of the aggressor, transference of guilt to the victim, and most of the definitions we laid out as extreme levels of social violence in the Introduction to this dissertation, were all there. However, very few people have recognized the degree of this “Invisible Genocide” in the Sierra Nevada during the 1960s.

As Michael Taussig reflects, the “debt of debt-peonage...was where the gift economy of the Indian meshed with the capitalist economy”, and fused with the death space and the “power of savagery created by the European (1987, 128-9)”. Rubber traders in the Putumayo were responsible for the near genocide of the Uitoto People, while converting indigenous lives into commodities through debt. Despite some very important efforts, these events go unrecognized and are still in need of healing (Florez Arcila 2024), (Pineda Camacho 2024).

Many other indigenous people were subject to similar forms of extreme violence and massacres around Colombia during the early and mid-1900s. The *Sikuani* indigenous people, like the Kaggaba were also subject to the disastrous effects of years of violence hidden and justified under colonization and integrationist policies (Millán 2021). Settlers in the Llanos region of Colombia had persecuted and hunted the *Sikuani* for years as “savages” and “animals”, coveting their land, finally culminating in the 1972 “massacre of the Rubiera” (Gomez Lopez, Molina Gomez and Suarez Perez 2012). During the early 1900s other “invisible genocides” were still decimating the indigenous people of the United States, even with the implicit participation and misrecognition of anthropologists of that time (Scheper-Hughes 2001).

The extent and nature of this violence against the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada during those times is covered up by silence. Most anthropologists or other travelers, who visited or studied the Kaggaba up to the 1980s do mention onerous effects of the settlers, police inspectors and debt peonage over the Kaggaba<sup>275</sup>, but only in passing and leave out the extent of the torture and abuse. This is compounded by the fact that many of the Mamos who were the principal informants for those anthropologists were often the most abused, fact which the anthropologists rarely, if never mentioned.

The very misrecognition and normalization of abuse by the police inspectors perhaps kept that violence under a veil of invisibility for everyone involved. But there must be more. Nancy Scheper Hughes proposes that “a basic premise guiding 20<sup>th</sup> century anthropologists was, quite simply, to see, hear, and report no evil (2001)”. Likewise, for anthropologists studying the indigenous people it was difficult to recognize their own distant complicity with those forms of domination, along the grey zones of colonialism. Other anthropologists study their people, to take something home, to collect, like Pruess collected the Kaggaba masks. Scientific interest was apparently blind to the contexts of violence the indigenous people were navigating. It is also easier to criticize the past, and misrecognize the present. Am I any exception to these histories of misrecognition?

The Kaggaba mamos do not like to be interpellated as victims. They would not consider themselves to be in a State of Exception. They are covered by their own Law of Origin, albeit

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<sup>275</sup> This goes for Celdon, Le Brettes, Theodore Konrad Pruess, Gregory and Jhon Alden Mason and most others, many of whom especially Pruess held the Kaggaba in great regard. Gerardo Reichel Dolmatoff, was one exception. and took it upon himself to work to protect the rights of the indigenous people of the Sierra.

invisible to the Police Inspector, their settler neighbors. The focus that the Kaggaba have maintained since the arrival of the Spanish on their Law of Origin has been key to their processes of resistance.

By the 1960s it was becoming increasingly clear to the Kaggaba, certain members of the Colombian State, and a few observers from the Catholic church that the police inspector system was fundamentally contradictory with all standards of acceptable human behavior. For the Kaggaba it would be impossible to continue to coexist with the Police Inspector and church town assemblages in articulation with the Law of Origin, as they had done in the past with figures like “San Pedro”. The scale of the affectations and violence against people, ancestral territory and the Law of Origin had made this impossible, if not dangerous. The Law of Origin would have to find an alternative route to articulate with legitimate forms of law.

## **6.2 New contexts of nation and indigenous rights**

During the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, profound changes were taking place at national and international levels with the emergence of new regimes of nation, citizenship, and the defense of human rights, especially indigenous rights. Precisely, it is during that time when the Law of Origin starts to formally displace regimes of law based on violence like the Police Inspector, to seek articulation with legal regimes more accepting of indigenous rights. This section describes those incipient legal and institutional contexts that were more accommodating to indigenous rights, and the strategies the Kaggaba, and the Arhuaco deployed to articulate them with the “Law of Origin”.

- Regimes of indigenous citizenship in a “Multicultural” Nation.

Even before the 1960s, certain legal and political norms had started to emerge in Colombia that favored indigenous peoples. These changes were based on concepts relating the modern state to administering population and territory, especially for the inclusion of rights of indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities and their role as citizens of the Colombian State. Those rights were finally formalized in the “new” Political Constitution of Colombia of 1991.

That Constitution, quite revolutionary for its time, envisioned a nation based on “Multicultural citizenship” that would “recognize and protect the ethnic and cultural diversity (Article 7)” of the nation, diversity which would coexist under a multicultural liberal state (Kymlicka 1995). Different ethnic or “cultural” groups could coexist under discrete regimes of governmentality, as long as they did not violate the basic precepts of the Constitution (Sánchez, Sánchez y Roldán 1993) (Bocarejo 2008). The Constitution established new regimes and categories of indigenous rights (Rappaport 2008) that recognized relationships between territory, ethnic rights (Escobar 2008) and indigenous identity (Escobar 2020).

Repetitive cycles of armed conflict and violence that had plagued in Colombia for generations, were often attributed to the exclusion and lack of recognition of the diversity and underrepresented populations in the Nation. For many, the new Constitution represented the opportunity to conciliate and integrate differences, and improve the participation of diverse “subaltern subjects” in the nation. The Constitution promoted categories of participation based on gender, region, “culture” and ethnicity and forms of political representation particularly geared towards opening formal political spaces for traditionally excluded groups (Jackson 2019).

The creators of the Constitution hoped that a pluralistic nation would provide an enduring solution to violence that stature the gap between the self and power.

Within the diversity of the Colombian nation, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and Rom communities were assigned special rights and recognition as forms of “differential citizenship” within the new Constitution. Instead of attempting to integrate and eliminate their indigeneity, as had been the case for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Colombian state would promote forms of indigenous citizenship with a progressive set of rights including rights to self-government and territory, as the opportunity for indigenous peoples to cast off centuries of oppression.

The correlation between indigenous identity with opportunities for political participation was sometimes criticized as forming part of globalized assemblages of neoliberal domination. Autonomous regimes of indigenous governance could be coopted as forms of governmentality by the Colombian state to bolster the administrative capacity and rule of the State (Gros 2000). To make matters worse, the construction of categories of indigenous citizenship as a prerequisite for participation in the nation, would lead to the reification of those same forms of identity, stifling the indigenous movements, they were supposed to protect (Rueda – Saiz 2017). From this point of view, claims of indigeneity were suspect, as ideological constructs manipulated for political advantage and a tool for unfair claims to territory (Vélez Torres 2013, 161), also in the Sierra Nevada (Bocarejo 2008). Regardless of these pitfalls, the 1991 Constitution represented a breakthrough after centuries of oppression against indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and subaltern subjects.

- The “indigenistas” and the struggle for indigenous liberation.

Political efforts towards for the recognition of indigenous rights and identity had already started to take form in Colombia decades before their crystallization in the 1991 Constitution. The first winds of change made themselves felt with the emergence of a Pan American “*indigenista*” movement in the 1920s originating especially in Peru, Mexico and Bolivia (Amry 2006, 83). Indigenous peoples in Colombia, especially from the Cauca region, who already had been fighting for the recognition of their communities and lands, notably Miguel Quintin Lame also participated in those movements (Trojan 2015) (Rappaport 2005). These early movement were often allied with peasant leagues and workers unions, associated with the communist party, and their reputation as radicals would put “indigenismo” at odds with prevailing conservative regimes in Colombia (Rueda – Saiz 2017). Indigenous people from the Sierra Nevada also participated in those Pan American movements.

In Colombia, the “*indigenista*” movement became more visible during the 1940s, organized around the “Instituto Indigenista de Colombia” and spaces like the “Primer Congreso Indigenista Interamericano”- The emergence of indigenismo in Colombia apparently had its roots in the natural historians of the “Enlightenment” in the XIX century. Instead of portraying the indigenous people as savages, they would describe their singularity, value, and humanity. This was underpinned a sense of political responsibility and commitment that would later motivate certain anthropologists to defend indigenous rights, so long oppressed under colonist regimes (Pineda Giraldo 1999), (Garcia Nossa 1945).

Some forms of “indigenismo”, were more radical and others more academic, but they were all united through a focus on implementing practical actions and reforming state policies to better

defend the indigenous people (Barragan 2013). The “indigenistas” in Colombia, questioned the prevailing integrationist policies for indigenous peoples and the dissolution of their Resguardos. They argued for the recognition of the value of indigenous peoples within the nation, and the need to implement specific measures for the defense of indigenous people especially their rights to land. These “indigenistas”, anthropologists, agronomists, doctors, lawyers and indigenous leaders reinterpreted the application of law 89 of 1890 to emphasize its role in recognition of Resguardos and indigenous cabildos, while arguing against the policy of dissolving those figures (Pineda Camacho 2016), (Amry 2006), (Barragan 2013). This decades long process of revindication of indigenous rights based on the strategic reinterpretation of unfavorable 19<sup>th</sup> century laws, underpinned the successful validation of indigenous rights in Constitution of 1991 (Rueda – Saiz 2017).

From the beginning, these attempts to promote indigenous rights, especially those associated with territory met fierce resistance from the Colombian oligarchy. During the 1940s to the 1960s the indigenistas had to work in the context of the Colombian State that had no public institutions and no public policy for protecting indigenous rights. Private groups like the Instituto Indigenista de Colombia had limited influence in politics. The indigenistas often worked for institutions like the Colombian Lands Institute, which were focused on elimination of indigenous groups and their lands as policies for constructing a modern nation. The indigenistas had to find ways to mesh practical attempts and strategy for protection of indigenous rights and territory with those institutional settings (Correa and Acero 2013), (Garcia Nossa 1945).

By working along the margins of established public discourse, and as the employees of government agencies, the indigenistas made many practical grounded contributions to indigenous rights. They prevented the dissolution of many Colonial Resguardos and reframed notions of the role of indigenous people in the nation. The Instituto Ethnologic del Magdalena. defended the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, organized by anthropologists including Riechel Dolmatoff, with initiatives that included the first legally recognized, but short lived Resguardo for the Kaggaba in 1949 (Asamblea Departamental del Magdalena 1949).

In 1960 the institutional panorama started to change. The Ministry of Government set up the División de Asuntos Indígenas (Correa and Acero 2013). In theory the DIV was responsible for dissolving indigenous reservations, but in practice it did its best to defend indigenous rights and lands (Jackson 2020). The DIV had become the first public institution in many decades dedicated to the defense of indigenous peoples. By the 1990s it had faded away, replaced by regional or national level indigenous organizations<sup>276</sup>.

As a result of these efforts, laws to declare Resguardos were reestablished for the first time since the end of the colonial period. The Law 135 of 1961 (ley de Reforma Agraria), enabled the declaration of indigenous reservations especially in *baldios* - “empty” lands of the nation, under the responsibility of the INCORA.

The indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada participated in those indigenista movements for recognition and formalization of indigenous rights in Colombia and benefited from their results.

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<sup>276</sup> The ONIC – Organizacion Nacional Indigena de Colombia, the CRIC – Concejo Regional Indigena del Cauca, la CIT and others.

The Division of Indigenous Affairs, set up a delegation responsible for the Sierra Nevada in the 1960s, effective in denouncing the abuses of the settlers, and supported efforts to create Resguardos<sup>277</sup> and organizations of indigenous self-representation in the Sierra. In the 1930s the Arhuaco organized the first indigenous organization in the Sierra Nevada, grown out of the national level movements, called the Liga Indígena de la Sierra Nevada, as an alliance between indigenous people and campesinos (CIT 2015, 21). With the help of the DIV in 1964 it became the CIT representing the Arhuacos, Kaggaba and Wiwa of the Sierra Nevada. In 1987 the Arhuaco Kogui and Wiwa of the north face of the Sierra formed their own organization, the OGT.

### **6.3 From a State of Exception to Law of Origin: the visible emergence of Kaggaba resistance.**

The renovated institutional context during the 1960s and 1970s helped the Kaggaba and the Arhuaco, to start visibly displacing the assemblages of violence and debt under the Police Inspector system. What distinguishes the processes of indigenous resistance in the Sierra Nevada from other political process of resistance I have seen in Colombia, are the specific strategies that the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada use to materialize and deploy these new contexts of indigenous rights. The indigenous people of the Sierra through norms of reciprocity that articulate other legitimate forms of law, embedded in ancestral territory.

In this section, we will look at some of the specific and grounded processes through which the Kaggaba started to transform of the scenarios of violence present in their territory. The role of recognition as factor in transformation of violence moves to center stage. The Kaggaba start to take the first visible steps to visibly redeploy the Law of Origin as their own legitimate law of indigenous self-government. It is striking that at first these new political strategies transitioned through the same figures of San Pedro, and the Church towns, that the Kaggaba had been using for the last 300 years as forms of resistance

- The return of the Capuchinos to San Antonio, and the end of the path of San Pedro.

The first scenario of transformation we trace out is how the Capuchinos during the 1970s, attempted to defend the Kaggaba based on concepts of humanitarianism drawn from the colonial “Leyes de Protección de los Naturales”. That alliance full of contradiction given the long history of problems with the Catholic church and especially Capuchino missions and their effects on indigenous peoples in Colombia and the Sierra Nevada. Even more contradictory was that in 1952 the Capuchino had lost their right to administer indigenous peoples in Colombia. The Vicariato de la Guajira, Sierra Nevada and Motilones was dissolved and returned to the local Bishops. The Indigenous people of the Sierra were no longer formally under the administration of the Capuchinos, but the Capuchinos stayed on in the missions of Nabusimake, la Sierrita and Marocaso<sup>278</sup>.

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<sup>277</sup> The INCORA, established the Reserva Arhuaco in 1977 later converted into the Resguardo Arhuaco in 1983, and declared the Resguardo Kogui Malayo Arhuaco in 1980.

<sup>278</sup> The Capuchinos could still administer and evangelize through specific mission agreements. In the Sierra Nevada, they continued to do so especially in Nabusimake with the Arhuacos and “La Sierrita” with the Wiwa, with disastrous consequences for the indigenous people.

It was in the late 1960s, when things with the settlers had gotten out of hand, that the figure of Santo San Pedro made one last stand for the defense of the Kaggaba. The Capuchinos reappeared and now maintained a permanent presence in Kaggaba territory. In juxtaposition to the other Capuchino missions in the Sierra, their presence formed part of the Kaggaba's process of liberation from the violence of the settlers. The Italian Capuchin, Father Emilio Cucchiella decided to set up a mission the area of Pueblo Viejo in 1970 and personally ran it through the 1980s. Emilio became quite famous amongst the Kaggaba for his audacious stance against the settlers and his omnipresence around all their communities in the region.

On my visit to Pueblo Viejo 2006, mentioned in the introduction, when I inadvertently stayed there for a few weeks during the end of the armed conflict, Father Emilio's mission was still there, under the Order of the Hermanas Laura. Hermana Judith managed the school and Hermana Erminda, ran their small hospital. The Kaggaba held them in high regard. Those two Sisters had been there for decades, and had traveled around many communities with Father Emilio giving families medical aid, food, and care.

During the weeks that ensued, I made friends with Hermana Judith. She kept an eye on me and said that I could consider the mission as my own home, and could come in whenever I wanted. "Anyone who is working with the 'Kogui' is also a friend of mine". I stayed in the health post with the Kaggaba promoters and the OGT dentist, but her invitation made me feel welcome. I remember the Laura sisters without any of the disdain that other anthropologists in the Sierra seemed to hold against them. For reading material, Hermana Judith lent me a book written by Father Emilio about the history of Mission and the Kaggaba, which I read in detail.

Less than a year later I returned to Pueblo Viejo and again presented my proposal in another general assembly of the indigenous people. I also went to the mission to say hello to Hermana Judith. She was no longer there, and the new Sisters in very unceremonious terms told me I was not welcome. I also asked them if I could make a copy of Father Emilio's book, but they wouldn't let me see it again. They told me that the book was totally out of print and not available in any library in Colombia, which turned out to be true. Instead, they took their copy around Pueblo Viejo and stopped in front of each Kaggaba house, showing it and saying that Padre Emilio had already written the book that has "everything in it" and there would be no need for a new one.

Those new nuns held a strong grudge against anthropologists, and even more so, ones from the OGT, but I still couldn't understand why they wouldn't show me their book. A few years later I managed to get a copy of both of Emilio's books (Cucchiella 1995) (2004). In those books Father Emilio told his tales of how he came to San Antonio, some of what he did with the Kaggaba and included clear descriptions of the settlers' mistreatment against the indigenous people. Next I tell the history of how the Statue of Pedro kept in defending the Kaggaba, citing some of what Father Emilio relates, and the considerable memories that the Kaggaba have about Padre Emilio and San Pizhu from that time, which they later provided for the book Shikwakala, and told me when I was Pueblo Viejo during 2006.

- Padre Emilio reincarnates the 18th century Capuchino Missionaries.

Father Emilio explains how he arrived to San Antonio, when no Capuchinos were supposed to be starting new missions. After 1945, the "Bishop" started to get concerned, again, that the

Capuchinos had not been able to establish any permanent “centro de evangelización” amongst the ‘Kogui’ after they had been placed under Capuchino administration in the 1890s. Even though they still operated missions amongst the Wiwa and Arhuaco with others around Riohacha, inexplicably there were no Capuchino missions in Kaggaba territory. Padre Emilio set out to remedy that situation. In 1969 he made several visits to Kaggaba territories.

The bishop himself accompanied Emilio and did some baptizing, just as Bishop Monroy had done around 1720 in the first church town of San Antonio some 250 years before. Emilio who was affiliated with the “Misión Capuchina de la Vicaria de Riohacha”. decided that the right spot for his mission was Pueblo Viejo, now mostly inhabited by settlers, a twenty-minute walk from the site of the long-abandoned church town of San Antonio. In 1971 he started to build the mission, and in the habit of the Capuchinos, used public funds provided by the Colombian government to do it. He finished in 1974 (Cucchiella 1995, 153-7, 199).

Cucchiella was acutely aware that he was continuing the lineages of Capuchino Priests who had operated in San Antonio and the other church towns amongst the Kaggaba since 1720. He gives a complete genealogy of the Capuchino fathers who were active in San Antonio since the 1890s and included himself at the end of the list (151). He feels that he is fulfilling that incomplete legacy of the Capuchinos and that his mission was a “reconstruction of San Antonio de Yucal”, as that same parish from colonial times (201).

He attempted to do what the Catholic or Capuchino priests were supposed to have done since the colonial period, which was to protect the rights of the indigenous people against the settlers or what the priests from colonial times called, “the Spanish”. In accordance with the Leyes de Protección de los Naturales of 1542, Emilio reflects that after the “Conquest” the missionaries arrived to the New World to liberate the indigenous people from slavery and oppression perpetrated by the Spaniards. Missionaries are to value the humanity and “spirit” of the indigenous people and protect them from those people unable to understand their “identidad cultural y social”, only interested in wielding power and accumulating wealth from them (260). Emilio asserts that he worked against the Police Inspector policies of indigenous integration and tries to give humane treatment to the Kaggaba at many levels, health and education, so that they can find a place in the modern nation as indigenous people (198).

In this sense, Emilio was aligned with the “indigenista” anthropologists of the time. He was apparently friends with Riechel Dolmatoff, or at least they had conversations about ways to help indigenous people into modern times, while respecting their “culture”. Cucchiella in his books also expresses a deep aversion to government anthropologists, and the Asuntos Indígenas office which in his opinion did nothing of practical value to help the Kaggaba. They were only self-serving politicians.

Emilio feels the calling to defend the Kaggaba from the system of oppression of the settlers and the police inspector, and does that. He is witness to the atrocities of the settlers and the police inspectors and narrates many events similar to what the Kaggaba mamos describe. He describes the “Pueblo Vlejeros” (175), the “tactics” they used to take advantage of the Kaggaba (173-80), the debt bondage systems and the callousness through which they trick the Kaggaba, but Emilio does not understand why the Kaggaba passively accept the domination and abuse.



Although the settlers are responsible for this violence, he sees it as the result of a system of domination that pits the poor -the settlers- against the poorer- the indigenous people (251). At the bottom of the chain, he states that the Kaggaba had been deprived of their humanity, and now only exist as objects for the benefit of the settlers, museums, anthropologists and the “Asuntos Indígenas” office, a classic case of misrecognized structural violence.

The “missionary” immersed in all these problems, at least would be able to recover the humanity and the soul of the indigenous person before God (260). Emilio describes part of his work doing that, while defending the Kaggaba. He had no remorse in confronting the settlers, making enemies amongst them and carries a revolver on his tours of the Kaggaba territory, just like his Capuchin predecessors. He intervenes and publicly denounces the abuse of the settlers. He sets up the mission school exclusively for the indigenous people so they can abandon their “passivity”, to recognize and fight to overcome the system of oppression (218).

- The Church town of San Antonio comes back to life.

Many Kaggaba still had faith in the figure of the church towns and the statue of San Pedro. They knew what those figures were useful for, even at such a late date. To this end, in 1972 Cucchiella and the Kaggaba decided to jointly reestablish the Church town of San Antonio, under the direction of the mamos from the ezuamas of Sankona and Seizhua. We may remember that San Antonio had been burned down and abandoned around 1890, to be replaced by the Kaggaba church town of San Francisco. Antonio Coronado in 2006 a native of that community, shared his memory of the re-founding of his church town.

“Around 1972, Mama Ceballos said that we were going to reestablish the town of San Antonio. Manuel Antonio Simungama bought the farm there from a settler named “Pinde” and had the community build the town. There was a lot of conflict. The authorities of San Francisco said that another town could not be built because they had obtained deeds to the land in the Ezuamas of Ableinzhi, which we from San Antonio knew belonged ancestrally to our lineage. The Inspectors, and even Indigenous Affairs, got involved in the problem. But Father Emilio said that yes, they could make their town, but only if it included a church to make the town strong. Emilio bought them a bell and a saint. We built the church and the Father did the weddings, baptisms and gave mass. That is how San Antonio was reestablished”.

Mamo Ceballos was of the main proponents of reestablishing San Antonio as a church town. When San Antonio had disappeared in the 1890s, the lands of his community’s Ezuama, Ableinzhi had come under control of the Kaggaba lineages of the Ezuamas of Kuamaka, organized around the church town of San Francisco. Establishing San Antonio as a church town would help consolidating the territory of the original Ezuama, and return it to its lineages of mamos. For Mamo Ceballos, Padre Emilio represented an opportunity to consolidate authority over Ableinzhi by reestablishing the church town and at the same time to defend that territory from the settlers.

For Father Emilio that conflict offered a great opportunity to reestablish his long-awaited church town in San Antonio. Without mentioning that motive, Emilio presented his point of view. The valley and the site of the abandoned town of San Antonio had fallen into the hands of a settler family called Rosaldo. The grandson of that settler, Jose Miguel Rosaldo had hidden “in a pot, the money that he had accumulated from his dealings buying cows and pigs from the indigenous people (Cucchiella 1995, 201)”, assumably through debts, violence and alcohol. Rosaldo started

to boast about his riches. Word got around and other settlers killed him and made off with the pot. We could surmise that the long years of abuse against the Kaggaba and his extraction of their wealth had finally taken its toll, the Law of Origin had responded to the unpaid spiritual debt. None of his inheritors wanted to keep working the farm and left it fallow.

Three Kaggaba from Ableinzhi decided to buy the land back with the idea of recreating the old church town. Francisco Correa, the director of Asuntos Indígenas and Father Emilio helped pay. Mamo Ceballos did the spiritual work to establish the town, in Father Emilio's words, to connect it with the origin of the world so that it would have significance as a place, which took 9 days of "Pagamento, Confesión y Retribucion".

The process of setting up San Antonio in 1972 was much the same as the establishment of Kututabe – San Antonio almost 250 years ago. In both cases, the mamos established their church towns by on linking them to the ezuamas, to the Law of Origin, with their ancestral authorities and dances. They articulated the Catholic church with the system of reciprocity of the Law of Origin. Emilio writes that Mamo Ceballos had consulted that "'The only thing left for the town to be complete is the church'". Four mamos got the site ready, and the community built the church. The mamos from San Miguel had a statue of San Antonio brought from Bogota, and named Kaggaba authorities to run the town. They organized a religious procession to install the statue in the newly built church. At the end of all this according to Emilio, the town's Kaggaba authorities concluded "Now...yes!!! The town is complete ", and the community started to populate the town (Cucchiella 1995, 204).

History had pretty much repeated itself. Even at this late stage at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the buried strata of Colonial and indigenous relations of reciprocity and survival reemerged in the form of the reborn church town. The Kaggaba mamos from Ableinzhi finally got their church town back. It still operates today, with its church, saint, and yearly "Pitas" dances, and its mamos and ezuamas. The strategy successfully re-linked the ezuamas of Ableinzhi -Sancona under the watch of its own authorities, separating it from San Francisco and its ezuamas of Kuamaka.

It was a consensual relationship between priest and Kaggaba, reminiscent of the symbiosis of church towns from the colonial times of Kukutabe. In San Antonio, the church town again formalized the existence of the community and protected its associated ezuamas from competition with other Kaggaba church towns, from the settlers and the police inspector system just as they had been trying to do for the last 150 years. A give and take where the relationship between ezuamas and the church towns not only survived, but nourished the Law of Origin itself.

After recovering San Antonio, in 1979, Emilio tried to help the Kaggaba recover Pueblo Viejo from the settlers. He purchased a plot of land in the middle of Pueblo Viejo, where the Kaggaba then built the town of Nubizhaka, under the auspices of Mamo Valencio from Seizhua – San Miguel. Emilio said wanted to have an indigenous population close to the mission.

From his account it would also seem that Emilio had also purchased the land with the apparently unspoken hope setting up a church town in Pueblo Viejo. For Emilio, it would be the "great return" to what he incorrectly called the original colonial site of "San Pedro" with its old church foundation, terraces and "a few spiritual payment sites" (227-30). He would complete the Capuchino's dream of completely recovering the "old Parish of San Antonio Yucal".

The Kaggaba were also enthusiastic about recovering Pueblo Viejo, but not for setting up a church town. For the Kaggaba it was the launch pad towards the recovery of their territory based on the ancestral principles of the Mamo Sushí. Pueblo Viejo was the ancient town of Bunkuanezhaka from where the Kaggaba Mamos had coordinated with the ezuamas during centuries before and somewhat after the Spanish arrived. By recovering Pueblo Viejo, as a sacred site, it would be possible to recover Kaggaba land down the mountain. The strategy worked well. By 1993 the Kaggaba and the government had repurchased their land all the way down to Bonga.

Enmeshed in this give and take of interest, finally Father Emilio did what the Catholic church was supposed to do, from a humanitarian standpoint, to defend the indigenous people and their lands. The alliance with his mission helped the Kaggaba to regain their territory after 1980, to remove the settlers, and organize the recovery of their land and autonomy.

Father Emilio, asserts that he was doing a new type of missionizing that did not negate the indigenous identities, and neither was it a process of evangelization. He respected and encouraged the Kaggaba to continue their “ancient traditions”. Perhaps influenced by Latin American Liberation Theology, Emilio stated he was doing grounded work to turn the tables on oppression for those who had been subject to enslavement of their liberties. He searches for modern forms of evangelization, that bring the indigenous people into the “human achievements conquered over the last two thousand years of recent history (261). Nonetheless it was a mission, and Father Emilio had his sights on organizing his church town in Pueblo Viejo.



*Figure 6 Kaggaba Communities of Pueblo Viejo and Nubizhaka.2006. Photo by Peter Rawitscher*

- The end of the Path of San Pedro.

It was at this point that the Statue of San Pedro again came into action. The mamos of Seizhua in the town of San Miguel, had been keeping that statue safely stowed since 1890 when the town of San Antonio was burnt down. Apparently now tired of San Pedro, those mamos gave it to Emilio for repairs in 1968 (147). The statue never returned to San Miguel. What happened to

San Pedro initiated a new phase of how the Kaggaba started to organize the recovery of their territory and practices of law.

Emilio around 1984 brought the repaired San Pedro back up to Pueblo Viejo. Mamo Felix remembers what happened next. Emilio had “ordered a chapel to be built in Pueblo Viejo for the Saint. The father performed marriages and baptisms for indigenous people from this chapel. Faced with this situation, Arregocés Conchacala, leader of the OGT for Pueblo Viejo at that time, told the community. ‘This Saint belongs to the priests and nuns and they pray to it, but that is not our culture, so why do we to have here?’. Arregoces was going to burn down the church with the saint and everything in it. But faced with resistance from both the Mamos and the Priest himself, he returned the Saint to Father Emilio and ordered the community to dismantle the church. That got Arregoces into a lot of trouble, but also put a stop to the evangelization at the mission”<sup>279</sup>.

Effectively, Emilio had built a chapel with the statue of San Pedro for the “fiestas” and for the evangelization of the Kaggaba in Pueblo Viejo and Nubizhaka. Arregoces Conchacala, then a “Cabo”, and as a young Kaggaba leader, had already sniffed out that Emilio’s new chapel with the San Pedro statue, had all the trappings of the church town system, with the Capuchinos on top. Arregoces liked things to be clear. When Antonio Coronado was telling that same story while we were in Pueblo Viejo, Arregoces had overheard the conversation. He interjected, “I would have liked to simply burn that useless doll (San Pizhu), it had nothing to do with the Kaggaba, it was Imposed on us”. I asked “So why didn’t you burn it?” He admitted that much as he would have like to, burning the statue would have caused too much trauma for Padre Emilio and problems with several mamos who still “defended the saint”. So, he respected that, and instead had the Kaggaba community dismantle the chapel and return the Saint to Padre Emilio. Arregoces was evidently quite satisfied that he had stopped the priests from building another church town right in the middle of Pueblo Viejo during the 1980s.

Meanwhile, Mamo Don Juan from Kuamaka, not to miss the chance at finally getting his hands on the “Santo San Pizhu”, requested the statue from Padre Emilio, who gave it to him. Today, the Kaggaba from Kuamaka still guard the statue of San Pedro behind the locked doors of the church of San Francisco. The Saint had done a lot of work over the last 300 years or so. The Kaggaba still maintain their old churches, periodically renovate the roofing and the walls, sweep them clean, and take the saints out every year for the “fiesta”. Who knows, perhaps one day history will repeat itself and the statue will resume its path in the defense of the Kaggaba.

The idea of the Mamos of San Miguel of sending the figure of San Pedro down to Padre Emilio in Pueblo Viejo coincided with the end of that strategy of Kaggaba resistance dating from the colonial epoch, well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was a final act of resistance with San Pedro. From what I gather, Mamo Valencio was aware of this when he sent the San Pedro to Padre Emilio. It had one last mission. He knew that setting up a new town in Bunkuawnezhaka would trigger the

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<sup>279</sup> Interview *Mama Félix Coronado*, 2014. For book *Shikwakala*

recovery of territory<sup>280</sup>, down to the sea. The San Pedro was still the Kukutabe, the Ñiuba Santo, a sewa spiritually linked to the origin in the center of ancestral territory.

Alongside the contradictions that accompanied the resettlement of San Antonio, the mission and new quasi church town in Pueblo Viejo, many Kaggaba knew the statues of the saints were no longer needed as a method of organizing Kaggaba resistance to violence nor to maintain their communities. The Kaggaba mamos started to employ new forms of resistance, based on the visible emergence of “ancestral” forms of organization of territory from the ezuamas. They would deploy the “Law of Origin” in articulation with emerging forms of law more compatible with indigeneity and the principles of humanity.

The church town in Pueblo Viejo never fully materialized, but the Kaggaba communities of “Nubizhaka” and “Pueblo Viejo” tied to their ezuamas, did prevail. They were the origins of the new Resguardo and the OGT. Padre Emilio perhaps was only partially conscious that his work fit in with a much larger plan, centuries old, and now just starting to come to light. But Father Emilio knew his mission would not last forever. The symbiosis between the Kaggaba and the Catholic church finally worked at its best, when it was no longer necessary. After generations of patience, the strategy of the church towns had come to fruit and helped the indigenous people turn the tables on this situation of violence, return their territory, and eliminate the need for the missions themselves. As Emilio observed “for a grain of wheat to germinate, it must die (265)”. Shortly after Arregoces dismantled that chapel, Padre Emilio left for Italy, never to return.

The Order of the Laura Sisters continued taking care of the mission and keeping the school going. Years later, in 2020 the Kaggaba mamos consulted that they no longer required the mission. Its presence was causing more difficulties than good. The settlers had been bought out long ago. The mission farms themselves were the last “yali” owned lands around Pueblo Viejo. Like a twisted cog in the machinery, the Kaggaba expelled the Hermanas Laura and turned the mission into a self-run boarding school. The Kaggaba Governor Jose de los Santos Sauna justified it by simply explaining that the mission was funded with public money for indigenous people, and so they were entitled to running the school by themselves.

## **6.4 Transformation of the Law of violence into the Law of the ezuamas.**

### **6.4.1 The moment of recognition, the Inspector as an outcast.**

The relationship between the Catholic church and the Kaggaba was only one facet of processes of transforming violence through reciprocity with the Law of Origin. Well before the arrival of Father Emilio and Asuntos Indígenas, the Mamos and community had been reorganizing themselves to confront the ever more extreme manifestations of violence perpetrated by the settlers and their debt system. It was only until the 1960s that these efforts became manifest to the non-indigenous people around the Kaggaba.

Perhaps the most graphic and apparently transformational story of violence against the Kaggaba that I have heard is one from 1973 that Father Emilio narrates in his book. Emilio calls it the advent of a “new historical phase” for the Kaggaba: their public recognition that this abuse was

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<sup>280</sup> We develop Kaggaba concepts of levels or rings of territory, the black line and resistance in Chapter 7.

not right. The events hinged around the horrifying rape and killing of a Kaggaba woman by a group of settlers, newly turned drug traffickers, as they are roaming the trails around Pueblo Viejo. According to Emilio, the settlers' random rapes and killings had become so commonplace and normalized that the Kaggaba would not dare to respond. But "Conquera" the brother of the woman, refuses to accept the unpunished crime. He denounced it to the police inspector in Pueblo Viejo, who like always, said it was best to do nothing and avoid trouble. Conquera takes up his old muzzle loading bird shotgun and goes to reclaim the murder before its very perpetrators. The blood-stained group of settlers simply laugh, kill Conquera and throw his body to the dogs. This was too much for the Kaggaba. They take the law into their own hands, and burn down the guilty settlers' house and that family never comes back to Pueblo Viejo (179).

According to Emilio, this was the first time at least from his perspective, that the Kaggaba had visibly taken action. Emilio credits part of that moment of recognition to the consciousness that his missionary work had engendered amongst the Kaggaba. That act of violence made visible by the Kaggaba response finally catalyzed a government reaction. Both Padre Emilio and Asuntos Indígenas denounce the crime and it becomes a major public issue. The Police Inspector was no longer the only public figure in Pueblo Viejo. The illegitimate abuses of the law became increasingly evident. Pacho Correa the director of Asuntos Indígenas visits Pueblo Viejo in 1974 (251). He had the perpetrators put in prison, circulated press statements, and sent the police and military up, and sets off a chain reaction of government collaboration with the Kaggaba. During the remainder of the 1970s, Asuntos Indígenas, the INCORA and the INDERENA all worked together to defend the rights of the indigenous people, after so many centuries of abuse.

The illegitimacy of the Police Inspector was already becoming evident, helped by national level policy that increasingly recognized indigenous rights. It was now possible for the Kaggaba to circumvent the police inspector as a source of authority and to take a more radical stance. The Kaggaba started an effort to replace the law of the inspector with more legitimate forms of law that could interact with the principles of the Law of Origin.

Mamo Felix explains that the law of the police inspector was snowballing into something totally contradictory, and now directly interfered with traditional forms of Kaggaba law. When a Kaggaba marriage fell apart, the couple had to present themselves to the Police Inspector for legal mediation. The Police Inspector would assign an alimony or compensation, but instead of giving it to the wife, he would keep it for himself. These forms of "reverse debt" were interfering with the traditional spiritual "payments" that the mamos would make at the sacred sites for these types of problems. Instead of the spiritual mothers and fathers, the Police Inspector would get that payment, transformed into money. There was no healing.

The mamos started to organize themselves more openly, to heal that damage, that debt the assemblage of the Police inspector had created over the Law of Origin. Mamo Andresico explains "The mamos of Pueblo Viejo and San Miguel began to organize their spiritual work to remove the settlers. The situation was becoming dangerous". "The Mamos had to stay celibate for a year to be able to cleanse themselves of this violence and not let the community be

contaminated. This is what the Mamos said had to be done. The settlers are contaminating our wives, and now they want to harm our land by taking the gold and cutting down the forest<sup>281</sup>.

Mamo Felix remembers how the Kaggaba first removed the Semanero. “At that time a man named Vicencio said that the position of authority of the Semanero had its origins in Cherua. Then the mamos from all the ezuamas began doing spiritual work in those sacred places until they eliminated that position. At that time, I was young”<sup>282</sup>. The strategy was based on healing through reciprocity, to “Pay” the Law of Origin for the damage that the police inspector was doing. The Police Inspector was fining the Kaggaba, thus directly articulating himself with the Law of Origin, as “reverse debt” which had to be healed.

The next step was to remove the position of the Police Inspector. Mamo Felix continues, “The last Police Inspector was Sibiabi Lebette (a settler). All those Inspectors were the most violent who attacked our people. The work of eliminating the positions of Inspector and Semanero was led by Mama Jacinto Zarabata, Tsinta, Antonino, and Ramon Gil Barros, accompanied by all the authorities of each town who were responsible for fighting against those immense problems. After that, the Kaggaba were finally able to remove the Police Inspector and we replaced him with Ramon Gil Barros, a Wiwa, as the new inspector.

#### 6.4.2 The Standoff: “A struggle so big that you can’t even start to imagine”.

The Settlers were aware, or at least felt, that their law was no longer recognized. The response of many settlers to these affronts to their authority, was even more violence. Again, mamo Felix remembers during that the settlers, “After the Semanero no longer existed, Sibiabi's sons went to San Miguel and raped a few indigenous women. There was no one to file a complaint with, so the Kaggaba authorities went to Riohacha to complain. After they started to do that, the levels of rape and robbery began to drop”. The fact that the indigenous people could now go to Riohacha to complain made the settlers even more angry and violent.

The work of healing was crucial to neutralizing these endless cycles of violence. Groups of Mamos from their ezuamas and other key sites in their territory, started to organize a process of spiritually healing the violence exerted by the settlers and the police inspectors from the origin of the principles of law itself. This required a lot of work and concentration at the proper sacred sites, receiving the damage done. After having removed the “position” of the Police Inspectors, the Kaggaba authorities were no longer so directly articulated with the violence of the police inspector, and not so much drawn into that system. The Mamos were able to stay focused on the principles of life, to spiritually “Pay” and cure this sort of violence.

At certain moments, it looked as though there was no way out of this confrontation between the Law of Origin and the law of the inspector. The Kaggaba worked through their system of healing, while the settlers relied upon feeding off their own assemblages of violence. These two assemblages of debt, became irreconcilable.

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<sup>281</sup> Interview Mamo Andresico Nujue de los :Nañiba p. 16-17 for Shikwakala.

<sup>282</sup> Interview *Mama* Félix Coronado, Community of *Tuqueka*, July 2014. for Shikwakala

As mamo Felix put it “at the start of the creating the first land reserves. it was a fight so big you can hardly imagine”. The settlers attacked and shot at the indigenous people, and stole their produce, animals, and coca, all under the watch of the Inspector. Some Kaggaba fought back. Those cases of open conflict were an initial desperate reaction when confronted with the settlers taking their territory to produce cocaine. It was violence not only against the Kaggaba, but territory itself. Groups of mamos, and authorities from each church town accompanied these more direct attempts to defend territory.

Older Kaggaba remember many stories of how they confronted the settlers. Mamo Andresico relates one such event. “One day Ever Lebette invaded Mamo Pedro Juan’s jañu patch, who unsuccessfully tried to defend it. The settlers took several Kaggaba hostage. The Kaggaba decided at Ramon Gil’s suggestion, it would be better to resolve those problems themselves and not through the inspector. To do that, the Kaggaba made an alliance to do their spiritual work between the people of San Francisco and San Miguel, and remove the yali from Pueblo Viejo, responsible for the violence.

A few Kaggaba took direct physical action to respond to violence, but did not commit violent acts. The Kaggaba closed the path off to Pueblo Viejo at a place called Ulukaya. Several Kaggaba fired shots with their old ‘chimney’ shotguns, without hitting anyone, and then ran off<sup>283</sup>. They rescued the Kaggaba who the settlers had taken hostage, and took them back to the Ezuama.

However, many other people did lose their lives in these conflicts. The settlers continued to threaten and occasionally kill the Kaggaba. Groups of Arhuacos had come from their native territories in the Department of the Cesar, also to settle around Bonga and San Pedro. Famously, the Arhuaco leader Mario Solis directly confronted the drug running settlers, and many Arhuacos were massacred right in San Pedro. That would be another story to tell.

When the mamos had “eliminated the position of the Police Inspector”, they named Ramon Gil as the first indigenous police inspector so he could better fight for Kaggaba rights. That also put Ramon in the position of having to physically intervene in these problems. Ramon Gil occasionally tells his famous story of the “Double Cero” shotgun. How he in his role as police inspector had defended himself, and the entire field of indigenous rights, ancestral territory, and the Law of Origin, in an armed standoff between himself and a group of settlers in the 1970s.

Ramon told me this story in 1991, in the Wiwa community of Klavangaga where I was doing my fieldwork semester with him in the Guachaca Valley (Rawitscher 1992). Later in 2006 when I was in Pueblo Viejo, my Wiwa friend Anita Gil, Ramon’s daughter who was a spectator, retold me how she remembered the story, of how Ramon confronted the settlers of Pueblo Viejo, now turned drug traffickers. They were jealous that the Kaggaba were reclaiming their land and the Police Inspector as their authority. To solve the problem, they planned to eliminate Ramón as the person they perceived as responsible for having turned the tables against them.

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<sup>283</sup> Mamo Andresico “Nujue de los Ñañiba p. 15”, Ulukaka is a place along the path between Bonga and Pueblo Viejo. A “chiminea” is what the Kaggaba call their muzzleloading birdshot guns. These events are also mentioned in (CNMH-ONIC 2019, 271).



Anita's memory of events went as follows: Shortly after Ramon was named inspector, Mamo Ceballos<sup>284</sup> died a natural death. In their usual strategy of reverse debt and trickery, the settlers attempted to falsely frame him as responsible for the Mamo's death. They denounced Ramon in Riohacha, and they planned to capture, jail him, fine him, and replace him with a settler again as the police inspector. But that hadn't worked, because the Nuns from Father Emillio's mission had testified in favor of Ramon.

So, Pedro Luis, a leading drug trafficker-settler cited Ramon to Pueblo Viejo to resolve this affair, to accuse him, capture him, or perhaps kill him. Ramon and the supporting groups of mamos were not willing to shy away. It was a duel. Pedro Luis descended from one side of the Valley, and Ramon with his wife and children including Anita, from the other. They faced off for a duel in Pueblo Viejo. Ramon was resolved to stand his ground against the twisted "law" of settler violence. The stakes were high. If Ramon lost, the settlers could recover their police inspector and subject the Kaggaba to their debt system again.

Anita narrates. "Pedro Luis had charged my father a fine of 50 cattle. That day about four settlers came down, all carrying their machine guns. We were waiting, his family, in Pueblo Viejo, at the post where the cattle are 'sacrificed' for the fiestas in Pueblo Viejo. We were scared. My father had a 16-gauge shotgun, also called a double OO. Finally, Pedro Luis arrived and my father told him, 'You shoot me first, and then I will shoot'. Pedro Luis readied his machine gun, and said to my father words that were too rude to repeat. He raised his gun and aimed at my father. But Pedro Luis got scared and started to tremble. His tongue started to hang out like this (Anita reenacts that). He pulled the trigger to shoot at my father, but his gun only sounded 'Chuiomp' and it didn't fire. We were all watching. And my father said "shoot again'. But Pedro Luis, was so shocked and weakened, that he sat down. My father aimed his shotgun at Pedro Luis, but with the intention of shooting in the air, and his gun didn't go off either. Pedro Luis said 'What problems we have had since this Arsario, Ramon arrived. He is wise, a *secretero* – a sorcerer'. Then, Pedro Luis left, very scared. It had turned out right because the mamos were working so that the settlers would start to leave<sup>285</sup>".

"And how did the mamos do their work to defend against the settlers, to defend your father", I asked. "Oh, you know how they work. They 'pay'. They pay to the spiritual grandfather, they pay the *zhona, shala*, for all the problems that the settlers generated. That was a lot of work for the Mamos. But Pedro Luis and the rest mistreated so much the indigenous people. The mamos were not working to harm Pedro Luis. They were simply healing those problems".

One law was incompatible with the other, opposed. This was a standoff, what Wagner-Pacifici defines as, "situations of mutual and symmetrical threat, wherein the central parties face each other--- across some key divide". The participants have usually taken their stands on some issue in which their positions are "diametrically opposed" (2000, 7-8). In these spaces people can be reborn, or reconfigured in new social roles to negotiate between apparently irreconcilable and

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<sup>284</sup> Effectively according to Padre Emilio Mamo Ceballos had died a natural death in 1979 (Cucchiella 1995, 207).

<sup>285</sup> Anita tells the story in 2006 in Pueblo Viejo. *Secretero* means Ramon was a "sorcerer" impeding Pedro Luis's ability to shoot. *Arsaario* is another name for the *Wiwa*.

contradictory grounds of reference or “Coding schemes (2000, 147)”. These are moments of contingency that open wide horizons of possible outcomes.

That standoff was associated with two clear frames of reference, or sets of articulated assemblages of reciprocity, embedded in the interaction frame of Ramon’s standoff. Each frame of reference was were brought in and out of context, as reflected in the footing between Ramon and the Pedro Luis, faced off at the cattle butchering post. One was the assemblage of reverse reciprocity involving the Settlers and the Police Inspectors, as debt upheld by violence and trickery. On the other we have Ramon standing his ground for what we have called the Law of Origin as assemblages of reciprocity with their chains of debt originating in care for life. In the background, we have mamos from the ezuamas doing their spiritual work, not on Pedro Luis himself, but what Anita calls paying the “Grandfather” meaning the spirit of the territory, as a form of healing.

Even though the Mamos did their payments and spiritual work, what form final outcome of the standoff would take was a matter of contingency, as the articulation of available horizons with diverse possibilities. Pedro Luis with his machine gun had every chance to win. But, the Law of Origin prevailed, and produced an unexpected result. Pedro Luis’s gun didn’t fire and Ramon stood his ground. Ramon couldn’t fire either, otherwise he would have been absorbed by the very same logic of violence that Pedro Luis stood for. The surprise of Pedro Luis when confronted with that reality, changes his footing from that of standing to one of sitting.

Anita is clear that the Mamos had no intention of harming Pedro Luis. However, 6 days later, Pedro Luis was killed by one of his own workers on his marijuana plantation, and for a different reason altogether. He was upset that Pedro Luis had neglected to pay him his salary. Anita tried to explain that Pedro Luis’s death was not a consequence of the mamos work, but a response of the same Law of Origin. He was a victim of his own behavior and practices of inverse reciprocity.

However, the general long-term results of the standoff, in the wider context of territory and the Law of Origin, were more predictable. The result was healing. The standoff embodied a wide transformation of context that was taking place around that time in ancestral territory. The assemblage of violence was inverted, finally leading to the exit of the violent settlers, and the return of territory to those people who took care of it. That standoff was related to transformations of the terrain with far reaching political results, including the signing of the Black Line resolution in 1973 and later the declaration of the new indigenous reservations.

### **6.5 Conclusions. The unity of the Mamos and the spirit of resistance as politics.**

When Mamo Andresico finished narrating his story of settler violence and Kaggaba resistance, a young Kaggaba leader who had been orienting that public meeting in Bonga asked, “so how did the mamos work to recover our territory?” Mamo Andresico responded “The Mamos worked in unity from the ezuamas, just like they have been doing from the beginning of history, so that their payments would work. That is the correct way”. All 20 or 30 Kaggaba in the meeting affirmed that conclusion with a simultaneous “ahaha”. The answer was to work in reciprocity with the principles of life according to the Law of Origin, to heal and not perpetrate violence.

Mamo Felix from his house in Tugueka, somewhat later, when finishing his narration on those same themes, came to a similar conclusion. "Our communities and authorities started to direct their solutions to these problems based on the spirit. We relied more on payments at the mother and father sites where the spiritual essence of our ancestral parents is. That is when the problems of the settlers in the Sierra Nevada started to disappear".

Alongside the mamos' reliance on their practices of healing, it was during the 1970s that the settler system started to implode, almost by itself, alongside the effects of its own misrecognized extreme violence. After buying out Pueblo Viejo in the 1980s, the Kaggaba in alliance with the government and friendly NGOs, by the early 1990s had recovered much of their land down to the community of Bonga (RICERCA 1997). This process is still ongoing, and today the Kaggaba in the Cañas Valley have recovered their territory almost down to the "Black Line" along the sea.

In this chapter, we have seen how the Kaggaba were subject to an increasingly intense "state of exception" under the violence of the assemblage of what we have called the "Law of the Police Inspector. These forms of violence were based on sort of an assemblage of debt servitude, inherited from the times of the encomienda. Over time it transformed into forms of misrecognition that perpetuated violence, dressed up as the law of "Police Inspector".

We presented specific scenarios of resistance, in which these indigenous peoples deployed strategies of reciprocity or "healing" to transform processes of violence by their articulation as "debt" with the Law of Origin. The Kaggaba up to the 1980s, still used figures like San Pedro or the church towns under the Police Inspector, to articulate external forms of authority with Kaggaba authority. They connected the debt system of the encomienda, the church towns and later the police inspectors through relations of reciprocity with the Law of Origin, so they would at some level, care for the Law of Origin. These figures did not openly legitimize ancestral authority nor recognize it, rendering invisible those same ancestral practices to enable them, just as practices of violence often go misrecognized.

By the 1970s, Kaggaba work of resistance would start to abandon those colonial strategies of resistance that camouflaged the "Law of Origin". Silently, amongst a core group of mamos and authorities, fundamental shifts had been taking place both to publicly organize and internally unify Kaggaba authority around the "Law of Origin". They would now more visibly work through Law of Origin to enable mutual relationships with more appropriate Colombian legal and institutional frameworks.

The issue of recognition of violence moves to the forefront in practices of transformation of violence, asking when is too much? The Catholic church contained elements of respect and protection for humanity that could be manipulated and worked through practices of reciprocity based on the Law of Origin. In the case of the extreme violence generated by the Police Inspector system, it got to the point that those practices of violence could not be transformed, and the very Mother earth expelled them. The Kaggaba recognized that this law of the inspector was not a law, and that it was incompatible with reciprocity based on the "Law of Origin".

The Kaggaba employ practices of situated resistance that transformed that centuries long legacy of violence against them. Strategies of resistance were now more directly articulated with the work of the mamos from their ezuamas, based on their practices of reciprocity within assemblages of territory and spirit, and people linked. The "Law or Origin" as an assemblage of

reciprocity and healing, was at the heart of the indigenous struggle for liberation from those assemblages of violence.

These forms of resistance are based on the articulation of debt, in this case debt generated through violence, at a spiritual level, with assemblages of reciprocity based on the Kaggaba “Law of Origin”. Through these practices of reciprocity, chains of debt based on violence are turned upside down. The assemblage readjusts itself to re-articulate its components, including the expulsion from territory of these components which do not fit in, as forms of violence that do not give back to the principles of life and care. The constant readjustment of these forms of debt are what the Kaggaba mamos in the last Chapter, referred to as healing.

Like the story of Ramon Gill’s standoff with the settlers, these transformations through reciprocity take place in situated participation frames, linking much wider shifts in context through embodiment or contiguity between people, the spirit, territory and other elements in the assemblage. Through these situated practices the Kaggaba transform relationships with forms of power, based on debt reciprocity, which were relationships with the settlers. In the next chapter we will focus on how the Kaggaba deploy reciprocity embedded in territory as healing, to create wide effects especially at the level of politics.

## 7.0 Medicine for territory and people: Writing the law of Mamo Sushi as resistance.

Territory is at the heart of practices amongst the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada. This Chapter develops how embodied practices, that include the spirit and things in territory, link situated spaces of resistance and healing, with wider political transformations along routes of reciprocity. The Chapter works with the strategies the indigenous people use, with a focus on the Kaggaba and the Arhuaco, to transpose assemblages of reciprocity based on ancestral territory, and the spiritual laws that hold it together, into written law.

By the 1970s the issue of territory was moving to the forefront. As we saw in Chapter 6, groups of Kaggaba mamos had been working to situate processes of resistance directly from the Law of Origin manifest in territory. By the 1960's the Kaggaba mamas had become concerned that the fabric of their territory was becoming irreparably damaged. Large scale settlement, associated with drug trafficking, deforestation and the looting of sacred sites were affecting territory causing profound effects on people, nature and the Law of Origin. Confronted by this threat, the Kaggaba reoriented their resistance to include Mama Sushí as the Law of Origin embedded in territory.

We look at how the indigenous people deploy written law as both embedded in territory and articulated with other regimes of law as a strategy of resistance, transformation of context and healing. We posit the Law of Origin as a frame of reference, embodying the entire ancestral territory as an expanded “interspectival” space. We argue that these assemblages of reciprocity can interact with and transform forms of law favorable to the indigenous peoples emerging in the Colombian nation.

Starting with the 1973 Black Line resolution, the Chapter goes backwards in time to show how indigenous efforts to formalize the “Mama Sushí” had underpinned the resurgence of forms of indigenous self-government and resistance for decades, if not centuries, before the 1973 Resolution.

- The Mama Sushí as spirit embodied in assemblages of territory, people, and things.

For the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada, territory embodies the “code” of the Law of Origin, meaning the laws of how to care through reciprocity. The Law of Origin as manifest in territory has many names and deployments. For the Kaggaba, the most fundamental form of Law of Origin embedded in territory. For the Kaggaba people, that term encompasses various dimensions of territory, reciprocity, and law.

*Mama Sushí*, is pronounced in Kogian as “Mama Sálshi”. At the level of territory, Mama Sushí refers to the organization of the spiritual elements of territory manifest through its sacred sites, mothers and fathers, in relation to things and people that give and receive spirit. It is the “principle” of that assemblage. Physically, the principle is organized as 9 rings of “sacred sites” emanating from the center of territory, circling ancestral territory down to the sea, and deployed around the four Cardinal directions (CTC 2015). The Mama Sushí, as Mamo Luis explained in Chapter 5 on healing, is also a hidden spiritual essence which silently talks. It links territory with people and nature, spiritual and material forms of reciprocity. The Mama Sushi is embedded in people and their practices.

At still another level, the Mama Sushí is manifest in certain Tayrona gold pieces, as a *sewa*, that enables the mamos to connect, to consult on how to work though principles or “codes” of caring

for territory embedded in each sacred site and in the entire spiritual order of territory. The Kaggaba mamos keep the principal gold piece somewhere around the Ezuamas of Makutama, and call it the golden “seal” of Mama S̄shi.

The S̄shi can also be embedded in documents. The first time that certain aspects of this “ancestral law” of the indigenous people was formally recognized by the Colombian State, in the form of the legal document titled “Resolución 002 1973 de la Línea Negra” the “Black line”<sup>286</sup>. As a document embedded in that assemblage, it was related to transformations in the application of law that would defend indigenous territory and people in the Sierra Nevada.

Almost no writing on indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada recognizes how far back in time the Kaggaba’s and Arhuaco’s attempts went to formalize the “Black Line” as territory and as law, nor that it was at the heart of indigenous processes of resistance to transform violence and remove the settlers from their territory. Most notably the Black Line was intimately related to the formal process of declaration and National Parks in the Sierra Nevada during the 1960s and the Arhuaco and Kogui Malayo Arhuaco Reservations in the 1980s. The rest of this chapter focuses on indigenous processes of writing and deploying the silent “book” of S̄shi, of ancestral law, articulated within the assemblages of reciprocity of the Law of Origin.

### **7.1 The Golden Seal of Mama S̄shi and ancestral politics of protection of territory in 1970.**

Most Kaggaba Mamos who I know, trace the emergence of visible forms of the Law of Origin as the Mama S̄shi, for the defense of indigenous territory to the declaration of the Black Line Resolution in 1973. It was related Kaggaba’s efforts, and the indigenous people of the SNSM in general, to overcome the problems of the police inspectors and settlers in the early 1960s. These strategies were fundamentally based on the role of territory in the Law of Origin.

Mamo Felix remembers how writing that 1973 Resolution was an effort shared amongst “All the mamos and traditional authorities, and the ‘civil’ – (non-indigenous person), who led that effort, named Pacho Correa, the Director of the Asuntos Indígenas Office. Confronted by these problems of the Police Inspector and the settlers, the mamos meet once again, and ‘re-read’ the Mama S̄shi. Once they re-read it, as the natural document written about the limit of the map of the indigenous Resguardo of the Sierra Nevada, they affirmed that our territory had been designated down to the coast at the Black Line”<sup>287</sup>.

Mamo Felix continues, to explain that “When we were working on Black Line Resolution the problems with the settlers got a lot worse. The Kaggaba were saying that the land belonged to us all the way down to the sea. The settlers were not in agreement with those limits and in response they started to hit us, steal our cattle, and beat us even more. But the indigenous people were firm on our objective of establishing that limit at the Black Line. All that happened just after the position of Police Inspector was removed. When we built the *nujue* in Nubizhaka, the settlers burned it immediately, and when we rebuilt it, they burned it down again. We thought that the

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<sup>286</sup> The term Mamo S̄shi never appears in legal discourse until around 2015, when the indigenous people of the SNSM – CTC, and the Colombian government rewrite the Black line resolution. A “Mojón” is a boundary marker made of cement.

<sup>287</sup> Interview, *Mama Félix Coronado, Tugueka*, Julio 2014. For book *Shikwakala*.

S̆shi would never be established nor applied. But it was. The government installed the Mojon for the Resguardo in Abizhi<sup>288</sup> [near Bonga] so that the indigenous people could move down the mountain and get somewhat closer to our limit of the Black Line along the sea. The settlers killed some of the people who helped us do that”.

The recognition of ancestral territory as the Black Line was the basis for the entire process of resistance. Felix observes that the 1973 Black Line Resolution came into existence after a “re-reading” of the Mama S̆shi, as a solution to the violence of the settlers. As we will see the Mamos had been reading their Mamo Sushi for centuries to confront forms of social violence imposed on them. It revolved around recognizing indigenous territory, the “Black Line” all the way down to the sea. The settlers were quite upset that the government was recognizing Kaggaba claims to territory, and not theirs. First, they had lost their legal authority, Police Inspector, and now they were losing their rights to territory.

Mamo Felix mentioned that Pacho Correa, the director of Asuntos Indígenas had been up in Pueblo Viejo writing the 1973 Black Line resolution and the Parks people had been there in the 1960s working with the Mamos. I had also heard that during 1960s, Kaggaba mamos had come down from their ezuamas to do their spiritual work at the Black Line sites on the sea especially at those Tayrona sites located in the areas that were to be declared as the Tayrona Park. The spiritual work of the Mamos was part of the strategy behind creating the Tayrona and Sierra Nevada Parks in 1964, based on the organization of ancestral territory as law<sup>289</sup>. I surmised that they would have the same strategy to writing the 1973 Black Line Resolution, but I wasn’t sure about how it could have happened.

One day, during a visit to his nujue called “Sekuañi” in the San Salvador valley, I asked my friend Mamo Luis Noevita about the possible relationships between the first Parks of 1964, and the Black Line Resolution. Mamo Luis is quite elderly and is originally from the Ezuama of Nuklienchi, below Makutama. He had worked with the OGT for many years. and he remembered quite a bit. The first “indigenistas” had come to Pueblo Viejo well before Padre Emilio had arrived, well before the 1973 Resolution. In fact, they were working on setting up the 1964 SNSM Park together with the indigenous people.

Mamo Luis went on to say that he remembers the encounters between the principal Kaggaba Mamos to liberate themselves from the Police Inspector. They probably took place in the early 1960s, including Mamo Luis’s father, Mamo Ceballos from Ableinzhi and Mamo Jose de la Cruz from Takina and Mamo Miguel from Jukumeizhi, who were by then quite old. They held a series of meetings in the Ezuamas of Makutama and Takina, also sometimes accompanied by Arhuacos, to consult “spiritually” as to the principle, derived from the Mama S̆shi, that would enable them to work with the government, and lead them out of the Law of the Inspector.

When Mamo Luis started to participate in those meetings, he was a young Mamo, freshly out of his Ezuama, where he had been trained for some 20 years to dance in the darkness of caves and

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<sup>288</sup> A mojón is a concrete boundary marker, in this case for the Kogiu Malayo Arhuaco Reservation.

<sup>289</sup> Conversation with Juan Nieves in the Tayrona Park, about how his father in law, Mamo Marco Barros had established residence sacred site of “Pueblito” during the 1960s, working with the INCORA to establish the park.

the nujue. After he emerged into the light, he spent a few years dancing and working as a Mamo in his ezuama. Then his father had Mamo Luis leave his Ezuama join that group of elderly mamos and carry on their spiritual consultations to help organize resistance to the police inspector and the recovery of their territory.

At that time according to Mamo Luis, an Arhuaco called Mario had come to live amongst the Kaggaba in the Rio Ancho Valley below Santa Rosa. He was from Valledupar. Apparently the Arhuacos were looking for a way to establish their organization, the CIT and had asked the Kaggaba to consult. The answer was in the “sello” the golden “seal” of Mama S̄ushi. Sitting there in Mamo Luis’ nujue, listening to his story, I was quite impressed. I had always thought that Mamo Luis was about 75 years old, but started to wonder and asked him. “Well, I think that I am at least 90 years old or maybe more”. “I participated in all those first meetings. I was there and then later I accompanied Ramon Gill and later the Cabildos. I worked on it all”.



Figure 7 Mamo Luis Noevita Photo P. Rawitscher

Mamo Luis is small and compact, still walking around his forests, with a wizened face but not one grey hair. When Mamo Jacinto Zarabata was still alive, he had explained to me that when mamos get old they gradually transform into Jarleka, timeless rocks that are part of territory. I thought about myself, and my prematurely grey hair. Mamo Luis responded, “well, you people turn into men very quickly”. In the Sierra Nevada time keeps on going back to the same principles over and over again, embedded in those same spaces, while time goes on. Who knows how many generations of groups of mamos have been consulting the same principles over hundreds of years at in same places, for the same problems that assume different forms.

Mamo Luis was from the younger generations of Mamos, who would renew that group of elderly mamos and indigenous leaders, formed decades before 1960s. When Mamo Luis arrived, they were working to remove the settlers and Police Inspector. It was also spiritual work at a political level, as they accompanied government institutions like INCORA, to declare National Parks in the Sierra. They articulated figures of indigenous law like Mama S̄ushi into these relationships, linking law to territory through the ezuamas by spiritually paying the “debt” of centuries of exploitation at the right “sacred spaces” in the territory of Black Line. Mamo Luis summed up “I worked so long, that I am now happy to be here in Sekuñi “healing the tapir, the jaguars and the water, everything”.

## 7.2 Writing the “Book” of Mama S̄ushi and the Black Line.

7.2.1 “They started with the Black line at least 107 years ago, it was a long time”.

So yes, there was a relationship between the Mama S̄ushi and the first figures of legal protection for indigenous territory in the Sierra Nevada. Also, very importantly Mamo Luis told us that there



have been groups mamos working from the ezuamas on the political defense of their Ancestral Territory for a long time. But he didn't give much of the specifics. I looked around a bit more and found that the history went much deeper. I knew that the principles on which the Black Line resolution was based were at least as old as the Kaggaba, but I had not thought that the Mamos had been deploying the Black Line as a political instrument for the defense of territory decades, if not centuries before 1973.

it all had to do with what some mamos call "reading" and "writing" the "Book" of Mama S̄shi. The Kaggaba always talk about the "Book" of their law. At first, I ingeniously thought it was an actual paper book, or document, some ancient manuscript stashed away in the Ezuamas. But no, they call the Mama S̄shi, and many other rocks, figures, drawings and designs, "books" that contain the "codes" of territory. Even territory itself is a "book" comprised of all its "sacred sites" that contain the Law of Origin. For the Mamos, both doing the spiritual payments to re-articulate the assemblages of reciprocity in territory, as writing the "book" of mama Sushu and transforming that into something recognizable as "law" were key practices of resistance to violence they had been implementing over the centuries. Likewise, the 1973 Resolution was a written transposition of the "book" of Mama S̄shi. I asked myself, "how would they write the spiritual principles of territory into a "book"?"

I also had been involved in a one of these group process with the Mamos and indigenous leaders, of "writing" the "book" of Mama S̄shi. During the year 2014, the Consejo Territorial de Cabildos - CTC had agreed to collaborate with a Colombian Constitutional Court order, the Auto 189 of 2013, that mandated the need to "redefine or update the so-called Black Line (Corte Constitucional de Colombia 2013, 43)". A couple years before, a development company, Puerto Brisas, had built a port right on top of a principal Black Line sacred site called Jukulwa, on the coast near Dibulla. After years of the indigenous people's efforts to stop the port, the final decision rested with the Constitutional Court. To the dismay of the indigenous people, the Court it did not suspend the Port's environmental license. Instead, it proposed a remedial measure of redefining the Black Line to make it clearer where those sacred sites were located, so they could be better protected in the future<sup>290</sup>.

The four indigenous peoples of the CTC, in 2015 set out to more effectively rewrite the Black Line Resolution and make a proper map of it. They named their own work groups of Mamos, Sakas, leaders, authorities, members of their communities, and assessors from their organizations, to visit the "black line" sites, and write the "book" of the principles of ancestral territory. The Kaggaba Governor named me as "chief anthropologist". I was to compile all the ancestral information produced by the mamos and dutifully recorded by me and the other anthropologists, and the Ministry of the Interior, on their visits to each "sacred site" of the Black Line, consolidate, edit, and revise it all with the rest of the group, into one large "book", which we did. Later, with the CTC, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Colombian President's office, we transformed that

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<sup>290</sup> Previously the Court had issued another sentence declaring that permits for large development projects located within the ancestral territory of the Black Line, was subject to the Prior Consultation process with the indigenous people, effectively recognizing the territorial rights of the Black Line. The government needed to know where the Black Line was, and they needed a map (Corte Constitucional de Colombia 2014).

book of sacred sites, the mamos descriptions of ancestral territory and Mama S̄shi as the codes of the Law of Origin in territory, into what finally President Santos, signed as the Decreto 1500 del 06 de Agosto del 2018, de la Linea Negra. Alongside the decree was the “Documento Madre” that CTC and the Mamos of the four peoples wrote on the Mama ancestral law of territory. All together it was the new “book” of the S̄shi.

The Kaggaba mamos held several consultations to decide how to start the work, what sort of spiritual payments needed to be done, at which sacred sites and from what ezuamas. During one of those meeting, in the nujue of Sungueka along the lower Rio Ancho, they decided to include something in their document about how the 1973 Black Line Resolution had come to light, as one of the precursors to the rewriting we would be doing. They designated Mamo Jose Gabriel Limaku to tell that history. Everyone, including Mamo Jose Gabriel himself said that he was at least 100 years old. He had accompanied groups of Mamos and the OGT for decades, working to regain control of their territory and the rights of the indigenous peoples. Mamo Jose Gabriel also spoke good Spanish. He was one of the few Kaggaba who studied at school in San Jose during the 1940s, and for years had represented his people before government officials, peasants, in Bogota and around the world. Mamo Jose Gabriel was there because he wanted to see through this Black Line effort. It had to be a real “book”, a law that everyone could understand and respect.

Alongside another anthropologist on the team, we sat down with Mamo Jose Gabriel under a large tree outside the nujue. He explained his memory of how the indigenous people had worked to convert the Black Line, or Mama S̄shi into law. But he clarified, it hadn’t started in 1973, but that “people say that it was about 107 years ago when we started with the Black Line, it was a long process”. Mamo Jose Gabriel started out by telling how he had gotten involved in that process of writing the S̄shi., In 1953 a group of elderly mamos handed him the responsibility, inherited from his father, and a cadre of mamos who down the generations had been defending and deploying the S̄shi to defend their ancestral territory, just like Mamo Luis.

“My stepfather, Miguel Inzhimaku told me that the Mamos held a meeting in the Ezuama of Takina. They consulted with their zhatukua on why the settlers and been invading higher and higher into our territory. Mama Antonio Zarabata was the eldest mamo of Seizhua, and Jose de la Cruz Vacuna was the eldest of Takina. An Arhuaco called Celestino Suarez who could write, was there too. My father Juan Jose Limaku, and everyone else arrived at that meeting and consulted in their zhatukuwa that it was true that the younger brother would keep on invading higher and higher. The Mamos had a book called the Mama S̄shi, and another called (...). It was not really a book, but it was in thought. There are two, and the eldest Mamo consulted that Serankua, the earth, made a book, but that book is not a paper book, but is a gold figure, a spindle like this (Mamo Jose Gabriel drew a circle in the air like the round gold piece)<sup>291</sup>”.

“When my stepfather brought me to that first meeting, Mamo Antonio Zarabata had died, only mamo Jose de la Cruz was left. ..., That is what my stepfather told me in 1953, ‘your father was a leader, and now you must keep on working like him, the only one left was Mamo José de la Cruz, and I (Mamo Gabriel) said to him ‘I do not understand’. So, Mamo Jose de la Cruz told me:

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<sup>291</sup> Interview with Mamo Jose Gabriel Limaku 2013. Summarized from (OGT 2014).

‘This is what is going to happen to us in 50 years, or 100 years, if we are not careful: we are going to come to an end. There will be droughts for 4 years, then floods for the next 4 years, then drought again, and that will be the end of us. All the other Mama at the meeting assented that it was true, that they had consulted the same thing in the zhatukua”. “But the settlers had already arrived to our territory and they were invading higher and higher. They didn’t care about anything. They treated us like animals, like savages. At that time, they were causing trouble for all of us, the Kaggaba, Wiwa, Kankuamo, and the Arhuacos”.

The meeting in Takina when Mamo Gabriel was initiated into the Black Line process with Mamo Jose de la Cruz<sup>292</sup>, had taken place in 1953. The consultation that Mamo Jose de la Cruz was talking about in the Ezuama of Takina including Celestino Saurez, and Jose Gabriel’s father where they verified that the “Book” of Mama S̄shi would defend the indigenous people, took place much earlier, probably in the 1930s.

Celestino Suarez was part of a group of Arhuaco leaders and Mamos who were forming a resistance movement during the 1920s against the abuses of the recently installed Capuchino mission in Nabusimake<sup>293</sup>. Also, in the 1920s, a group of Arhuacos had elected their own indigenous cabildo for recognition by the national government (Naranjo Peña 2012, 154). Assumably the consultations of the Mama S̄shi that Jose Gabriel speaks of in the 1930s, were associated with those resistance movements searching for the indigenous legal norm implicit in the “book” of Mamo S̄shi.

Working on the Mama S̄shi was a shared process between the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada, and this was nothing new. Since Colonial times, the Arhuacos, Kaggaba, Wiwa and Kankuamo Mamos were in permanent communication moving around the “Paramos” of the Sierra from their ezuamas or “sanctuaries” to find ways of defending themselves from the Catholic priests, as we saw in Chapter 4. In this case, to consult on the Mama S̄shi, they all had to go to the Kaggaba Ezuama of Takina or Makutama where the lineage of Mamo Jose de la Cruz had kept the golden seal of Mama S̄shi in custody before the arrival of the Spanish.

Being able to deploy the Mama S̄shi in a political context was quite complex. As Mamo Jose la Cruz explained through Mamo Gabriel’s words, the Mama S̄shi was a book but in fact was not really a book, but “It is thought” or spirit. The same silent spirit that Mamo Luis mentions in Chapter 5. The territory was also the book, “but not a book in paper”. It was written when the spiritual father Serankua created the world, drawing out ancestral territory in concentric circles of sacred sites. The book of Mama S̄shi was also the gold disc, “a spindle” embodying that same order of territory. All these “books” contain what the mamos gloss over as the “codes” of care for the Law of Origin, that can be read by those who know.

Writing up the document of the “Black Line” as a paper “book” was quite difficult and did not happen right away. It required translation at multiple levels, from the silent language of the Law

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<sup>292</sup> Mamo Jose de la Cruz Vacuna from Takina was already grey haired and looked quite old in the photographs that the anthropologist Gregory Mason took in 1936 when he was attempting to return the Kaggaba mask that he had “taken” from the mamos in Palomino (Mason 1938, 164, and Plate LIV).

<sup>293</sup> They later escaped, and set up a new Arhuaco town far out of reach, called Serankua along the upper Aracataca River. In 1935 Celestino, and a group of mamos drew up a document denouncing that situation and sent it to Bogota (MAPP/OEA 2008, 47).

of Origin, into Spanish. Mamo Jose Gabriel goes on to explain, and I summarize, that the mamos from Takina during the consultations of the 1930s, with Celestino Suarez had not been able to write up this “Law of Origin”. They had to try several times. The Mamos consulted that they would have to meet again in a peasant village called Patillal near Atanquez, where Kankuamo still lived who could speak their language and perhaps could also write in Spanish. It took four trips between Patillal and Makutama to be able to transpose the Mama S̄shi into some form of writing or graphic representation.

Mamo Jose Gabriel relates: “they met with Celestino Suarez and his son in law Cesar Niño. He had studied a bit at school and knew how to write a little. At that time almost no one knew how to write nor how to speak Spanish. At that meeting a mamo called Manuel Herrando a Kogui from Makutama and another named Manuel Barros from Suribaka, and the Kogui Ramon Gil from San José de Maruamake met in the village of Patillal and consulted with their zhatukuwa<sup>294</sup>. Cesar Niño knew how to write, but he couldn’t figure out how to write that book. So, Mamo Antonio Zalabata said ‘let’s bring down that document of how we write in the material world, the papers that Serankua left. They went back to Makutama and brought down the golden seal of Mama S̄shi. They made a copy and with that they drew out the Black Line, ‘like a spindle he said”.

In Makutama a Kankuamo named Clemente Carrona arrived with another Kankuamo Arne Silva, and a Wiwa named Jacinto Arrua. They all sat down together and [read” the Mama S̄shi. Antonio Zarabata especially knew how to read it, since it was from his ezuama. Finally, they were able to make of copy in document form. They sent Cesar Niño down to the town of Fundación where he took a bus to Bogotá, and brought that paper with him. They talked with the government, I don’t know with who and they said that was a very important paper”.

Cesar Niño was one of the first Arhuaco leaders to join the pan ‘indigenista’ movement then forming in Cauca. He was quite vocal and traveled from the Sierra Nevada, to participate in the Indigenista Congresses of the 1930s in Cauca, including the III Congreso Nacional del Trabajo in Cali of 1938, where he gave long discourses on the Sierra Nevada, some of which were published. He was also a member of the “communist” peasant leagues (Villanueva 1993). Niño later founded the Liga Indígena de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in 1944, a mostly Arhuaco organization of indigenous representation<sup>295</sup>. He also made numerous trips to Bogota during that time, including the trip mamo Gabriel mentions, and we can assume that this second version of Mama S̄shi was written around then, in the late 1930s. But Jose Gabriel never says what that document might have.

I did find one possible mention of such a document. In 1933 a commission of “arhuacos” visits Santa Marta, alongside a Kaggaba Mamo. A local newspaper interviews that Mamo, who is denouncing the government authorities and the Capuchinos who “relieve” the indigenous people of their land and subject them to mistreatment, with no legal recourse. The Mamo asserts, “We have our own government for our internal affairs”, and the creator of our tribe “Seraira or Selancua, the circle from the Tairona’. ‘And how you know all that?’. ‘Because it is written. The

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<sup>294</sup> “Mamo Gil and Mamo Barros” were Kaggaba Mamos whose names appear in documents, associated with the resistance movement against the Capuchinos during the 1920s around Nabusimake or San Jose (Bosa Bastien 2019, 8).

<sup>295</sup> <https://www.confetayrona.org> The Liga indígena was formalized in 1949.

very Jámdano himself wrote it, and the Mama know how to read, and it refers to the indios (El Estado 1933)<sup>296</sup>. Evidently the Kaggaba Mamo is referring to the book Mamo S̥shi, with its circle, drawn out by Serankua when he creates territory, as readable by the mamo, and is equivalent to ancestral authority.

The Mama S̥shi document Cesar Niño brought to Bogotá was perhaps also associated with the formation of another political movement, the Ligas Indígenas de la SNSM in the 1940s. The Liga Indígena was one of the first that the Colombian government recognized as an indigenous organization from the Sierra Nevada, with its officially elected “cabildos” and indigenous representatives. As early as 1949 it started to petition the government to create the Arhuaco indigenous reservation as part of recent indigenista policies (Naranjo Peña 2012, 163). More effective political organization happens in the 1960s when Asuntos Indígenas appears on the scene, and helps the Ligas transition to the CIT in 1977 (Muelas, Santamaría and Sosa 2012, 125).

In any case, with Cesar Niño, the Kaggaba and Arhuaco Mamos were able to make some sort of written version or document of Mamo S̥shi. It was based on Mamo Antonio Zarabata’s ability to “read” the S̥shi gold figure. What exactly the document was, or if it was a map of the circle of sacred sites that represent the Black Line around the Sierra, as was the case for the 1973 Black Line Resolution, or a drawing of “wheel” of the gold figure, we do not know. However, Mamo Gabriel mentions that Mamos considered they had able to transpose that book written in spirit, to paper. Cesar Niño died shortly thereafter, and Mamo Gabriel says the document went ignored for several years.

By 1960 the need to have a written document of Mama S̥shi was becoming more urgent. The government had started to make the first “reserves” or national parks in the paramo regions of Colombia, including a National Park for the SNSM. The indigenous people needed that document to help them trace out the map of that Reserve based on the order of ancestral territory so it would respond to indigenous law. The park was perhaps the first piece of policy that would protect indigenous territory of the Sierra Nevada since the times of Simon Bolivar. According to Mamo Jose Gabriel, “The people started to talk. First, they thought it would be a Reserve. But the mamos did not know how much they were going to reserve. The government understood the indigenous people could reserve more forest” than anyone else. An Arhuaco called Santiago Marquez went to Bogota around 1960 to find the “book” or “document” that Cesar Niño had left there years before, and return it to Valledupar.

Santiago Marquez found that document. When he returned to Valledupar with it, he asked the Mamos if it was the Mama S̥shi document they had sent before. By that time the only mamo still living from those consultations of the 1930s was Mamo Jose de la Cruz. When he arrived to Valledupar from Bogota, “Marquez asked the mamos if they knew who had made this black line document. Mamo de la Cruz had identified that document as was the one they had sent to Bogota, years before. it was the Mama S̥shi, the *pankatza* -the map”.

However, the anthropologists with the government Indigenous Asuntos office had made their own version of the map for the Reserve. Mamo Jose Gabriel was not in pleased with that map.

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<sup>296</sup> Cited from the newspaper article in El Estado, transcribed by (Ariza Arias 2019, 107).

It went up and down rivers and squiggled around mountain chains, The government's version of the Mama S̄shi was a territorial map, but was not like the gold piece, not like the round wheel form of Mamo S̄shi, that the Mamos and Jose Gabriel knew how to read based on the principles of territory. "We are going to make our own map of how Serankua drew out the world. That is the one we use".

For Mamo Gabriel, the Government map was an empty document. It was only a physical map of territory, and did not contain the principles of ancestral law. For Asuntos Indígenas, it was the map that they perhaps had made of the approximations of the sacred sites that the mamos had described for the boundaries of the first Park. Even though the Parks map was probably also intended to protect ancestral territory, the Mamos hadn't done the processes to incorporate the spiritual principles that protected the territory in that map.

So, the Mamo had to bring their S̄shi gold figure down again from the Ezuama of Makutama. "We went to bring that book called the Mama S̄shi down to Valledupar, and we made a cement copy of it in the middle of the Casa Indígena in Valledupar, so that everyone could see it. That book had Serankua in the middle. So, I said 'Ok, we can work with that'".

The cement copy incorporated the principles which Serankua had written in the territory as the "ring or wheel of the spindle" transposed from the gold piece. The Mamos could read it as the order of those sacred sites from which Serankua had established the earth and its principles of origin. Mamo Gabriel reflected that "was the part that I had studied with the mamos, and I knew what it was, and it was what we could work with". It embodied the spiritual principles of origin of territory and its codes, or law for curing those same principles. The cement replica had the same essence, or perhaps these representations did embody ancestral law and its practices. Once these embodiments of Mama S̄shi on paper, or even in cement, articulated with assemblages of reciprocity that included western law, they could start to do their work or care for the Law of Origin.

In the 1960s, and probably well before, the indigenous people were clearly aware that they would have to govern themselves according to their own laws. As Mamo Gabriel remembers. At that time, in the 1960s, "The police inspectors were in charge. They would say 'You have to do as we tell you'. But I said 'we are not going to do any of that. We are going to govern ourselves one day, as indigenous people'. That is what we thought, and we sent the paper of Mama S̄shi back to Bogotá again"<sup>297</sup>. Inserting the Mama S̄shi into legal or political discourse would protect indigenous peoples based on their own law.

Writing and expressing the Mama S̄shi on paper became an important locus amongst the indigenous people for articulation of western and indigenous forms of law. But it was difficult transpose these principles as a book in words. Mamo Jose Gabriel was one of the first Kaggaba leaders to be educated in the mission school of San Jose during the 1930s or 40s, joining the ranks of Arhuaco leaders like Santiago Marquez, or Cesar Nino, who knew how to speak Spanish and perhaps write a bit. The Mamos needed a cadre of indigenous leaders who could explain this law

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<sup>297</sup> After using that "Book" to start the national park Mamo Jose Gabriel says that he recommended setting up a boarding school in Pueblo Viejo, which Padre Emilio actually started to do in 1969.

to the government so it could be recognized and have affects in western law. Western” education for the indigenous people would be useful.

Mamo Andresico while talking from the Nujue de los Nañiba in Bonga, also has similar reflections on how the Mama S̄shi started to come to play in the processes of indigenous resistance during the 1960s. He calls it the gold figure of sishi kuxtu - the jaguar, and affirms that they the same things as the Mama S̄shi. “It is a gold piece that has all the laws of humanity. It has a figure of a jaguar in territory. We brought it down and made a cement copy just like the gold piece”<sup>298</sup>. That gold piece embodied the “norms” or “law” of humanity, copied into the likeness of the cement replica in the casa indígena of Valledupar.

Mamo Gabriel sums up what the elder Mamos told him about the spirit of Mamo S̄shi. “Here in the Sierra Nevada, all the clouds are born, all the wind, the clouds. That is why they say this is ‘the heart of the world’. The elders told me that when the Sierra Nevada comes to an end, so will the rest of the world. Most people think that water is born from the clouds, but it is not. It is born from the Gonawindua Peak here in the Sierra Nevada, drop by drop and from there, emanates to the rest of the world “... “Very tiny, that is how the mamo told us. We do not have to make dams, because that water comes from the heart of territory, and the wind blows it all around the word”.

Mamo Gabriel is mentioning the same invisible spirit that Mamo Luis called the S̄shi, as that “that little thing”, the silent spiritual essence of water as life which heals. Mamos like Jose de la Cruz practiced those principles, as did their generations before and after. This sense of Mama S̄shi is what Mamo Andresico calls “the Norms of Humanity”, and is the “Black Line”, a law written into territory. That essence is what holds the elements together as an assemblage of reciprocity based on the spirit, at the heart of ancestral territory, and in people.

#### 7.2.2. Inheriting responsibility: the rings of territory down to the sea.

- Mama S̄shi and the “Territorios Nacionales” in 1880.

This process of writing the “book” of Mama S̄shi had in fact started well before the events of the 1920s with Celestino Suarez that Mamo Jose de la Cruz had initiated Mamo Jose Gabriel into. We started to talk about that one night, with Mamo Shibulata Zarabata. After a rather long meeting with a community and their Mamos in the Sierra Nevada, I had gone to sleep in the nujue. At about 3 am it had gotten very cold. I got out of my hammock to stoke up the fire. There was Mamo Shibulata sitting with his poporo warming himself. Everyone else had gone to sleep, and we started to talk in front of the fire. I asked Mamo Shibulata about Mamo Jose de la Cruz and the whole history of writing out the Mama S̄shi. Mamo Shibulata is one of the Kaggaba mamos most well versed in the ancestral protection of territory.

Shibulata said that he knew the story. Not only that, he had also inherited from Mamo Jose de la Cruz and his group of elders the responsibility of working through the Mama S̄shi to protect ancestral territory. Mamo Shibulata told of another set of even earlier consultations that Mamo

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<sup>298</sup> Mamo Andresico de Bonga de 2013, interview for Shikwakala, Nujue de los Nañiba P. 2.

Jose de la Cruz had done as a young Mamo. At that time the group of Mamos included Mamo Jose de la Cruz's parents, Mamo Cantera from Surivaka, a Mamo Jacinto from Seizhua and Mamo Santiago from San Francisco.

They had been doing a series of consultations in the Ezuama of Surivaka, on how to "write" the book of Mamo S̄shi, on the same topic as the consultation of the 1930s: finding a way out of the problems with the settlers and the police inspectors. Mama S̄shi was the route towards recovering Kaggaba territory and eliminating that settler violence. Given the age of Mamo de la Cruz<sup>299</sup>, these consultations must have taken place in the 1880s or 90s. This would have been right around the time when Mamos de la Cruz, Santiago and other Kaggaba mamos had fled to the area of the Guatapuri River where they founded the church town of San Jose. Those were most likely the consultations on how to organize the church town of San Jose, and which Mamo Santiago also applied when came back to establish the town of San Francisco. These key moments of resistance correspond to the Mamos consultations on the "Book" of Mama S̄shi.

In Mamo Shibulata's opinion, it was still not the time for the Mama S̄shi to play a successful role in resistance to violence. Despite the Mama's efforts and consultations on the Mama S̄shi in Surivaka in the 1890s, it was very difficult for the indigenous people to actually defend themselves, given the intense oppression of the Police Inspectors and priests.

I found an example of what Mamo Shibulata was talking about. Around 1915, a group of Arhuaco Mamos, leaders and one Kaggaba, had produced a document denouncing the abuses against the indigenous people perpetuated by the settlers, priests and the police inspectors around Nabusimake. In 1916 they visited the president of Colombia, José Vicente Concha in Bogotá, with their document. Duane Villafaña, the leader of the group, requested protection for the Arhuacos from the Government. In his document and interview with the president, Villafana talks of "our traditional law" (Ariza Arias 2019, 102)" that must find application in the Government's "laws that we need so that we may no longer be humiliated" (Bosa Bastien 2016, 113).

Mamo Shibulata tells that in the meeting of 1890 in Surivaka, the mamos had again consulted what the Book of Mama S̄shi was. It was based on three principles, Shikwakala, Gonawindua and Mamo S̄shi. He explained. Shikwakala means the deployment of territory around its four cardinal points and its permanent process of connection and rearticulation with the principles of life, akin to rearticulations within assemblages of reciprocity. The Gonawindua mountain peak is the heart of those spiritual principles in territory, the center from which territory was drawn out. Mama S̄shi is the "code" of those principles, the sacred spaces that receive spiritual payment for each principle embedded territory, the rules of reciprocity embedded in territory and things.

In the midst of the difficulties of the times, those elder mamos knew that these were the principles through which their peoples had survived over centuries. Someday in the future the application of those principles would liberate them from the problems of violence. They passed down the results of this consultation to the other younger mamos. Mamo Shibulata had received

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<sup>299</sup> Mamo Shibulata explained that he personally knew Mamo Jose de la Cruz, as one of the elders who trained Shibulata in the ezuama of Seizhua near Makotama. Mamo Shibulata remembers that de la Cruz had died around the year 1965, when he was more than 100 years old. Thus, Mamo Jose de la Cruz as young mamo of 20 or 30 years, when he joined the group of elders, would have started around 1885 to 1890 the time of the consultation Mamo Shibulata mentions.



this inheritance from his older brother, Mamo Valencio, who had received it from Mamo Jose de la Cruz who had received it from his parents, and in turn from other generations.

That 1890 consultation had validated that the Mama S̄shi was also expressed through nine rings or levels of sacred sites that go down the mountain. This was the strategy passed down the generations that the mamos worked with as they liberated and healed their territory from the snow covered peaks, down to the sea. The names of these sacred sites that marked the rings were also handed down the lineages of mamos. Mamo Shibulata mentioned those names. They started from the Gonawindua peak and they went down from there, ending in the Black Line site of Jukulwa on the coast. One of those rings he mentioned went through the ancient town of Bunkuanezhaka, in Pueblo Viejo where mamo Valencio had set up the town of Nubizhaka with Father Emilio to recover territory thereon down the other rings. Another was near Bonga where the INCORA had placed the first “mojon” for the Resguardo.

The mamos never forget those ring marker sites. From those the Mamos work to spiritually “cure” the territory. to cure violence. In that same order of place, they organized their politics of resistance under this law of Mama S̄shi to recover and maintain their territory. Similar sites exist along the rings encompassing the other river valleys in ancestral territory. The establishment of legal figures like the Resguardo or National Parks are all based on these levels of territory. Mamo Shibulata accompanied Mamo Valencio as the head Mamo of Bunkuanezhaka – Pueblo Viejo, when they recovered that area from the settlers, and then the mamos from Makutama designated Shibulata to organize the community of Bonga in the 1990s when they recovered that territory. These sacred sites along the rings of territory organized the Mamos political work protecting territory, and later the OGTs work as well.

From there, Mamo Shibulata recounts that he accompanied the process to expand the Resguardo in 2011 to the sacred ring site of Seizikxa, getting near the sea. Then In 2017, the Amazon Conservation Team with the Kaggaba, purchased the Black Line sacred site of Taniwieshkaka near the outlet of the Jerez River to the sea in Dibulla. Mamo Shibulata was charge of that process as well. He concluded “We finally made it down to the sea”.

After all this talk about S̄shi and transforming violence from the Kaggaba Law of Origin, I asked of what use had been the figures like Kukutabe or San Pizhu, and the church towns. Mamo Shibulata laughed at the mention of San Pizhu. “Our people fought a lot over San Pizhu, so instead, each town got their own saint made in cement with each of their names. Then they stopped fighting over San Pizhu”. “Finally in San Miguel some ‘frances’ came up saying the Catholic church wasn’t useful for us. We let them burn the concrete saint and all the papers in the church”. “But the mamos didn’t let them burn down the San Pizhu, it had ‘a gold piece in it. They reflected amongst themselves, ‘we use that gold to make it rain’, what would we do without it? So, they sent it down to Padre Emilio for repair and it is still in the church of San Francisco”.

Not only Mamo Shibulata, but most mamos today regard San Pizhu or Kukutabe as anachronic. But it was also based on the same principles of Mama S̄shi. It had its gold piece and the principles that articulated spiritual work through practices of reciprocity that had effects on the assemblage of territory, people, things and spirit. It integrated the church towns into the system of reciprocity of the Law of Origin. However, after 1973 the Mama S̄shi would start to directly do that work.

### **7.3 The Seal of Mamo S̄shi: complex speech frames, reciprocity and the protection of Ancestral Territory.**

#### **7.3.1 Ancestral territory as the frame for curing “reverse debt”.**

For the Kaggaba mamos, making strategic interventions, as spiritual “gifts” through practices of reciprocity based on ancestral territory implies that the same assemblage of reciprocity will produce responses. It is on the precept of responses from the Mother Earth, that the Kaggaba base most of their strategies of resistance to violence, and most of their practices. Up to this point we have talked about the Law of Origin, about healing through spirit and territory, and transforming relations of reverse debt and of context. However, we have not yet specifically described how those responses and transformations of context include form part of political practice, and creation of norms for legal protection of the indigenous peoples after the 1960s.

This section focuses on how the Kaggaba “wrote” the book of Mama S̄shi and the resulting political and institutional results for the protection for indigenous people and territory in the SNSM. The remainder of this Chapter presents situated historical examples of how, for the indigenous peoples of the SNSMS, political and institutional instruments arise from practices of reciprocity based on the Law of Origin. The chapter also revises how political processes are articulated with ancestral territory in more recent processes including the “Expansion of the Sierra Nevada National Park”.

To better understand and situate practices of reciprocity and political processes it is useful to conceptualize ancestral territory, Mamo S̄shi, as an expanded participation framework deployed through territory, that includes assemblages of reciprocity. The spatial configuration of the Mama S̄shi is totally compatible with Goffman’s concepts of participation frameworks, or Hanks’ “Interperspectival” space.

That spatial configuration is evident in the histories of the ancestral form of creation of the world, shared amongst the four indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, already presented several times in this dissertation<sup>300</sup>. Again, at one level the spatial configuration of the territorial frame of reference is deployed around the four cardinal points. It is an expansive frame of reference that does not stop at the “Black Line” but goes to the “infinite” along the four cardinal directions, but at once localized as situated participation frames of place, people things and spirit<sup>301</sup>.

At another level, ancestral territory was drawn out by Seizhankua from the center of territory, in concentric circles of sacred sites, the last circle of which is the Black Line at the sea. “When the Mothers and Fathers organized every element of the world in “Se” (spirit), they also traced out

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<sup>300</sup> The mamos of the SNSM constantly repeat this history, as do numerous books and articles on the Sierra Nevada cite versions of the same history. For instance, Reichel-Dolmatoff and the “Modelo C3smico”, the nine spiritual levels above and below the earth (1975). Natalia Giraldo talks of the “Camino en Espiral” in Arhuaco territory (Giraldo Jaramillo 2010). The Kaggaba mamos also told Pruess similar versions in 1914.

<sup>301</sup> Many indigenous people base the deployment of space on the cardinal directions. We can take note of the distinction that Willam Hanks makes between “Cardinal directions” as extending the frame space to an infinite wider space, and “cardinal points” in Mayan “ritual discourse”, as specific “places of origin” that embody that wider space (1990, 299).

the connections or threads between these principles. In the interconnections between “Se”, and the material world, lies the fundamental concept of the Black Line, as the sense of interrelatedness, expressed through *Shi*, an infinite thread (CTC 2015, 20).

Everything is interconnected as an assemblage of reciprocity through spirit, and deployed through the spatial reference of territory. In this sense, all elements in that assemblage also embody its spiritual organization. “The seal of Mama S̄shi has at its center Seizhankua sitting on his bench, who drew out the world, the four cardinal points, and several circles which appears with dots on the edges of the disk (CTC 2015, 20). As such the golden seal of the Mama S̄shi is also the embodiment of the relationship of reciprocity between people, things, territory and spirit that is at the heart of that order.



The gold object of Mama S̄shi is also the same “Book that Serankua left in territory”. It embodies those same principles. The Mama S̄shi, as the gold piece, is all at once the map of the organization, or the “order” of all the sacred sites, of the order of reciprocity between spirit, place, and things in ancestral territory, and the embodiment of that assemblage.

In 2015 when all four indigenous peoples in the CTC, were writing the new Black Line Decree, there was some discussion if the golden seal needed to be brought down from the ezuamas again to be able to fully “write the book of Mama S̄shi”, as had been done in the past. The Kaggaba mamos said that there would be no need for that. They had already done the work, and the book was coming out well. However, for illustrative purposes, Mamo Jose Gabriel, and Mamo Shibulata agreed that the gold figure of Mama S̄shi kept in the ezuamas, and which the Mamos

<sup>302</sup> [https://enciclopedia.banrepcultural.org/images/6/6b/Tairona\\_aplicaci%C3%B3n-Oro-200-d.C.-\\_900-d.C.-\\_Minca-Santa-Marta.jpeg](https://enciclopedia.banrepcultural.org/images/6/6b/Tairona_aplicaci%C3%B3n-Oro-200-d.C.-_900-d.C.-_Minca-Santa-Marta.jpeg)

<sup>303</sup> [https://enciclopedia.banrepcultural.org/images/9/97/Tairona-pectoral-oro.-200-\\_d.C.-\\_900-d.C.-rio\\_palomino-Santa-Marta.jpeg](https://enciclopedia.banrepcultural.org/images/9/97/Tairona-pectoral-oro.-200-_d.C.-_900-d.C.-rio_palomino-Santa-Marta.jpeg)

have used for their consultations during many centuries past and still today, is like the following Tayrona pieces, which are now in the Colombian Gold Museum of the Banco de la República.

Jose Gabriel explained those two gold pieces from the photographs. Father Serankua is sitting on his bench at the center of ancestral territory. Serankua is holding up the territory on 2 poles on his ankles and shoulders, the end points of which are the four cardinal directions in the geography of the Sierra Nevada<sup>304</sup>. This configuration is what Mamo Shibulata calls “Shikwakala”, and what I just referred to as the spatial configuration of the territorial frame of reference. The ring of points around the edge are the spindle, with each point as a sacred site of the last ring of the Black Line of Mama S̄shi.

Serankua is wearing his headdress, the same sort of crown of feathers that the mamos use to dance in their ezuamas. Serankua is in contact with territory, sitting at its center, doing spiritual work of healing territory and its assemblage of elements. He embodies it. That figure is also Mama or person doing spiritual work, cultivating and sharing the practices of care that relates them to this system of reciprocity. Serankua could also represent people in general, as Mamo Luis told us, in contact with that same origin, and territory, through their heart. In this sense the Mama S̄shi gold piece is the embodiment of the person, the practices, and awareness that permanently relates people to the origins of life, and of territory itself. At the same time, for the mamos, the gold piece is the origin of territory and the Law of Origin itself.

The golden figure of Mama S̄shi is very well-known in regards the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada. It has been reproduced as a diagram on many occasions and for many indigenous political movements in the Sierra Nevada. Effectively the Mama S̄shi underpinned the creation of the CIT in 1977 as the first formally recognized indigenous organization representing the

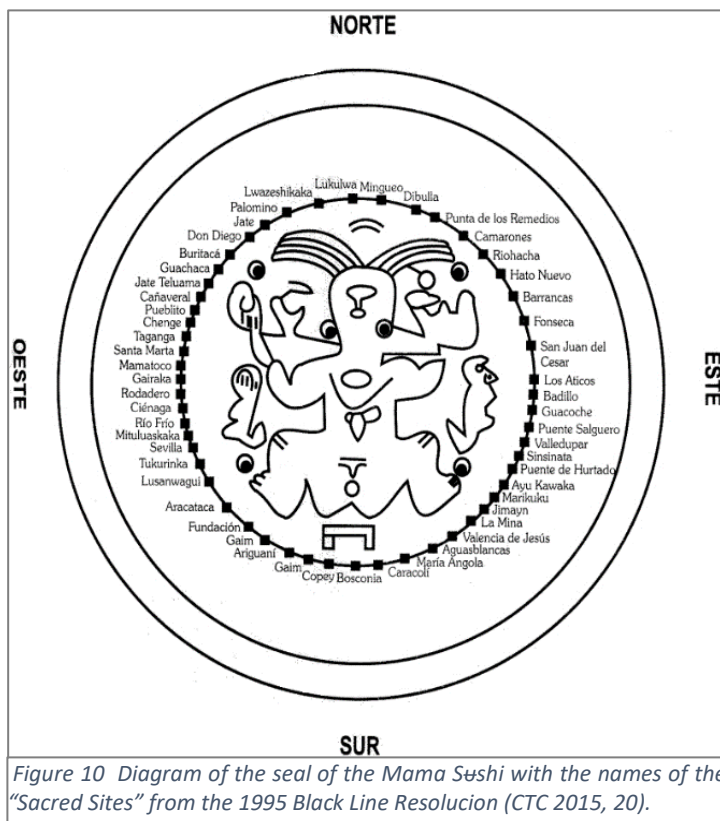


Figure 10 Diagram of the seal of the Mama S̄shi with the names of the “Sacred Sites” from the 1995 Black Line Resolucion (CTC 2015, 20).

<sup>304</sup> Reichel-Dolmatoff identifies similar gold pieces, as the “El Padre Sol, fertilizante y dominante” (1990, 154). The staffs correspond to the Kaggaba history of creation, four cardinal points held up by four men who sustain the universe, and when they move, the earth quakes. Under them is the mother, providing water and care so they may continue to sustain that weight (G. Reichel-Dolmatoff 1985a, 225). He interprets this structure of the world, as the “‘Fantasia uterina’ of the creation, and the “great egg” which is nothing but the primal uterus we still live in (1985a, 227)”. For the Kaggaba this is not a “fantasy” but is the practical order of ancestral territory as form of relationship with the world.

Arhuaco, Wiwa and Kaggaba. The diagram of the S̄shi in Figure 7, is also the official logo and legal rubber seal of the CIT they used to stamp their official documents.

That legal seal of the CTC has the same basic elements of the gold piece: Serankua sitting on his bench surrounded by the ring of Black Line sacred sites, and the four cardinal points. The diagram is one form of having “written” the book of ancestral territory.

In the following sections, I will explore how the work of transposing the Mama S̄shi into a document can articulate and embody those same documents and representations within the assemblages of reciprocity of the Mama S̄shi. Correctly deployed, the Mamo S̄shi, transformed into documents, can enter into dialogue with “western” law in articulation with the Law of Origin, linking fields of power and politics with ancestral territory as wider assemblages of reciprocity that can produce multiple results.

### 7.3.2 The golden “seal” transformed into law: the Nuns of the USEMI in 1970 and the Arhuaco Mama Marquez.

Writing or positioning the Mamo S̄shi, to articulate western law into the assemblage of the Law of Origin as ancestral territory was an important component in process of indigenous resistance to violence during the 1960s, The formalizing of Mama S̄shi as written law or as a “Map” was at the heart of attempts create forms of legal protection effective for the indigenous people.

This section presents various processes in which the Mama S̄shi is transposed into writing as law, through practices that include ancestral territory as expanded participation frames and assemblages of reciprocity that we have been developing throughout this dissertation. The section starts with effervescent times in the 1970s, when a group of Arhuaco Mamos worked with “indigenistas” to set the conceptual bases used to write the 1973 Black Line Resolution, based on the Mama S̄shi as a frame of reference.

To set the groundwork for understanding those processes of political resistance, my OGT work companion, indigenous leader, and friend Yanelia Mestre explained a bit more about the CIT “Seal” to me, from what her parents, Arhuaco leaders from Nabusimake in the 1970s had told her. The CIT seal would have been based on a rough hand drawn copy, of the original gold seal of S̄shi that the Kaggaba mamos kept in Takina. The diagram was apparently drawn by a “secular” nun named Beatriz Toro. She was accompanying the Arhuaco mamos as part of their effort to produce, the Mama S̄shi<sup>305</sup> as a document during the 1960s. Beatriz, as part of helping that work had visited Takina with the Arhuaco, for a consultation with the Kaggaba Mamos. They showed it to her and she copied it out.

Beatrice had kept a notebook with some of her work with the Arhuaco mamos from the early 1970s, when they were studying the principles of ancestral territory as law. Years later, when she left the Sierra, she gave that notebook to Yanelia’s parents to use at the right time, who gave it to Yanelia. She considered it would be useful for my dissertation and lent it to me. As Yanelia

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<sup>305</sup> Mama S̄shi is a term in Kogian, the Arhuaco refer to that same concept as “Jwisinka Jwisintama” (CTC - PNN 2020).

was aware, that notebook provides an interesting window on how the mamos from those times transposed the Mama S̄shi into law.

Beatriz and her notebooks formed part of the struggle of the indigenous people of the SSM in the 1960s and 70s, to liberate their territory and people from centuries of domination. According to other documents, Beatriz initially arrived to the Sierra Nevada as a member of the Valledupar Indian Affairs office in 1963. By 1967 she wanted to work directly with the Arhuaco in Nabusimake. She organized a Sierra Nevada branch of the indigenista organization called the USEMI -Union de Seglares Misioneras to function as a bridge between the Arhuaco, Kaggaba and the Asuntos Indígenas Office (USEMI 1972a, 2). The USEMI worked in and around Nabusimake during the 1960s and 70s to support the Arhuacos, set up schools, make educational materials and help the effort to declare the first Arhuaco Reserve with Asuntos Indígenas<sup>306</sup>. The Capuchinos, ignorant of the USEMI's "indigenista" origins had unwittingly brought them up to collaborate with their mission in Nabusimake. The USEMI turned out to have been a significant factor in the Capuchino's final eviction in 1982.

The USEMI also set up a school and health post in nearby Kaggaba communities, around San Jose along the Guatapuri river. From there, in treks over the paramo, the USEMI documents say they maintained contact with the Kaggaba in the areas around the ezuama of Makutama. Like Father Emilio in Pueblo Viejo as a "modern" humanistic missionary, the booklets that the USEMI published state that they were trying to raise the "consciousness" of the Kaggaba and Arhuaco for them to take control of their destiny, and help the indigenous people protect their lands and communities (USEMI 1972a, 17, 20).

Regardless of their ties to missionizing, their commitment to the cause of the indigenous people, and that of other indigenistas around that time, were important for the preparation of 1973 Black Line Resolution (USEMI 1972a, 2). It would appear that the USEMI and especially Beatriz Toro, was committed and played an important role in creating legal strategies to defend the indigenous people. During that time, the USEMI indigenistas helped the Mamos to transpose what, certain Arhuaco mamos called, the "Ley Moro", "Ley indígena" or "norma de la vida" into written law. This was the same challenge of transposing the Mamo S̄shi into a "Book", that had not been entirely successful until now.

In the wizened pages of the notebook that Yanelia lent me, Beatriz had recorded her conversations with Arhuaco mamos from different "Kankuruwas"<sup>307</sup> around Nabusimake, during the 3 years leading to the 1973 Black Line Resolution. Her main colleague was Vicencio Torres Marquez a well-known Arhuaco Mamo and leader who some years later publishes his own book on indigenous resistance and the Black Line (Torres Márquez 1978). In the notebook they seemed to be working out how to write out Mama S̄shi from the principles of ancestral territory. She included many carefully drawn diagrams of ancestral territory that the Arhuaco Mamos were using to show how ancestral territory is law. Most of the diagrams in the notebook revolve

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<sup>306</sup> <https://vistprojects.com/las-senoritas-en-sierra-nevada-de-santa-marta/>  
<https://evangelizadorasdelosapostoles.wordpress.com/2015/02/25/recuerdos-de-la-usemi-que-conoci-leon-montoya-naranja/>

<sup>307</sup> A Kankurwa is an Arnuaco equivalent of the Kaggaba Ezuama.

around the same idea of what the Kaggaba call Mamo S̄shi. They portray the world from the moment of creation divided into the four cardinal points, and their four diagonal lines crossing in the center forming a square, with a circle drawn around them. This is the “Shikwakala” but they don’t use that word. Around the square is a circle, the same “Black Line” of the sacred spaces on the Mama S̄shi gold figure. Figure 8 is an example of a basic version of that configuration but with 8 cardinal directions.

Other diagrams in the notebook repeat variations on that same configuration, and including other concentric circles within, as the rings of territory Mamo Shibulata talks about. The circles are drawn by tracing the dots or what the notebook calls “signs”, of the sacred sites, which mark out those circles including the limit of the ancestral territory, the Black Line.

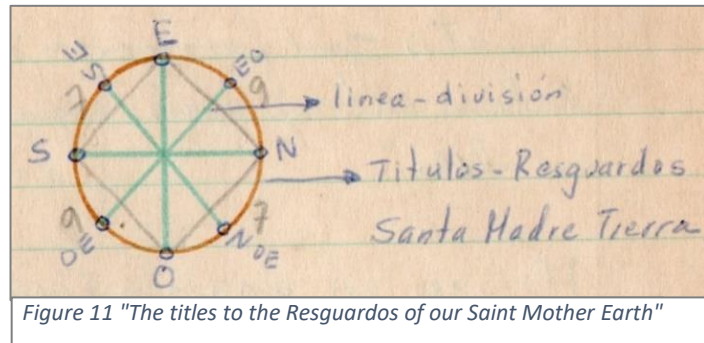


Figure 11 "The titles to the Resguardos of our Saint Mother Earth"

Beatriz includes a drawing of a diagram etched on the famous Mamo Norberto’s staff of power (Figure 9), with a more complex version of this same Mamo S̄shi. The four founding fathers hold up the mother of the earth over four posts, as the owners of the world and as the “mothers of earthquakes .... one single heart of the world (Toro 1971, 49, 52)” is at the center. The four cardinal points expand out indefinitely, creating a field of reference bounded by the principles of origin of the four fathers and the four mothers at each point, and additionally include “earthquakes” and the levels of territory above and below the surface. At the center of the staff, where the lines cross, is the origin of the world. Emanating from that center are two concentric circles, one a “dividing line” and another “the sea”. The diagram shows relationship between *Shikwakala* as the referential space of territory deployed along the four-cardinal directions, and Mama S̄shi as the organization and limits of ancestral territory and spaces within.

Like Mamo Shibulata did in the “Documento Madre” for the CTC, Vicencio explained to Beatriz that Serankua seeded the sacred sites of ancestral territory by going around concentric circles from the origin of the world. “Serankua who had been made the owner of the earth, and for which he has left his signs, is what brings to memory everything that receives the responsibility to comply with the functions in those laws (Toro 1971, 48)”. Serankua left in the land these fathers and mothers, as “signs”, “left at the same moment when they formed and created the world, they are in the levels [rings of territory], and represent the being of our mothers. The mountains are our guardian fathers like houses with their owners. The mothers are waters in the form of rivers, creeks, pools, springs, lakes and lagoons (Toro 1971, 30-1)”.

Vicencio tells us that the mothers and fathers, were left as geographic “signs” embedded in territory, also as the law. “Everything is written as the names of the “[spiritual] people (35)” as the signs in territory. “They were left with each of their laws for the nation, to Govern each with their own and legitimate laws” ....and, “that form the titles to each part of the earth (Toro 1971, 33)”. The names of each mother and father site indicate the work each one does, the kinds of payments for needed to pay back debts generate over each principle. Vicencio equates the



ancestral “Law” of each site, as the legal title, or deeds, to those spaces in territory. The mothers and fathers embody land, law and the spirit.

This relationship between sacred sites, law and territory become clearer in Figure 10. That drawing includes the lines, or the rings, in this case drawn out as squares, that mark out territory as comprised of sacred sites, drawn as points. Vicente calls these sites along the edges of the circles “mojones – our Mothers”. The word “mojon” is a cement boundary marker which the INCODER used to mark out the first Arhuaco indigenous reservations, and the first National Park. The “mothers” are both sacred sites, and land boundary markers. Vicencio explains that the circles of sacred sites around and inside the four cardinal points in his diagrams are the “Meaning and content, the titles of our Resguardo of the Saint Mother earth” (Toro 1971, 30). Vicencio indicates that the last circle marks out the entire ancestral territory which he calls “our Saint mother Earth ... down to “the sea”. The other interior “dividing lines” or rings in the diagram would indicate smaller areas within the Black Line, like the INCORA “Resguardos”.

The implications are far reaching. Mamo Vicente is able to conflate ancestral law, ancestral territory and western law. Sacred sites, although Vicencio still did not use that term, mark out territory. Those places are simultaneously the spiritual mothers and fathers with the principles the origin of the world. They are owners, and hold the “Titles” to these spaces. Mamo Vicente continues to explain they are also the embodiment of the “Traditional Law” and the “codes” of that law, so that people may interact with the principles of each point, and pay the proper tributes, in accordance with the “names” of each one of these sites. The name of each spiritual mother or father is related to the role that he or she plays in the Law of Origin. For instance, Jaba Niñekun is the mother of water, and might be located at a small spring. She takes care of water there and of that principle in general.

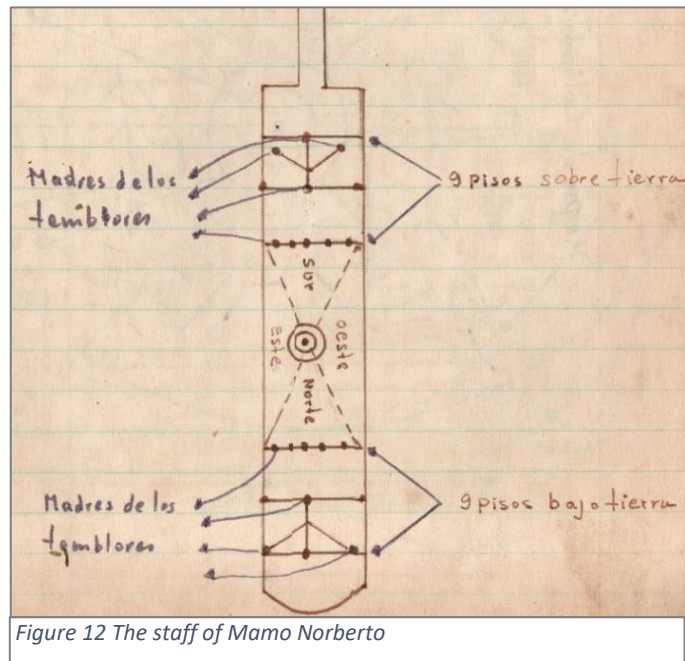


Figure 12 The staff of Mamo Norberto

Very importantly, each individual point or sacred site, along the circles or rings of territory, embodies the same frame of reference as the entire Mama Sushí (see Figure 10). Each “point” has the same four cardinal directions off to infinity, and at least 3 “dividing lines”, marked out with a series of concentric squares with that sacred site in the center. What is crucial here is that each one of these points or “signs” along the circles, marks out other smaller areas of territory, with their own “dividing lines”, and replicating the same scheme of the four cardinal points of ancestral territory and the nine vertical levels of territory, but at the place of that mother or father. Each point transposes the Mama Sushí as a territorial frame of the Law of Origin around its own point of origin, reproducing the same frame of reference in each local space and at once situated in the whole. The same goes for people, embodied in this wider frame of reference.



Vicencio having set out this referential space, discusses how the order of territory as law is based on practices of debt and reciprocity to make strategic interventions in these assemblages. All Mamos and people must follow this law and “pay” the “retributions” to these

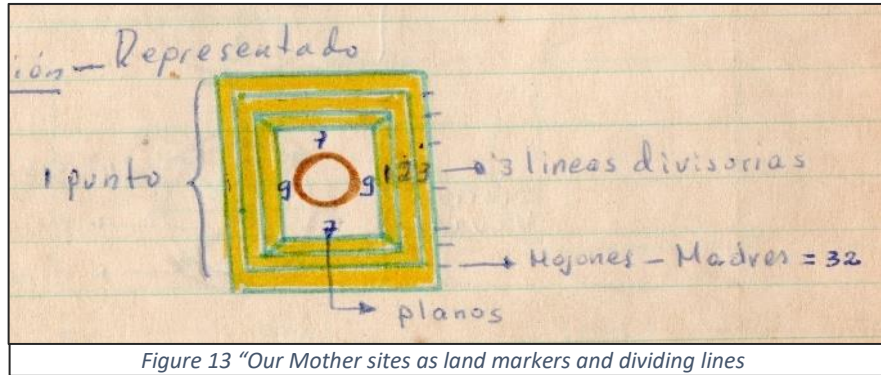


Figure 13 “Our Mother sites as land markers and dividing lines

spiritual mothers and fathers. They are physically visible as “those rocks that are planted around where the tumas are, and is where there is spiritual communication, where the intuition of our memory goes. That is where the laws are preserved (44)”. These places are what the indigenous people now call “sacred sites”, what Vicente calls the places that conserve the laws. “We have always had to be paying for that right, for everything that we have been committing faults”.

The mamos pay these debts, these “faults” at each sacred site. They also pay what Vicent calls their spiritual “tributes” at the yearly dances based on this “Law”, held in the Kankurwas with their ancient masks, which he calls “paletas”, and feather crowns. He mentions the staff dances, (what the Kaggaba call the “pita” the patron saint dances) in the Church Festivals of “San Juan” in Nabusimake (39)”. Vicencio calls the Mamo who dances the “Rey Moro”, like Serankua with a feather headdress, mask and palm leaf skirt, and as who embodies the law. “This is not of today nor yesterday, but it is eternal, it is the principles of the creation of the sun when God made the moon, the light (37)”. The Mamo who is dancing embodies those same principles of the Law of Origin, situated within the assemblage of territory as sacred sites, performing the practices of healing territory through reciprocity.

As an anecdote, in a much later 2012 interview, an elderly leader Arhuaco leader Jose Camilo Niño, relates events from the 1950s that his parents had told him about the area of Nabusimake. “My parents taught me since I was small to respect the sacred sites. For me there was no contradiction with the San Juan and San Sebastian. They had been baptized by the Mamos, did payments for everything, for the frost, the hail, etc. Maku Felipe baptized those images..... At that place the Mamo would bathe the saints and baptized them so that they would care for nature, water, they were like their defenders”. Like the San Pizhu, those saints in the church of Nabusimake were also strategic forms of articulation with the unwritten Mamo Sushí, still operating from colonial times.

Next, in Beatrices notebook a diagram (Figure 11) appears of the last ring with the sites that form the dividing line of territory with the sea (57)”. The names of those sites Beatriz and Vicencio list are basically the same “geographic place” names that appear in the Black Line Resolution of 1973 (58)”. This drawing is the earliest representation I have found of the Black Line. However, Vicente does not call it that yet, but, as “the soldiers who stand watch around their government, and the mothers who watch all the Sierra from the shore (45)”. He also calls the those sites the four “younger brothers”.

The notebook ends with what appears to be a transcription of a 1934 document about a "Trip to Cherua", an Ezuama forming part of the Kaggaba Ezuama of Suribaka. Perhaps Mamo Vicencio had an old copy of the "act" of that 1934 meeting and had showed it to Beatriz, who copied it out in the notebook. This was probably one of the meetings about the Mamo Sushu, that Mamo Jose Gabriel Limaku describes earlier on in this Chapter. That Act mentions Ignacio Marquez, Candido Villafañá, Juan Bautista Villafañá and Vicente Torres, who all travel to Cherua, where they meet Mama Manuel Barros, a Kaggaba, and Mamo Vicente Daza, a Wiwa. We remember that Mamo Jose Gabriel mentioned Mamo Barros as at those meetings of the 1930s.

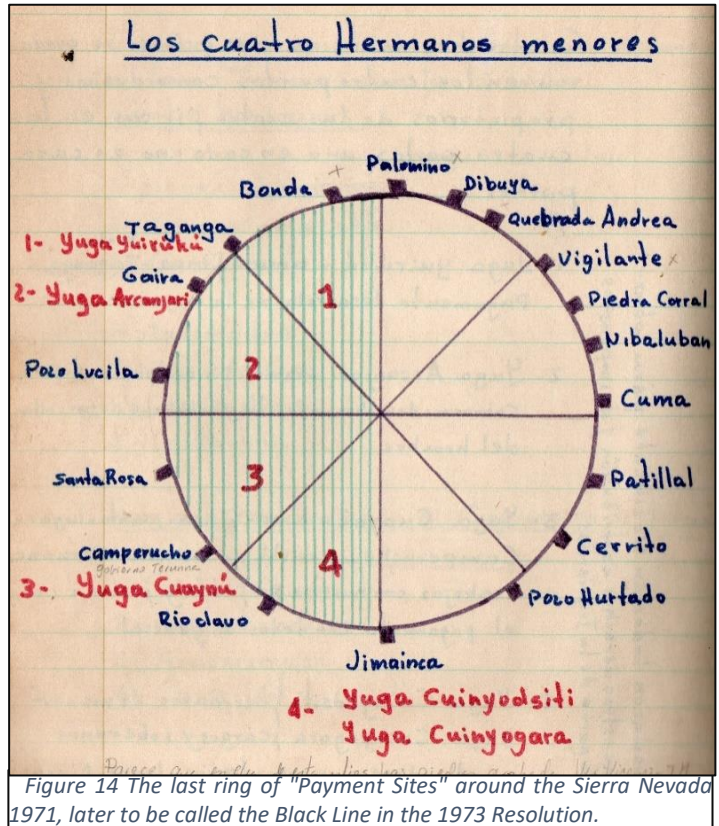


Figure 14 The last ring of "Payment Sites" around the Sierra Nevada 1971, later to be called the Black Line in the 1973 Resolution.

The transcription of the 1934 meeting starts with the sentence "The point of departure: Two centuries before (60)". This would imply that the Mamos had been consulting the Mama Sushi since the 1730s at such meetings. The document then goes on to include the description of some of these same "sites", which later appear in the 1973 Resolution, as places of payment, still not called Black line sites, but simply places.

The document talks about healing, as something very important about those Black Line sites. The spiritual payments made at those sites, are medicines or "Remedies" - *Remedio*. They are "money distributed around 6 Points. 1. Mamankanaka, 2. Jomianca, 3. Camperucho, 4. Gaira, 5. Taganga, 6. YoSakaca, 7 etc. (62)". There, "the world of the civilized people is linked to those anterior elements". These sites heal problems "linked to the charging of taxes and tributes as the acquisition of the rights related to the civil and religious" spheres. In effect the mamos at that 1934 meeting in Suribaka are saying that that these Spiritual "payments" made at Black Line sites cancel the effects of colonial "tribute", and pay the spiritual mothers and fathers, reversing, or curing the debt, needed to "acquire civil and religious" rights. They "link" the "civilized" people to the Law of Origin. This is fundamental. The Black line sites were based on healing through reciprocity with the spirit and worked as law embedded in territory as a form of resistance.

The transcription of that meeting, also "reflects" on the fact that by 1934 those payments had "lost their historical origin and had transformed into mythological origin (62)". The legal basis of tribute and tax as debt to acquire rights for the indigenous people had lost their historical origin as "tribute" in the colonial period, perhaps they had lost their veneer of legitimacy in the Police Inspector system. By 1934 those forms of spiritually paying the debt as reciprocity needed to be adjusted to be able to articulate with law of that period, to be able to pay the tribute for

the damage in terms of the context and elements present in the assemblages of reciprocity of the 1930s. The *encomienda* and the old Catholic church now longer existed, no longer did the Police Inspector system charge its debts in gold. But they were debts paid in some material form, and could be spiritually healed and managed. As Mamo Jose Gabriel Limaku said, the “Mama S̄shi goes a long time back”, the times change but the principles are the same.

What does not change either, is that the spiritual “payments” at these black line sites, and at sacred sites in general, are articulated with the expanded frame of ancestral territory and reciprocity. They “heal” or “cure” debt for the entire territory. Curing takes place at the level of ancestral practice, payments at the sites. Incorporating legal documents or other forms of law and debt, form new “links” into this same assemblage of articulated reciprocity. These are forms of healing violence, of repositioning the subject in context and context itself that have been at the heart of ancestral practices for many centuries.

### 7.3.3. Mama S̄shi as an expanded speech frame.

It is quite impressive that Mamo Vicencio’s and Beatrice’s diagrams are very similar to those that sociolinguists like Goffman (1983), use to describe “speech frames” as available contexts for interaction. William Hanks works through similar participation frameworks in various examples he gives of “complex frames”. For instance, he starts out with the diagram of the Mayan cardinal directions with the “indexical center” where they cross. He then relates that space to “*iknal*, bodily space”, also as “*situationally specific*” places also with cardinal directions, indexically related or perhaps in a relationship of contiguity with that center (1990, 93, 299-302). Hanks develops several examples of these spaces, notably from Mayan altars where a shaman performs rainmaking ceremonies, both articulating and embodying frames distributed along indefinitely extending cardinal directions. Hanks points out that the ‘shaman’ draws out complex overlapping frame spaces all linked to the centers, as “iconic embodiment of the cosmos in the altar.... and the spirits to whom it is directed (1990, 375), as centers were multiple relationships of creation of meaning and deictics take place. I call these places of articulation of reciprocity, including sacred sites, people and things all in the right contexts.

Hanks observes that this transposability, or “sameness makes possible the reciprocity of perspectives presupposed by all ritual address in Maya culture (1990, 377)”. Likewise, these Mayan places have spiritual “owners” and “bonds” that are “reciprocal in the sense that not only do places have owners, but agentive forces”, associated with rights and responsibilities (1990, 388). Just like Vicencio’s diagram of individual sacred spaces organized around the cardinal directions with the center and origin of territory at Gonawindua, individual elements, people and places can embody and form part these wider frames or assemblages of territory and reciprocity.

It is difficult and perhaps inappropriate to try to box in the Law of Origin. Even so, Mamo Vicencio’s and Beatrice’s diagrams, as do Shibulata’s and Mamo Jose Gabriel’s descriptions of Mamo S̄shi, mesh perfectly with concepts of frames of interaction or assemblages that vastly surpass the merely physical. The “Shikwalaka” as the four cardinal points or the posts that hold up the world can be seen as the frame of reference that sets the grounds for the Law of Origin as an assemblage of reciprocity as the Mama S̄shi. In these expanded participation frames, people and things occupy as similar to Hanks’ “interspectival space consisting of that which is mutual, reciprocal or distributed among co-participants is also part of the frame of space (1990, 200)”.

Mamo Sushi as ‘intersperspectival’ space automatically brings its elements of territory, nature, people and discourse into interrelated assemblages of reciprocity with its origins at the center of territory. It all becomes part of the same, as a space shared around reciprocity. The extended frame space includes all ancestral territory, extending out to the entire planet itself to its cardinal directions, at once links people and place to an origin at its center, and situated within this frame of the “Law of Origin”- Strategies are available within this assemblage to elicit responses from that same frame, and thus to re-articulate the positions of the participants through practices of reciprocity, as a permanent movement of redeploying the horizon of potential meanings and practices through embodied practice. Those same strategies must ensure articulation within the assemblages of reciprocity with the Law of Origin at its center, based on the principles of care for life, and thus imply permanence in the form of the processes at the heart of change.

To bring together these concepts, in the Introduction to this dissertation I proposed the term, *articulated assemblages of reciprocity*. Assemblages of reciprocity both include and transcend practices of communication seen through Goffman speech frame based linguistic analysis. They can include what Mauss calls the “spiritual essence”, or the “bonds” formed from exchange, reciprocity, and embodiment. These assemblages expand to include the natural, political, human and territorial. People and places automatically embody this same intersperspectival space within smaller linked frame spaces. In this way people form part of the same assemblages with corporal dispositions that also include practices or habitus to articulate with a variety of fields in both the indigenous and “occidental” worlds, as is the case for the “Mamo Sushi”.

Forms of assemblages of reciprocity in this frame space are not static, are both in constant change, changing and are always based on the same principles of reciprocity of care, from the same “center”. The concept of “Earthquake”, in the drawing on Mamo Norberto’s staff comes into play. In Kogian, the word *Shikwakala* also means “Earthquake”, as tremors of the earth while it accommodates to new forms of articulation. Earthquakes, shifts in territory, accompany changes as the load and the footings of territory are realigned between the four cardinal points to re-articulate with changing forms of assemblages of reciprocity based on the Law of Origin. We can reminisce that “historically sedimented landscapes formatively shape contingent constellations that become materially and discursively consequential (D. Moore 2005, 25)”. In the case of the Sushi these formations and responses are not totally contingent, but centered around the “Law or Origin” as a living part of the process, with specific origins. It assumes many different forms, but is always the same, as the Kaggaba mamos repeat over and over in their meetings “we always come back to the same principles”.

It would also seem that the embodied participation of people from the USEMI team, in the ancestral territory of the Sierra Nevada evoked similar kinds of reflections. In 1972, the USEMI published a booklet on the Ikun – Arhuaco, including many of Mamo Vicencio’s diagrams and explanations copied right out of Beatrice’s notebook. The writer of that booklet, perhaps Beatriz, also grapples with some of these concepts I just presented as theory, when reflecting on the same diagrams, calling them “images” or “maps” of “schemes of thought”.

She reflects on two schemes embedded in ancestral practices. One is “a strictly spatial and static scheme founded on the four cardinal points”, and the other is based on concentric rings or spirals, of transformation. “This map (abstract), can represent (concretely) the Sierra, the entire world, the social organization in its original form, the Kankurwa, the house, humanity”. “Each element

occupies its place in relation to the whole... Without losing its unity nor its own world'. It is possible to "dispense with the parts to see the unity of the whole"... "Due to that category of unity, the parts, when identified with the center, become equivalent and even identical between themselves", this included the "Sierra with its water and all nature within a 'logic of inclusion'" (USEMI 1972b, 28-9).

The USEMIs work with Mamo Vicencio and other mamos marks an "effervescent" time of search for finding strategies to defending indigenous rights shared amongst many Mamos and 'indigenistas' around the Sierra Nevada. The Mama S̥shi emerges from Beatriz Toro's notebooks as a contribution to forms of written representation of the Law of Origin that could articulate with Colombian Law. The USEMI starts to share these diagrams and maps in their mimeographed publications of 1972<sup>308</sup>. From that point on, different version of these diagrams of the creation of the world become a widely accepted and reproduced narrative, cited, and repeated in most everything written by and about the indigenous people of the SNSM ever since.

#### **7.4 The transformation of indigenous discourse into figures for the protection of territory.**

##### **7.4.1 Mama S̥shi and the creation of legal figures of territorial protection in the 1970s: National Parks, indigenous Reserves, and Resguardos.**

The story does not stop there. In this section I trace out how the Mama S̥shi articulated with legal strategies for the defense of territorial rights to work instruments of political protection. This section describes the initial indigenous practices of linking the Law of Origin in territory to the configuration of legal norms and polices based on ancestral territory, and forms of reciprocity that embody the principles of care.

During the early 1900s, parallel to the mamos efforts to "write" the Mama S̥shi, the Arhuacos make early attempts to find ways to use or adapt Colombian law to defending indigenous rights and territory. Arhuacos, with their accompanying Kaggaba and Wiwa mamos and leaders<sup>309</sup> were becoming increasingly skilled in discourse that equated traditional law with Colombian law. The preoccupation of articulating indigenous with "western" law is evident in Vicencio's notebook, full of terms like "Titles" and the "supreme court". We see traces of indigenous deployment of legal discourse as early as 1916 when the Arhuaco delegation visits President Vicente Concha in Bogota. Even before then, the Arhuacos had made significant advances in obtaining legal rights to self-government, having installed several Arhuacos as "Comisaries".

One historian of Arhuaco resistance calls such indigenous strategies from the 1920s, as "lenguaje legalista", as a technique to engage with Colombian Law., to reconfigure "the law to our side" (Ariza Arias 2019, 88). The indigenous people in the Sierra at that time invoked Colombian laws that "must exist" to protect, and include indigenous peoples within formalized regimes of rights (Ariza Arias 2019, 93). By the 1940s this language becomes more prevalent in documents related to establishing the first Arhuaco organization, the "Ligas Arhuacas" (Ariza Arias 2019, 86). The

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<sup>308</sup> in 1978, with Beatriz Toro's accompaniment Mamo Vicencio publishes his book, (Torres Márquez 1978) with those same diagrams and explanations that they had drawn out in the notebook.

<sup>309</sup> The Liga Indigena was also set up with support from the Kaggaba and Wiwa (Muelas, Santamaría and Sosa 2012, 125).

Arhuaco would express their respect for Colombian law by positing themselves as citizens of the nation who should have rights. They draw attention to their situation as people who in fact had no legal rights and are subject to the abuses of the police inspectors, settlers, landholders, and unjust taxation. The implication was that the Colombian state had a debt or obligation to provide the Arhuaco with legal protection in exchange for those abuses of centuries<sup>310</sup>.

The indigenous “legalist” discourse of that time made little reference to territorial rights<sup>311</sup>. This changes when the Arhuaco start to search for forms of protection for their territory. During the 1940s or perhaps before, the Ligas Arhuacas had been trying to establish an Arhuaco indigenous reservation, but with little success<sup>312</sup>. The Arhuaco only start including terms equivalent to “sacred sites” and ancestral territory in their public statements, after the late 1950s. Establishing relationships between territory and law, as we later see in Vicente’s notebooks, proved successful and formed part of their petitions for the establishment of the first Resguardo, called the “Reserva Arhuaca” in 1963 (Naranjo Peña 2012, 157).

During the 1960s, we can see traces of how the Arhuaco applied the equivalent of “Mamo S̄ushi” to the declaration of the “Reserva Arhuaca” as the first legally recognized form of indigenous territory in the Sierra Nevada. At first it had to do with the creation of the Corporación Autónoma Regional del Valle del Magdalena (CAR) in 1960. As part of national policy to regulate the use of Baldios Nacionales, the “CAR” was legally responsible for marking out geographical limits between the “agricultural-productive sector” occupied by settlers, and those areas to be protected, especially the streams and forests, from encroaching settlers, as *Reserva Forestal* – Forest Reserves, under the newly minted Ley 2 de 1959 (Muelas, Santamaría and Sosa 2012, 135). Given that the indigenous people could show they were taking care of the forests, it would be possible to delimit their territories as special Reserves within the “Forest Reserve” (Ariza Arias 2019, 48, 52). The idea of remolding new environmental norms to create figures of territorial protection for the Arhuacos within Nacional Baldios, surely grew out of indigenista’ strategies of molding legal forms of protection for indigenous territory from other norms, during those times when there were none available in Colombia.

By the 1940s settlers were moving well up into these Baldios Nacionales that were also Arhuaco territory. The Arhuaco urgently needed legal forms of protection to fend off settler usurpation of their land, also affecting the environment. The authorities in the Ligas Arhuacas denounce the settler’s invasion of indigenous territory, as tending to destroy the forests, dry out the springs and other natural water sources, and affect the fertility of the land (Naranjo Peña 2012, 156, 164) and (Ariza Arias 2019, 78).

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<sup>310</sup> Apparently groups of “indigenistas” committed to the defense of indigenous rights, and later the USEMI and Asuntos Indígenas, helped the Arhuacos to write many of their “legalistic” documents (Ariza Arias 2019, 84-7).

<sup>311</sup> We can also speculate that under the 1886 Constitution the indigenous people only had rights to the degree that they were “civilized” and as such would gain access to their own self governing cabildos and territories. To show that the Law of Origin was in fact a civilized law would be the basis for attaining the right to self government.

<sup>312</sup> The Arhuaco had been unsuccessfully requesting a Resguardo since 1917 when the government had issued a law declaring that Resguardos could be declared in Baldios Nacionales. The idea of an indigenous “reserve” in the Arhuaco area, also arose out of legislation in 1922 that proposed the declaration of forest reserves in national baldios (Ariza Arias 2019, 49).

Dividing lines between indigenous occupied and settler occupied territory were easily visible to the Arhuacos and the government in terms of environmental effects over the land. These lines were also visible to the Arhuaco as the sacred sites along those lines. By 1959, the Arhuaco start attempting to mark out those lines, by making reference to the corresponding sacred sites along those frontiers (Ariza Arias 2019, 48, 52). The sacred sites were also being affected as we see later in 1969 when the Liga Arhuaca talks of “the dividing line that covers the sacred places of our tradition that were left as inheritance by our grandparents for us to take care of the world by making payments at our sacred places<sup>313</sup>”.

The procedure of marking out territory with sacred sites was related to the declarations of the early Arhuaco “Reserves”. The first was declared under Resolution 204 of 1968, in which the INCORA designated a “globe of terrain” as a reserve for the Arhuacos, within the 1959 forest reserve. In line with how the INCORA assigned parcels of “Baldíos Nacionales” to settlers, the INCORA divided up the Arhuaco Reserve into parcels assigned to each indigenous family. The INCORA later emitted Resolución 113 of 1974 expanded that Reserve as a “special reserve” for the Arhuacos. The INDERENA had separated this “special reserve” from the 1959 Forest Reserve, “at the request of the community” of Arhuacos. In Resolution 078 of 1983 the INCORA reclassified the land ownership of that Reserve from “empty lands” owned by the Nation, to a new category of Resguardo that titled the property as collectively owned Arhuaco land.

While none of these Resolutions mention “sacred sites”, that concept was key to the process of marking out limits of the Reserves (Ariza Arias 2019, 52). Given that Colombian law was now interested in environmental protection, sacred sites in ancestral territory would have been a valid point of articulation between ancestral law and western legal forms of environmental protection. Reminiscent of Mamo Vicencio’s notebook, these efforts to designate “Reserves” or other forms of territorial protection for the Arhuaco after 1959 involved marking out land, based on the ancestral “titles” or sacred sites, that embodied a relationship between conservation of nature, indigenous territory and western law. Each sacred site embodied “ancestral law” and relationships to nature, territory, encompassing the entire assemblage of reciprocity of the “Law of Origin”, the Mamo S̥shi.

In summary, the pieces of the puzzle of how to “write” the Mama S̥shi started to come together during the 1960s, as a contingent strategy in which the Kaggaba and Arhuaco apply ancestral law to the creation of indigenous Reservations. Although the indigenous people had been trying to formalize their Mama S̥shi for decades, this effort had not found a confluence of circumstances suitable to “get traction” in western law. Including references to territory as part of the Mama S̥shi makes the Law of Origin, more effective as a form of articulation with occidental law in favor of the indigenous people in the SNSM. The territorial elements of the Mamo S̥shi, thus positioned, were able to articulate with available institutional norms of territorial protection that were also definable through the physical characteristics of territory.

A similar relationship had already proved effective between the organization of ancestral territory as the “Black Line”, and the declaration of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and Tayrona

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<sup>313</sup> AGN, Ministerio de Gobierno, Asuntos Indigenas, Caja 50, Folio 1 cited in (Naranjo Peña 2012, 156, 164).



park as the first figures of territorial protection in the Sierra Nevada that would also benefit indigenous people. It was declared in 1964 by the INCORA<sup>314</sup>, the same agency responsible for the declaration of indigenous Resguardos (Uribe Botero 2005, 13), when the figure of Resguardo was not available in the national legislation for the protection of indigenous territories, or at least not widely applied. Both figures coexisted in the same territory from then on, as a de facto alliance that both protected indigenous territorial rights, and helped protect the ecosystems of the Sierra Nevada (Uribe Botero 2005, 15). The Park was declared along similar rings of territory of Mamo Sushi, a precursor for the RKMA established in 1980.

- The emergence of discourse on Ancestral territory and assemblages of reciprocity.

The emergence of sacred sites in indigenous political discourse, and the declaration of territorial rights for the indigenous people, does not mean that the idea of sacred sites, the ancestral organization of territory, and indigenous practices of care for nature only came into existence in 1960s because they were useful for indigenous legal discourse<sup>315</sup>. The assemblage of Mama Sushu as ancestral law, the order, and principles of creation of Kaggaba territory, and their forms of care for nature and have been central to indigenous practices of identity in the SNSM and forms of production for centuries, but deployed with different names.

The same concepts of Ancestral territory and sacred sites are present in early ethnographies on the Kaggaba. In 1914 Pruess includes the same narrative of world creation, along the four cardinal points that Mamo Vicencio tells Beatriz, and which Mamo Shibulata tells us, but with slight variations. “Seizankua blows a Golden flute giving origin to the black earth (*karvdksu*) that Sintana spreads to the horizon where the cardinal points end... That is why the plants came to be and all the living beings exist on the earth (1993, V1 101)”.

Pruess does not use the term “sacred sites”. He talks about “devils”, as the “fathers” and “mothers (V1 126)”. They are responsible for “all natural things that act over the senses: the sun, wind, rain, lakes, animals, etc. (V1 107)”. The “mothers”, take the form of the upper lakes in the paramo, and rivers (V1 117, 127, 131)”, and at “the same time are the mothers of the rivers that are born from them, (V1 6, 9)”, of the rain and hence, “of the fruits of the countryside (V1 117-8)”. He notes that many “fathers” are mountains or have been transformed into rocks (V1 134)”. He sees the mamos go to place their offerings at those places, to make their crops grow (V1 139).

Pruess does not further explore the relationship of these mothers and fathers with place. Pruess is more interested in Kaggaba management of these “natural things” through ancestral practices centered around dances with masks, song, “directed words (V1 133)” and “retributions”, or what today they call in Spanish “spiritual payments”. For Pruess, the capacity of the Kaggaba “to internally manage the demonic forces of nature is not the most notable thing about their spiritual

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<sup>314</sup> “Que el INCORA, mediante la Resolución No. 191 de 1964, aprobada por la Resolución Ejecutiva No. 255 de 1964, del Ministerio de Agricultura, reservó y declaró Parques Nacionales Naturales de Colombia en tres sectores de tierras baldías del Departamento de Magdalena, denominados para todos los efectos Parque Natural Nacional Isla de Salamanca, Parque Natural Nacional de Santa Marta y Parque Nacional Natural de los Tayronas.” (CTC - PNN 2020).

<sup>315</sup> Some 50 years later, a few anthropologists see relationships of ethnic identity and territorial rights formalized under the constitution of 1991, as reified (Bocarejo 2009, 312), romanticized, and a “geography of imagination, disassociated from the centuries of embodied relationships of the indigenous people with their ancestral territory that we have been taking about.



life, but rather its great cohesion, how everything is fused together with their conception of the Universal Mother (V1 18)". This unifying relationship between people, nature and the spiritual mother, is similar to what we have been calling "articulated assemblages of reciprocity"<sup>316</sup>.

Reichel-Dolmatoff's work on the Kaggaba is similar in that respect. Early in the 1950s, Reichel also refers to the existence of "innumerable" "sacred places" distributed around territory, as the mothers and fathers of many things where the Kaggaba make their offerings and do their consultations (G. Reichel-Dolmatoff 1985b, 146-9, 239). Eventually by 1982, Reichel Dolmatoff talks of the existence of a plethora of "ritually named landmarks (that) express symbolic property rights (1982, 294). Like Preuss, Reichel Dolmatoff recognizes that the Kaggaba maintain what he terms as an "equilibrium" between "man and nature" at both environmental and spiritual levels (1982, 283), and take care of their territory through those principles. However, Reichel-Dolmatoff' does not seem to explore the idea of sacred places further than that.

After the emergence in indigenous discourse of the 1970s of ancestral territory and sacred sites, it took until the 1990s for topic to start appearing in writing on the Kaggaba with any great frequency. Anthropologists who accompany the construction of Bonga in 1992, as a Kogui "frontier town ", start to mention "hitos territoriales o sagrados" (Perafán 1997, 81). Later other anthropologists develop their writing around sacred sites, ancestral territory, and eco-politics in the Sierra Nevada, to mention (Parra Witte 2018), (Giraldo Jaramillo 2010) and others. It is not so much that anthropologists "discover" this facet of the "Law of Origin", but that the Kaggaba start to talk about what has been part of their ancestral practices for millennia. During the 1960s changes take place in the forms of representation of elements related to territory. The deployment of aspects of ancestral territory as a strategy for resistance to violence became increasingly relevant.

Most everything the indigenous people of the Sierra do to maintain their relationships between the Law of Origin, nature, people, and reciprocity is based on spiritual work with the thousands of sacred sites that constitute their territory. In Shikwakala, the Kaggaba Mamos identified and described about 3,600 sacred sites, as Jabas and Jates in just a few sectors of four river valleys in Kaggaba territory. Each spring, creek, mountain, pool, forest and everything else has its own name, based on the spiritual mother of father in that place, and its relationship to people and nature. This detailed knowledge of the sacred sites in territory and the roles they play has been passed down many generations of Kaggaba (Mestre and Rawitscher 2018, 89-116).

#### 7.4.2 Writing the 1973 Black Line Resolution as the "Book" of Mamo Ṣushi.

These early forms territorial protection crystallized into the first written form of the "book" of Mama Ṣushi as the 1973 Black Line Resolution. Apparently, the government had to legally recognize the ancestral principles of the Black Line to be able to draw out the limits of the Arhuaco "special reserve" of 1974 (Ariza Arias 2019, 53). However, I have not found any specific description of how that Resolution was written or by whom. Instead, the next part of the Chapter

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<sup>316</sup> The French explorer-ethnologist, Le Brettes, mentions the Kaggaba "passion for geography" with names for almost all mountains, and rivers right down to the smallest tributaries (1903, 352), but does not develop that any further.

analyzes how the 1973 Resolution is written using indexicality as reported speech to rendering visible the “Mama Sushí”, and embed it within the Resolution, thus enabling its articulation with Colombian law.

The Resolution is forms part of the specific “discourse genre” of a Resolution, as a legal instrument that the Colombian State issues to implement institutional procedures. In this case the Ministry of Government is issuing one of the first resolutions in Colombia that protects indigenous people. The Resolution itself is quite short, only two pages long, and is titled, “por la cual se demarca la Línea Negra o Zona Teológica de las comunidades indígenas de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta” (Ministerio de Gobierno 1973).

The way that the Resolution was written, and especially its use of reported speech, reflects how the document articulates with the Mama Sushí. The document does not directly describe the principles of ancestral territory, but uses reported speech to articulate them within the discourse genre of a Resolution. The Resolution refers to the Black Line, as something declared by the indigenous people themselves. “The culture of the ARHUACO, KOGI, and MALAYO groups living in the Sierra Nevada del Cesar, include in the center of that territory, a circular area delimited by geographical features that they call the ‘Black Line’”, “That the ‘BLACK LINE’ includes sites that those cultures consider as mystical symbols”, and “That within these cultures these symbols constitute fundamental elements in their universal concept, and that they must be accessible to make offerings that help maintain that equilibrium’.

The government does not validate that the Black Line exists. But by using reported speech, those concepts are embedded in the Resolution, which as a legal document gives them legitimacy. Using direct speech, the Resolution declares that the indigenous people are being harmed, that the State has the responsibility to protect the indigenous people, and as such, to mandate of measures for their protection. The government has the obligation to “guarantee and protect the emotional tranquility and cultural autonomy of the indigenous groups of the nation.” The “advancement of settlers has deprived indigenous people of the right of access to these sites, which maintains them in a state of tension and anguish with its consequent emotional disorders”, and therefore the “psychological state in which the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada find themselves is a factor that prevents their normal development and disturbs the development of plans and programs for directed social change. The Resolution declares that the owners of those “sites” must grant the indigenous people access, to “comply with their magical-religious practices” and thus guarantee their psychological well-being (Ministerio de Gobierno 1973).

To indicate the location of the sites that indigenous people must visit to protect their psychological state, the Resolution will “Symbolically demarcate the “Black Line” of the Arhuaco, Kogi, and Malayo groups within the following limits”. It lists 16 “geographical features” that form the “Black Line”, as general references to places with Spanish place names like mountains and rivers as “geographical accidents” or “sites” considered as “mystical symbols” by the “these cultures”. They are mostly the same places that Vicencio Torres shows in the drawing of the last ring of the “Mamo Sushí” in Beatriz Toro’s notebook, as last circle in the Mama Sushí gold piece of the origin and organization of ancestral territory.

With this caveat, the 1973 Resolution uses reported speech to refer to the Mamo Sushí, and bring it into context without defining it. The Resolution does not validate the Law of Origin.

Instead, it validates the indigenous peoples' belief in the Law of Origin expressed in sacred sites, and thereby justifies their need to visit these sites to maintain their people's well-being. The Resolution names those sites, and that "circular territory", assigning them rights of access as necessary to maintain the psychological wellbeing of the indigenous people. In that way, the Resolution successfully refers to and renders visible the Black Line thereby recognizing it as territory with certain legal rights based on the indigenous people's beliefs.

In addition, the Resolution by evoking the Black line, embeds the ancestral concepts of territory and the Law of Origin within the frame of reference of Colombian legal discourse. By having included the words that make reference to the Mamo S̄shi, that whole spatial frame of territory with its four corners, based on the principles and practices of the Law of Origin becomes embedded in the document, and in legal discourse itself. The resolution starts to form part of that "interspectival" space which is Mama S̄shi and vice versa. If we were to look at this as a form of reciprocity, they would start to form part of the same.

As Mamo Jose Gabriel had said when he was talking about the cement replica of the figure of Mamo S̄shi, in the Casa Indígena of Valledupar of the 1960s: "That was good for me, I could work with that". It is difficult to describe the Law of Origin in words as a the "signified", and even more so in a document like the Resolution. However, Mama S̄shi is inserted into a dialogue with western law, a system of reciprocity. In a certain sense, the resolution becomes part of the Mamo S̄shi, just like the golden figure embodies the Law of Origin as do the people and things that participate in that assemblage.

Of course, the Resolution is not the Law of Origin, it is paper document. At the same time, it is connected, embodied in the Mama S̄shi, as it becomes a point of articulation. Like the San Pizhu, it forms a bridge through territory, its principles of origin, through the document itself and western law. Such forms of reciprocity enable us to think about these transformations as not something that happens only at the level of written law, but as embodied assemblages of exchange between people, place, language, documents and territory, rooted in the spirit of origin of ancestral territory.

We could go as far as saying that the document is based on reverse debt, as what the Kaggaba Mamo talk about as the spiritual payment to the father of trees, Kalasahe. The retribution, the "spiritual payment" does not go to the principle of trees itself but to its foil, the dancing puppet of Kalashe<sup>317</sup>. In this sense, the Resolution is like the husk that receives the payment for the principles of territory that are affected and is based on healing. As an embodiment of the Law of Origin, articulated within the assemblage of the Law of Origin, to some degree becomes part of that same assemblage, of its links of reciprocity that in turn can generate other ways of productively receiving and giving to take care of those principles. Even as a document, it has effects through the links of reciprocity.

Surely the Kaggaba might say that the consultations the Mamos did at that time with the Mamo S̄shi, and the "spiritual payments" they made at the right sacred sites, as gifts, would have resulted in an outcome from the Law of Origin, that enabled the emergence of the Black Line

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<sup>317</sup> See page 161 of this dissertation.

Resolution an element that would contribute the work of caring for that same assembly, and its links of reciprocity. The Resolution does not work by itself, without people writing it, reading it and responding to those same principles. Groups of people are involved in these exchanges, through embodied practices. The people who helped to write the Resolution, who participate were all imbricated in forms and assemblages of reciprocity with the Law of Origin. They embody it, to a certain degree.

- The Black Line Resolution starts to walk and talk.

Getting back to the legal, the incorporation of the Mama Səshi 1973 Resolution has become a central element for the success of indigenous political movements in the Sierra Nevada. That document has had very real effects on the protection of indigenous territory. We have already seen that the declaration of the Arhuaco Reserve in 1974, the Arhuaco Resguardo in 1983, the RKMA in 1980, and establishment of the CIT amongst others are all linked to the recognition of those principles in the Black Line Resolution.

The 1973 Resolution transitioned into the next Black Line resolution, the Resolution 837 of 1995, and then into the 2018 Decreto de la Linea Negra. The 837 Resolution is quite similar to the 1973 version. It is based on reported speech, evoking the same principles of Mama Səshi, but elaborates a bit more. It adds more sacred sites of the 1973 Resolution, and now give the name of each Jaba or Jate, in indigenous language, and a summary of the ancestral “function” of each, for instance: “30, Natunsama, Gairaka, the place of payment for the mother of salt (Ministerio del Interior 1995). The 1995 Resolution still uses reported speech, and declares additional measures of protection but in essence is the same Resolution.

The 2018 Decree is also similar in several respects to the 1973 and 1995 Resolutions. It still uses elements of reported speech to make reference to the principles of ancestral territory, and its articulation with or embedding in, Western Law for the protection of indigenous territory. There are also substantial differences. The Decree marked out the ancestral territory of the Black Line, as a territorial jurisdiction where rights for protection apply, as precisely as possible. The CTC with its mamos and authorities of the four indigenous people visited 348 “Espacios sagrados” to mark out the Black Line, which the Government also verified, to make it a legally recognized map and territory.

The Decree directly defines concepts of ancestral territory and the Law of Origin. it describes the Law of Origin as clearly as possible, alongside its “Documento Madre” written by the CTC. The document describes the different elements that make up ancestral territory, the Black Line and the concept Mamo Səshi, not just making reference to them. Also, the Decree directly recognizes ancestral authority as a legal regime applicable to ancestral territory (Ministerio del Interior 2018, 6). The overt recognition of “ancestral authority” opens the way for dialogue with the government to establish legal forms of protection that recognize the principles of indigenous law. Recognition is part of what the Mamos and leaders and been working towards since the 1890s. We could say that the Black Line was coming to maturity as a legal instrument, capable of articulating with other elements of legal protection based on reciprocity and recognition.

Especially after the 1995 Resolution, the Black Line has started to play increasingly prominent roles in the reconfiguration of legal and institutional processes for the protection of indigenous rights and territory in the Sierra Nevada. The Black Line resolutions have been effective in

defending ancestral territory and their sacred sites from large scale development projects (Corte Constitucional de Colombia 2013). The Black Line is covered by the sections of the 1991 Constitution and international treaties that define and guarantee the rights of ancestral territories, including the right to the “prior consultation process” (Corte Constitucional de Colombia 2014), and numerous others.

A considerable amount has been published on the legal and judicial effect of the Black Line Resolutions and Decree for the defense of ancestral territory in the SNSM<sup>318</sup>. I could keep on writing here about my experiences working with the indigenous organizations on those legal and intuitional aspects of indigenous resistance. That would be the subject of another book.

### **7.5 The expansion of the Sierra Nevada National Park, and the “principles” of territory - 2017**

Instead, I am going to talk about a specific process of declaring the “Expansion of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta National Park” that I participated in after 2017. Like the other examples described in this dissertation, that process was based on transforming the Mamo S̄shi, as the assemblage of the Law of Origin, into an effective norm of territorial protection for the Sierra Nevada. In this sense, declaring the “Park Expansion” reenacted elements of the “struggles” to declare the first Resguardos and National Parks during the 1970s, based on Mamo S̄shi, as forms of resistance and reciprocity. The parks expansion project involved transposing the order of ancestral territory into norm, the creation of figures of territorial protection, and the transformation of context through assemblages of reciprocity. The following account is based on public events and documents produced during the process.

#### **7.5.1 The rings of territory, National Parks, and the authority to cure.**

The embodied practices of reconfiguring context based on relationships with the order of ancestral territory as the “Black Line” take on varied situated forms, but always cycle back to similar points of reference. This brings me back to the conversation in which Mamo Shibulata had been describing the legacy of writing the “Book” of Mama S̄shi, and his role in that. Shibulata was one of the Mamos in charge of the park expansion project and applied the same consultation of Mama S̄shi of the 1890s that Mamo Cantera of Surivaka had passed on to Mamo Jose la Cruz and then to Mamo Valencio and then to Mamo Shibulata himself. That work was living practice of articulating the principles of Mama S̄shi with western law.

Around 2015, the Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos had been promoting the expansion of protected areas as way of attaining the national goal for numbers of hectares of priority ecosystems under conservation. The indigenous organizations of the Sierra were worried their territory was under threat from a growing number of mining blocks that the government was offering for tender. These mining blocks reached well into the RKMA and the Resguardo Arhuaco, and were only stopped by the line of the Sierra Nevada National Park further up.

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<sup>318</sup> (Mora, et al. 2010), (Pérez-Valbuena, Higuera-Mendieta and Bonilla-Mejía 2017), (Aristizábal Salazar and Garizabal Arrieta 2020).

The Kaggaba and the Arhuaco organizations studied the issue, and concluded that National Parks were the only Protected Area under Colombian norms that unequivocally would protect from large development projects. While the RKMA had been expanded several times, the Park was pretty much the same size as it had been since the 1960s and 70s. It was quite high up the RKMA, leaving many indigenous communities unprotected. Parks also shared with the indigenous people a focus on conservation of nature and a long history of joint work in the Sierra Nevada.

PNN proposed to the CTC the idea of setting up joint project to prepare the expansion proposal. Both the Arhuaco and the Kaggaba governors sent that idea off to their Mamos in the Ezuamas and Kadukwe for consultation. The Mamos agreed that the park expansion would protect ancestral territory. Parks and the Resguardo would keep working together on the same shared principles for the protection of territory. This consultation amongst the Kaggaba, not coincidentally, like the early Mama S̄shi consultations in 1890 took place in the Ezuama of Surivaka with Mamos from all over Kaggaba territory.

After that consultation in Suribaka, both the CIT and the OGT set up agreements with the Parks office to start the work on preparing the proposal. In the OGT, perhaps since I was also a proponent of the idea, the Kaggaba Governor Jose de los Santos, named me the “Coordinator” of the Parks expansion project for the Kaggaba and later for the CTC. However, it was the Mamos and the other ancestral authorities who were in charge.

In 2017, the consultation in Suribaka had indicated that the next consultation, to organize the project, had to be done from the Black Line sites of the Tayrona Park, based on the same principles when the Parks was established in the 1960s. The parks expansion would have to be based on the same relationship between Mamo S̄shi, the origin of territory and care for nature. In addition, a new PNNNSM management plan, that the CTC and PNN had recently formulated, was based on the same principles of Mamo S̄shi, and the 2018 Black Line Decree. It ensured joint governance of the PNN SNSM with the indigenous people, guaranteeing the principles of “ancestral” authority and territory (CTC - PNN 2020).

The consultations of the Kaggaba mamos indicated that the Parks expansion had to be spiritually embedded in a ring of sacred sites around ancestral territory they called “Kulaldu” sites or “Piedras Madre” – Mother rocks. This was one of the 9 rings of the Mamo S̄shi, located one ring up from the Black Line, that mamo Shibulata was talking about. The mamos explained it is comprised of sites that care for forests, ecosystems and water in the lower areas of the mountain and was the spiritual and material “base” for the expansion project. It would be another step towards recovering Kaggaba ancestral territory. These mothers and the “payments” the mamos made there, would support the park expansion, as something that would grow out of and protect the Law of Origin itself.

Together with Kaggaba Mamos, and authorities, after consultations from each Ezuama, the OGT team made visits to the “mother rock”, in each river valley. The mamos did their spiritual “payments” at each one of those “rocks” that corresponded to the “jurisdiction” of their respective ezuama. We also marked out the GPS location of each site in the ring. We visited at least 15 of those sites. The “mother sites” were mountains, places in rivers, lakes or waterfalls that marked out the rings of ancestral territory. For instance, the mother rock in the Cañas River was Sexizhka, knowledge of which that had been passed down to Mamo Shibulata from the 1890s

consultation of the Mama S̄shi sites. Similar knowledge had been passed down the generations of mamos for all the other valleys.

Mama Luntana, and the mamos from the Ezuamas of Takina and Makutama consulted that they had to do their payment at a mother rock called “Jaba Zhuxdiwe”, a large rock on the border of the Rio Ancho River connected to the principles of forests and ancestral consultations. The rock has several little bowls carved in it, natural zhatukua that embody the connection to the mother lakes in the Paramo. Luntana, during his payment that day gave these words.

“Perhaps people may think that animals and trees do not have mothers, but the Mamos know that they do have mothers and that each species was baptized from the sacred space of Golgueka, in the paramo, where each species has its own mother site of origin. From the principal mother, for that origin, the other mothers and fathers progressed down from the paramo, organizing the sacred sites, and the waters, the forests, the animals, and every element of nature down the mountain. These species and their spiritual mothers and fathers do not live alone, but have their Jaba Weishu – Ancient Mother, with whom they live together, and accompany each other as a family. That family has its order and connections.

It is from these principles that we must practice care, and why we have to heal from these principles of care. That is why we are starting the work from those principles that baptize each element of nature from the paramo. This is why we did the work for the Parks Expansion from Jaba Zhuxdiwe, the four Zhatukuwas, because it is where Jaba Se, Kalate and Kwalania are (the father and mother of the forests). From this mother stone, we are doing the work where the Kasaougwi - the parents of the trees were born, from Loambiku - where each tree was born and from where all the animals assumed life<sup>319</sup>. All species of animals in the water, wetlands, and everything. We need to continue this same work, because this is where our authority as indigenous peoples lies, and it is our duty to do that to conserve nature”.

The work of “healing” these principles of life is what the Mamos did at each of these sacred sites to link the Expansion project with the assemblage of reciprocity of ancestral territory. Mamo Luntana had described again the same relationship of Mamo S̄shi, the principles of life and the organization of territory into “espacios sagrados”, connected to the peak of Gonawindua at its origin, down to the mother rock sites in the lower part of territory, with their respective networks and assemblage of sacred sites. Healing the relationship between nature and the spiritual principles of life embedded in territory is “where our authority as indigenous people is found”. The entire process is based on healing and reciprocity.

Mamo Merejildo from Makutama, continued the idea: “People cannot mistreat the mother, and so we comply with that principle, otherwise we would not be respecting the mother. If we harm those principles, it is because we are not listening to the mother's advice and she then takes retribution, generating illnesses and problems. When we consulted with mother Zhuxdiwe, she said that damage is being caused here in the lower areas of the Sierra. In the consultation the Mother asked us, 'how are they going to respect me, and with so many children I have who are

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<sup>319</sup> *Loambiku* is the same *Alwawiku*, one of the original spiritual fathers of ancestral territory, and is a protagonist in the history of forests, trees and reverse debt on page 163 of this dissertation.

not respecting me, maybe I am going to die.' The mamos today saw that these principles, these mothers, had to be respected. We have to comply with the work of healing from this mother, and the others who are connected to her. For this reason, we Mamos are the principal authorities, because we have this knowledge"<sup>320</sup>.

The Mamos again reaffirm that the work is based on healing, paying back the reverse debt through reciprocity with the spirit. Healing is the basis of the Parks expansion process, both as public policy to protect territory and nature, and as personally situated practice and responsibility. In the case of the PNNSNSM expansion project the ring of "Mother sites" formed the base for transposing or articulating ancestral authority into Western law. The parks expansion project was articulated with the spatial frame of ancestral territory, Shikwakala, and to a certain degree formed part of it. A relationship exists between these mother sites and the legal demarcation of territorial protection, reciprocity and healing.

The National Parks Office needed to establish a spatial limit for the area of study for the expansion project. It had to issue a resolution declaring a zone of protection where no new mining activities could be authorized while the studies for expanding the park were underway. The Parks people found that the ring closely corresponded to the limits between upper and lower forest ecosystems, just like the Kaggaba mamos had said. The Parks office drew out that ring, geographically, adjusted through "limites arqueofinios" meaning along natural boundaries like mountain ridges and rivers, and ecosystems, and produced their map. It was probably somewhat like the limits of the first Reserve that Mamo Gabriel Limaku had questioned as not being the "Mamo S̄shi" in the 1960s.

This time, the mamos in the process made it clear that this was Mamo S̄shi, drawn in territory. They had transposed it though the Mother rocks. It also became law, enacted as the "Resolution de Reserva Temporal in 2018"<sup>321</sup>. The Mama S̄shi again emerged as a territorial limit embedded in norms for environmental protection, like the Arhuaco reserves of 1974, Arhuaco Reserve in 1968, and the first National Parks in the SNSM.

The boundaries of the park expansion never made it down to that ring of Kulaldu, but only as far as the frontier in the RKMA between the peasants and those areas occupied by the Kaggaba. Just like the first Arhuaco Reserves, a line of sacred sites still marked out a visible line between the peasants and the Kaggaba. Even though the expansion was much smaller than the area of the Kulaldu ring, it protected a significant amount of territory.

It took a few more years to finish the Parks expansion proposal. We held meetings with the indigenous communities in the expansion area, made journeys to each river valley to work through sacred sites, meetings with peasants, treks to characterize the forests and sacred sites and long work sessions with the Parks office. Finally in 2019, we had finished the proposal and the parks expansion was ready to be declared as Law. The last step was the "Prior Consultation

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<sup>320</sup> In (OGT 2017) and (CTC - PNN 2022).

<sup>321</sup> Resolution 504 of April 02, 2018 Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, and later extended in several versions until 2026.



process” with PNN to publicly officialize the process at the level of the CTC and PNN. Then the Ministry of the Environment would sign the Resolution to expand the park.

In 2019 just when it was ready, the project stalled. The COVID 19 “pandemic” set in. The Parks office had other priorities. The Kaggaba Governor, Jose de los Santos got sick and passed away. At the end of 2020, a general consultation of Kaggaba mamos at their general assembly instated Arregoces Conchacala as the new Kaggaba Governor. At the OGT office, Arregoces kept looking me in the eye, talking about that Park expansion project. “Are you going to get it finished or not? It’s never going to happen. All that work for nothing.



We don’t just talk and then do nothing, we talk about the things that we are really going to do, otherwise it is just words and paper uselessly piled up”. Evidently the Kaggaba and the Arhuaco really wanted that Parks expansion, and I was the person who had start it up again. It was the consultation of the Mamos, no way of going back on that. We started calling, and the CTC sent letters to the Parks team in Bogotá. With the help of the team in the Parks office, we finally got the project going again at the beginning of 2021. We drew up budgets, methodologies and timetables for the Consulta Previa and for writing up the Resolution of declaration.

### 7.5.2 Dreams of Territory.

While the parks expansion project was resuscitating, one night, when Mamo Luis and his wife Saka Maria had come to visit our house, my wife, Bibiana, had a nightmare. In the morning, she told it to Mamo Luis. Dreams are messages from level of Aluna. It was a pretty bad dream. Mamo Luis immediately consulted with his hands, the Kashiwintukua, and told Bibiana the result. “That dream is indicating that something is going to happen to your husband. He will probably die soon. My consultation says, to avoid that, you must go and see Mamo Shibulata. He is the only one who can do the work to cure a spiritual mother who is charging a debt on Peter. You have to go see Mamo Shibulata as soon as you can”.

I was a bit worried about Mamo Luis’s consultation. The last time Mamo Luis told me something like that was when he suggested I go see another Mamo. a very elderly expert on the Tayrona and their language. He could still speak it and knew many Tayrona place names for the book Shikwakala. He would certainty throw more light on my list of indigenous names from the encomiendas. Mamo Luis had not seen Mamo Silvestre in years, but for some reason he told me I had to hurry up. It was a very hard four day walk to that Ezuama. I procrastinated for about two months. Just before I was going to go, news came down the mountain that the Mamo had suddenly and unexpectedly died from a stomach infection. When I saw Mamo Luis after that, he

just gave me a look: “you didn’t listen to me, too bad”. So, this time, I thought it would be better heed his advice more quickly. Also, mamo Shibulata lived much closer.

The next Sunday, Bibiana and I went to see Mamo Shibulata in his community of Shinawinaka down the Jerez River near Dibulla. We drove up a dirt road to Shinawinaka, there Mamo Shibulata, was sitting outside the nujue and looked up at me. “My son Peter!!!!. How are you?” With no pause, he started to grill me. “And how is the parks proposal coming? We need to finish it right now!!” Mamo Shibulata was one of the advisory mamos for the Parks proposal, but I had not seen him for the last two years, basically due to the “pandemic”. He told me he had consulted in his Zhatukuwa that he was expecting my visit. He brought me into the nujue, had me sit down and asked for a full report. I told him that the Parks project had ground to halt. After much effort, the Parks people were saying they were ready start. The Arhuaco and the Kaggaba also had to work together on the Parks proposal. It was a joint effort. But it was all rather slow.

Mamo Shibulata replicated “we consulted on the parks expansion when we went to Suribaka. It is based on Mamo S̄shi, the unification of territory, from its four points and from the center at Gonawindua. Each of the four indigenous people embody one of those directions. We have to all work together”. Mamo Shibulata talked for a while about that. He concluded that we needed to meet with the Arhuaco Mamos to start working together after the COVID. He would do several payments at the right mother sites to make sure it all came together as it should.

Then, Bibiana told him what we had come for. She related him her dream and reminded him that Mamo Luis had sent us. “Oh yes, that’s right” said Mamo Shibulata turning to me. “You have to represent the Parks project for us. You are talking about territory, about the mothers and fathers and their principles, to defend Mamo S̄shi. You can’t talk about them without their permission- Otherwise those mothers will “charge” you for having used their words. You have to “register” yourself so they know your words are feeding them, paying them back with care. If you don’t you will get sick”. “Ok Mamo Shibulata, what should I do?”. “Well, I will register you right now!!!!. He pulled out a piece of cotton from his mochila, had me deposit my thoughts in it, my shala, all the work we would do, and gave it to his apprentice. “Go give that food to the mother” he said, to give it to a nearby sacred site- And then he directed himself to me. “Good thing that we happen to be near the Kulaldu Mother site here in Jerez. Tomorrow I am going to pay it directly”. “Now you can talk about territory and its mothers and fathers, speak their words, their principles. You are now authorized to defend the proposal, to represent it before the government and get it approved. That’s what the dream was telling you. You need to be connected to the origin of territory. Every time you use words to defend territory, they will be paying it back. If you hadn’t come here you would have gotten into a big problem”.

Mamo Shibulata looked at me “You can go now”. “We are finished”. Mamo Shibulata also said he would accompany the rest of the work. All I had to do was let him know about a meeting or whatever, and he would come join us. We got into the car and headed back home. I was feeling quite relieved. Especially about the fact that I was not going to die, or at least nothing would happen to our family.

I was also thinking about how it all had come together as a message. I was quite thankful to Bibiana for having her dream and the resolve to tell Mamo Luis about it. And Mamo Luis for the consultation that I needed to be healed by Mamo Shibulata. Mamo Luis was not aware of the

Parks connection and Mamo Shibulata, he had simply consulted that Mamo Shibulata would be the one to heal me. The healing was to authorize me to talk about those principles to get the project done. To defend territory from the Mamo Sushi. Was it just coincidence? Surely not. Neither had the mamos nor any of their apprentices had communicated with each other. This was evidence that we were working from the principles of life, that we had to get the project done to protect the territory. Mamo Sushu, parks, dreams, and consultations, all at the right time, all connected, and all embodied. When I mentioned this to my Kaggaba work team they thought it was a normal chain of events. Amongst the Kaggaba these kinds of coincidences happen frequently, especially when process is proceeding correctly. The everyday voice of the mother talking and producing results, and giving indications, to make everything click together.

### 7.5.3 The Mother of Water.

Back at home in Santa Marta, in the RKMA office, back talking with Parks, things started to move along. The Arhuaco and Kaggaba were all agreement. But there was one community who said they had changed their minds and it was a mistake to have been included in the proposal. They sent word that they needed to have a new “socialization meeting” to decide if they still wanted to form part of the proposal. If we didn’t do that meeting, the whole expansion project would fall apart for everyone involved, or at least they would have to be cut out. Everyone had to concur with the proposal. We would have to hold another meeting with them.

Time was running short, and new president of Colombia would be inaugurated in August of 2022, and we had not even started the consulta previa. It could take months. With a new government, the proposal could lose support and fall through. And it took several months for the meeting to finally get organized. Members of the CTC, the PNNSNSM Management Plan, and representatives from the Bogota Parks office all attended. The future of the Parks expansion was at stake, and everyone had worked hard on it for years. I called up Mamo Shibulata to see if he wanted to come, and did. It was the last community that needed to understand the consultations from the ezuamas, that the expansion would protect the territory of the Sierra Nevada based on the principles of Mamo Sushu.

Our group, made up of Mamo Shibulata, his apprentice, another Kaggaba from the territory office at the RKMA, and myself embarked on the journey. It was a long trip by Toyota 4x4, along the highway and then up some very slippery and muddy roads. Before we could enter the meeting, the resident mamos required us to do a special payment. They led us scrambling up a steep path to a set of rocks, a father sacred site, to do our “confession”, to give our thoughts about why we had come, and what food we consumed to get there. Now spiritually authorized to participate, we returned to the meeting.

In the community, a large audience had gathered and was attentively waiting for us. The local leaders opened the meeting. Most of the people denounced the proposal, saying their leaders had tricked them. “We don’t need Parks”, they lobbed at us, “we take care of nature with our ancestral work at the sacred sites. All the government wants is to be able to say that they are conserving nature then take all the recognition and the money for themselves, when in fact we are the ones doing the work. And then Parks won’t let us cut down even a tree nor let us grow any crops. What will we do, go hungry?”

The delegations from the indigenous organizations, and the Parks group, all explained that the Parks proposal was quite different from what they were thinking, otherwise we wouldn't be doing it at all. The basis of the whole relationship with parks was that the "ancestral" practices of indigenous people's land use is now the official method for conservation of territory and nature. Central to the expansion proposal was the new joint CTC – PNN management plan for the PNNSNSN, the indigenous leaders explained (CTC - PNN 2020). That Plan had already ratified the indigenous people's rights to manage the land according to their own "Usos y costumbres", and self-government, in recognition of the fact the land for the Park expansion is owned by the Resguardo as the collective property of the indigenous people. The Parks office would not be able to come in and tell the indigenous people how to use their land, but collaborate with the indigenous people to better manage and protect their territory. It is all legally guaranteed and would be ratified in the "Consulta Previa".

Mamo Shibulata got up and presented on why the parks expansion was not an imposition, but fully compatible with the Law of Origin. He reminded those present, that the mamos had spiritually consulted the parks expansion proposal in the Ezuama of Surivaka before starting. The consultation had been affirmative, and validated in additional consultations from all the other major Kaggaba ezuamas. The law of Mama S̄shi was imbricated in the whole proposal. He had personally participated in it all. Both parks and the indigenous peoples have the same objective, to take care of nature. How could we, as indigenous people say that we were not willing to take care of nature based on the ancestral organization of land? Saying we couldn't work with Parks was almost like saying we couldn't work from our own Law of Origin. They are tied together.

But all of this was to no avail. The complaints went on all day. Finally, even the leaders from the CTC were starting to lose faith. Things started to look dim. One of them asked me "It looks like we are going to have to cut out that whole sector from the proposal, do you think we can do that Peter?" "Yes of course we can, no problem", I responded. Mamo Shibulata but didn't say anything. He had already spoken. The consultations from the Kaggaba ezuamas and the Arhuaco Kadukwe had been clear.

Having finished the meeting in the evening, we were given a ceremonial house to stay in for the night. Properly perched in our hammocks around the fire, Mamo Shibulata, started to remind our little Kaggaba group. The Kaggaba mamos had been working on the Parks expansion project based on those same principles of Mamo S̄shi. The Parks expansion was imbricated in the Law of Origin. Parks couldn't exist without it. The consultation in Suribaka wasn't just any consultation. It was based on the essence of the principles of origin of territory, as the consultation of Mama S̄shi of 1890 that was handed down through the generations of Mamos. These were the same rings of territory, same principles of the Black Line. The parks project was just another instance of how the principles of origin of territory are imbricated with western forms of legal protection.

We talked for quite some time, until the first light of dawn cracked over the door of the Ceremonial house. Along with that ray of light, one of the members of the community came in to see how we had passed the night. Yes, we thanked him for a perfectly nice sleep and the very amenable house. I had been wondering what the traditional name of the community meant and asked him. He lightened up even more, and said it was the mountain of the spiritual origin of

water for the whole region. The mother emanates from a spring up in that mountain -he pointed in the direction- from where the brook flowing through the community is born.

We decided it would be a good idea to have our morning bath in the water of that creek. Mamo Shibulata looked over at his apprentice, still sleeping. I tapped his hammock. He woke up and jumped out like a cricket. Mamo Shibulata laughed, and we walked out to find the creek. It was about 20 minutes away, with bright clear water, flowing amongst the calm riverbank forest. It was a very refreshing bath. After having been cleansed with the mother of water, and having listened to Mamo Shibulata for the better part of the night, we felt good. But I still had a little doubt nagging about my brain from the day before. I asked Mamo Shibulata, "Do you think that the parks expansion will be good for them here in this community too?". He looked back at me incredulously. "Of course, it will". I felt a bit sheepish as to the obvious nature of the response.

Mamo Shibulata would not for one second let himself be lured into another mindset in which the Law of Origin and taking care of nature from territory was not the frame of reference. He was part of it, we owed our lives to it. That little thought that had crept in, had its origin from where this relationship to territory did not exist. I immediately pulled myself together. We had not come here for that. We had come here to share the message and the work of the consultations of the mamos, both the Kaggaba and the Arhuacos. to take care of territory and life from those same principles. It was much simpler, the trust and confidence that giving and receiving from the spirit of life would always lead us through. The Parks project was part of it, and any further problems down the road would be responded to and transformed through giving and receiving from those same principles. No worries.

We went back and the meeting started again. A much bigger group from the community had come, to listen, to decide on what was to be the future of their territories. There was a different air. The leaders had been in consultations. Apparently, they had been reflecting on the sort of things we had been talking about with Mamo Shibulata. One leader started the meeting with a surprising opening, "I want one of those Parks uniforms, I wish that they would give me one of those shirts with that bear on it. It is the uniform of conservation. We as indigenous people must never forget our mission to take care of nature from our own ancestral principles, those are our clothes, and we can share them with parks. We are doing that work together, in alliance". Other leaders from the community continued to share versions of that message. It would be useful protection in the future, based on our own indigenous principles of organization of territory.

The debates went on all morning. Neither myself nor anyone else from our group said anything. Yesterday we had closed out the meeting by saying whatever decisions they took would be perfectly fine. One leader made an especially impressive argument. If the Parks expansion eventually causes any major problems, we are capable enough of dealing with them the future. We are the leaders of our land and we have always found solutions, we have recovered our land, and transformed our relationships with the government based on respect for our own ancestral principles. By working from our own principles, we will always continue to be indigenous people, no matter how difficult it may seem. Work from the Law of Origin always shows us the path. This alliance with parks will let us move forward.

After lunch, and some more discussion, the community told us they would have an internal debate and reach their own decisions. We all left, in suspense. Would they approve the parks

expansion or opt out? After a couple of hours hanging around the sidelines, and Mamo Shibulata sharing amusing anecdotes with his apprentice, they called us back. One of the leaders who had been most vehemently opposed gave the verdict “Yes, we are in agreement with the Expansion. We can start the Consulta Previa”. He justified their position, “we hadn’t been properly socialized as to the principles of the parks expansion, why the mamos approved it, but now we understand”. They reaffirmed their commitment to taking care of their territory through ancestral practices, however challenging that may be. The community and leaders wrote up an “Act” to that effect, also saying to get on with the “Consulta Previa” as soon as we could. They all signed it.

The CIT, parks and Kaggaba delegations were quite relieved. The people in the meeting, also seemed enthusiastic about working with parks and being part of the management plan. Mamo Shibulata was a center of attention. But it was getting late, the road back was a long drive muddy drive of impressive holes and precipices. It also started to drizzle; a sign of a job well done. We were invited come back. All the visiting groups thanked the community and its authorities for their attention and hospitality. We did our final confession at a nearby sacred site, another group of rocks with a robust Kasougui tree in the middle, leaving all the words that we had heard and spoken, all our thoughts, food, air, and water that we had used during the meeting, giving that which was spent back to the mothers of origin. And then we climbed into our contracted Toyota cars with their big knobby tires for the ride back.

I expressed my appreciation to Mamo Shibulata for having come. Personally, I had needed to be reminded why we were there and what the message was that we were sharing. Mamo Shibulata had done that for everyone present, without having to talk that much. As a principal Kaggaba mamo, he embodied those same principles.

We reflected on the events of the meeting. The people in this community were not the only ones to have had doubts about the Parks proposal. While our teams from the OGT and CIT had been working on the expansion proposal over the last few years, other Arhuaco and Kaggaba communities had similar qualms. Eventually they all dispelled their own doubts with the same arguments: These the parks expansion and the law of origin, were based in the same principles, embedded in territory, and they could work together as one and the same. It was a principle of healing. Even through the Parks and the indigenous people were different, this kind of an alliance with Parks, was a way for the Kaggaba and Arhuaco to continually ratify their commitment of managing territory through their own ancestral practices. Public policy was born that would be managed through the same processes of reciprocity embedded in territory.

- Transforming the Mamo’s consultations into law.

After finishing that meeting, we had to start the work to get the Park declared as a norm. Parks told us everything was done; the proposal was 100% ready. It was September. We had to start the Consulta Previa process as soon as possible. But things just kept dragging on. Parks ran out of money, there were infinite details to be resolved. As Mamo Shibulata predicted, I had to use lots of words to represent ancestral territory. We started the Prior Consultation process with PNN months later in April of the 2022. The CTC had me coordinate that for them. All the indigenous people were in agreement that it was their own proposal, so we finished the Consulta previa really fast, by the end of May.

The promise of Parks was to declare the expansion by August, before the new government was elected, to avoid any possible future setbacks. The parks office kept telling us that for the right-wing Colombian president Ivan Duque, it was a national priority to expand the park and the government was committed to it. All they had to do was submit the proposal to the “Colombian Academy of Exact Physical and Natural Sciences” for approval, and then the Minister of the Environment would sign the Resolution. But nothing happened. Parks went silent. August unremarkably passed, and it was left for the newly elected left-wing government of Gustavo Petro to put into law.

Things then went even more slowly. The functionaries at the Ministry of the Environment kept on saying the Minister would sign it but she kept in putting it off. No one knew exactly what had happened nor why it was taking so long. We called meetings with the new director of PNN, met with the Ministry of the Environment and her people, re-revised the resolution. The Government had published the proposal and had it subject to public comment with no major opposition. Surely, we surmised, there were enemies of the expansion proposal, those who wanted development over conservation.

Mamo Shibulata would remind us, “When something useful to take care of the principles of life is being born, there is always a lot of opposition, the negative principles try to stop it. That’s the way it is, we need to be patient, and always keep ourselves centered from the principles of life and it will come out right”. Often, Mamo Shibulata would consult that we needed to go to one or another Kulaldu site do payments there. The final spiritual work indicated that we could no longer talk about the Parks project. It had to be paid silently to the principles of origin of the earth itself. Enough words had been spoken. It was time for territory itself to give a response, and that would be in the form of signing the Resolution. By January, we had done our last “payments” and Shibulata said, “We just have to wait”. And that was true.

In the meantime, after we finished the Consulta Previa in July 2022, the mamos from the four indigenous peoples consulted that the entire CTC had to go visit an Arhuaco Kadukuwe, called Kanzinkata, to affirm the work of the CTC. It was a long 7 hours walk up the Guatapuri River. There, the Mamos had the entire group of people from the Kaggaba, Wiwa, Kankuamo and Arhuaco do spiritual payments for the principles of origin of territory and all the thoughts and problems that we had to give them back, to heal those principles. We were about 100 people. It was two days concentrating under the hot sun, on top of a hilltop with no trees. It was for the Parks expansion, the Black line Decree, all the work the indigenous people were doing to protect their territory with the government.

The Mamos told everyone that this was the Kadukwe from where the Arhuaco and the other indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada had historically done spiritual work for the defense of the Black Line since before the conquest. They were clear that the specific sacred site we sitting was called Negrugaka, meant the outlet of Blackness, the origin of spirit “Se”. “Neguru” also means black people. Sitting under the hot sun, my mind went back to the encomenderos exhorting tribute out of the indigenous people, through their retinues of slaves, and criollo helpers all forced into the same game. I could imagine them coming to deal with the caciques hundreds of years ago, to get their gold. A few days later, on the walk back down I mentioned that to an Arhuaco friend, who had also come up. She said, “that’s probably right Peter”. She had been talking to one of the elder Arhuaco mamos from Kanzinkata. He told her that in

addition to being the source of the spirit, Negrugaka was where the Spanish or their retinues came up to negotiate with the Arhuaco, centuries ago. They received gold there and would go back down, not allowed any further into Arhuaco territory.

The Arhuaco were buying their life and land in exchange for tribute in gold. It was also spiritual tribute, paying back that reverse debt, linking the Spanish to the assemblage of debt of the Law of Origin, healing and transforming violence through reciprocity. The Arhuaco had defended their territory down to the Black Line in the times of the encomienda. They had been defending their territory from those same principles of reciprocity and exchange through ancestral territory, just like they are doing now with the CTC and spiritual payments. They were not paying back in gold, but work through the same principles of reciprocity, exchange and paying debt to defend and care for territory.

As we finished talking, two large condors glided down the mountain, circled around my friend and myself twice, flew back up and disappeared. Condors almost never go down to such low altitudes (we were at about 1000 masl), they are always up in the Paramo, above at least 3,000 meters. Most indigenous people from the Sierra know that Condors are the spiritual authorities of the paramo, and the upper lakes. We caught up to the Kaggaba mamos further along the path and I told them about the visit of the Condors. They were surprised. "Did that really happen?" asked one Mamo friend, "maybe you mistook the bird". I showed him the photograph from my phone. "Oh, ok, those are condors. They were bidding us farewell from Kanzinkata, they are telling us we are taking care of the territory from its principles, everything will come out well".

Finally, by February 2023, the Minister said that she wanted to come to Arhuaco territory and personally give the Parks Expansion Resolution to the Mamos, which she was going to sign soon. She visited the Arhuaco community of Ikarwa, near Valledupar where she and the rest of the government, and several NGOs that had helped to fund it all, expressed their commitment to continue working together with the indigenous authorities of the Sierra Nevada for conservation and protection of ancestral territory. The Mamos and ingenious authorities were quite satisfied as was everyone else. We had declared a large part of ancestral territory as protected, more firmly under the care of the Law of Origin and parks. At the next CTC meeting Arregoces reflected, "Getting the Parks expansion approved is one of our big achievements, it is something that we did, a result. We did it from our ancestral law. The Law of Origin is for everyone, for the care of water, forests, nature territory, people, and the care for the principles of life that we all share".

#### 7.5.4 Wrapping up: The Black Line Resolution as healing territory.

The parks expansion process was a lived experience on transposing the Mamo S̄shi, into an element of Colombian environmental legislation, as was the case for the creation of Parks in the 1960s, the first Resguardos, and the initial Black line Resolution. It was impossible to do the expansion project without recognizing the principles of territory themselves, and contributing to them, forming part of and giving back to them, based on embodied work with those same principles. The parks expansion was just one of the elements of environmental protection that the CTC, the four indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada, had brought forward during that time. A few years before they had also drawn up the 1500 Black Line Decree, the Sierra Nevada Park Management Plan, and a few others, all based on the same principles of "writing" the Mama



Sushi and sharing care. Those pieces of legislation, to a certain extent, now form part of the Mamo Sushi itself, enabling other people in the government and around the nation, to articulate with and participate in those same processes of reciprocity and care.

In this Chapter we have worked through forms of Kaggaba resistance that are based on territory. Territory forms part of assemblages of reciprocity at “spiritual” and material levels. It situates strategic deployments of reciprocity which have transformative effects both in localized speech frames and at the level of wide interaction frameworks contextualize in ancestral territory. Kaggaba forms of organization of ancestral territory, which they call the Mamo Sushi, can be seen as wide “interspectival” frames, that incorporate forms of spiritual reciprocity as law. “Writing” the book of Mama Sushi articulates indigenous forms of organizing territory with legal forms of demarcating and protecting territory.

Here we have focused on political strategies of resistance, centering around writing and representation of assemblages of reciprocity based on the spirit and territory to create political and institutional effects. The 1973 Black Line Resolution is a unique piece of indigenous policy and is the only officially accepted declaration of ancestral territory that exists in Colombia, that I know of. It enabled the Colombian government to recognize indigenous territory and rights at a very early time when almost no legislation protecting indigenous rights existed. The 1973 Resolution, and its later versions, are remarkable as they grew out of what we have called the “Law of Origin”, embodied in assemblages of reciprocity, and expanded speech frames or “interspectival” space and ancestral territory as one and the same.

The Kaggaba mamos have been using these principles since before the time of the arrival of the Spanish to organize their territory and people. After at least one hundred years of efforts, by the 1960s, they started to formalize and position these principles as a recognizable frame of reference for articulation with new legal figures available for territorial protection that would have political effects. By making it into a “book” the indigenous people were gradually able to insert the “Mamo Sushi”, into widening fields of discourse commensurate with indigenous rights.

Such transformations of the Law of Origin into written forms of law, like the Black Line were the result of direct personal involvement by people who were searching for ways to help the indigenous communities of the Sierra Nevada liberate themselves from these links to colonial debt and violence. The mamos would also say the emergence of the written document was the result of strategic spiritual “payments” around the Black Line that reconfigured the entire assemblage of the Law of Origin to finally produce the document, as part of that same assemblage, which in turn would expand those same links of reciprocity to create more opportunities for participation, all based on the principle of mutual care.

This was not only an effort to write and construct policy. The Black Line Resolution document, and the other institutional figures of protection, Reserves and Resguardos in this Chapter, were constructed from the Law of Origin. From that perspective the document is part of the same chain of reciprocity of caring for the principles of the Law of Origin. The Kaggaba and Arhuaco mamos who talk about the Mama Sushi in this chapter also show how spiritual payments to the Black line sites are forms of medicine or “healing” of the chains of debt that affect the law of origin, transforming histories of debt and violence. These are practices of resistance transferred down the generations.

Writing the Mama Sæshi was just one facet of the strategies that the Mamos had been using to articulate frames of reference of the “Law of Origin” with diverse forms of law and reciprocity for centuries if not millennia. These processes kept repeating themselves, in different contexts, different historical moments, but all based on the deployment of reciprocity situated in the discursive space of ancestral territory through chains of debt, and “healing”.

The Mamo Sæshi, the Black line, was fundamental to transforming violent practices in territory at interpersonal levels, all contextualized in these same frames of production of meaning. It was through the use of those principles that the Kaggaba mamos were able to expel the settlers and other people who were unable to recognize and resituate their own responsibilities in violence. The practice of healing at personal levels forms part of these wider processes where the person embodies and forms part of the relationship to territory and the spirit.



## **8.0 There is no divide: Conflict and the Law of Origin – Conclusions.**

### **8.1 Talking about the Colombian Armed conflict.**

This dissertation has worked through situated histories of violence, healing and reciprocity amongst the indigenous people of the SNSM. It really has not gone into what it initially was to be about: Forms of Kaggaba and Arhuaco resistance to and transformation of violence that arrived in their territory in the for the Colombian armed conflict after the 1990s. There really was no need to talk about that conflict. It was all part of the same history. Kaggaba processes of transformation of violence are related to work of healing or inverting debt relations and articulating them with assemblages of reciprocity based on the “Law of Origin”. These strategies can take different forms at one historical moment or another, and are based on the same principles.

However, to conclude this dissertation, I will talk about moments of indigenous resistance to these contemporary processes of armed violence. It is possible to talk about such processes in general, based on documents and citable sources meant to be shared. I will then link them into general conclusions on forms of healing and reciprocity.

The Kaggaba and the Arhuaco do not often talk about those difficult moments of the Colombian armed conflict in words unless it is for healing. As Michael Taussig reflects “the problem of writing effectively against terror (Taussig 1987, 3)”, is that words can inadvertently have the effect of reproducing themselves, and those same practices of terror. How do we write against terror without bringing it back to life. How close can we get to that origin to transform it without actually reproducing it? A Kaggaba strategy is not to just talk, but to use words for healing, to repay the debts generated by violence, by “reverse debt” relations. From this point of view, words embody thought and reality. In such assemblages of reciprocity, talk is strategic.

- Talking Backwards, Putting intentionality to rest.

“Reverse talk”, is something that occasionally comes up conversation in our Kaggaba work group. Arregoces says that many mamos talk backwards. They might say things like, “it is not time for lunch, when in fact it is. One day in the office. He asked me, “you don’t want to eat lunch, do you?” I responded, “Well really I don’t”. A few minutes later, he came back saying my lunch had arrived. I replicated, “good thing I didn’t say I wanted any”. Then he started to reflect on the difference between talking in “Kogian” and talking in “Kaggaba”. “Talking in Kogian”, Arregoces observed, “is when you say what you are going to do, or what you want to have happen, with all the intention. But be careful, because it could go backwards. it is what will not happen. Because you are bringing with it all your hidden negative intentions, but it can end up being what we are not going to do”.

Everyone in the room looked about, a bit quizzical. Arregoces went on. “We can’t be talking in Kogian all the time, because we bring that negative along with our intentions. We should talk backwards, in Kaggaba, to the principles. In the past we Kaggaba always talked in Kaggaba”. We knew the precise correct words to pay at each sacred site. One of my coworkers asked “Oh so before you spoke Kogian, Kaggaba and Teyuan?” Arregoces responded falteringly “well, yes...”, and explained, “What I really mean is that you always should have your good intentions before

you and right next to them you bring along your difficulties, hidden intentions that go with it. We always should be aware of that, to put them together so that things come out right”.

Then he left, also leaving a few people bewildered. “What did he mean. How am I supposed to talk now?”, and it was somewhat confusing. He was not saying that Kogian and Kaggaba are structurally different languages, but that they are words used with different intent, words that are linked to assemblages of reciprocity with different origins, which is very fine difference to recognize and apply. Kogian is using words to say what I want to have happen but in fact I am unwittingly bringing to the forefront fears or doubts that they will not work. Talking in Kaggaba is being aware of that relationship within myself, and using words to pay for those reverse debts from the frames of the Law of Origin, speaking backwards to pay for the empty husk of what should not have happened, reminiscent of Kalashe and the dancing puppet.

In the Book Shikwakala, the Kaggaba Mamo include the descriptions of the principle “negative and positive fathers and mothers” or spiritual principles that make up the Law of Origin. That involves something similar to “reverse talk”. For instance, “we have Fathers and Mothers of order and harmony (Jate and Jaba) and also those Fathers and Mothers who are contradictory or opponents (Due and Nu). But they are all sons and daughters of the same Mother *Jaba Sénenuglan*...That is why the world is always changing. There is a continuous movement between order and disorder, construction and destruction, healing and damage, peace and chaos. .... The Mama, the Saka and the entire Kogui community, we understand our territory and its use through those figures (2018, 44)”. It is especially the “contrary” or negative and violent fathers and mothers who embody the “norms and procedures to heal, remove and pay for the effects of that contradictory or oppositional thought (2018, 69)”.

In that part of the book Mamo Shibulata gives some reflections. He reminds the readers that the *Kogui* is the jaguar who pretends to be working from the law, but is in fact deceiving himself and the people around him by covering up his “contrarian” intentions. “The negative things: rage, vomiting, dizziness, all appear in humanity, that is why today when a person is filled with rage, anger, or intolerance, they lose their good spirit and are filled with the spirit of *Nuanase*<sup>322</sup>. He becomes like a tiger that attacks anyone and hurts them”. The mothers and fathers in ancestral territory, the Mama S̄shi, especially the negative principles, are “tools to prevent and heal damage to nature and free ourselves from all the negativities that control us (2018, 71)”. Curing is a permanent process that enables the person to recognize, to work out and give back those problems to those same principles, so not to embody them but the “positive” ones, to link to assemblage of reciprocity that are rooted in exchanges with a positive origin but still recognize and transform violence.

Shibulata concludes, “Society has been very affected because it has been lied to a lot and does not know from what spirit it is being governed. So, unknowingly, it is on the path to *Nuanase*. This is what many authorities in this country wear a double-sided coat, some tell you the truth and many others tell lies. You should always wear only one set of clothes, clothes that do not let themselves get turned inside out. Today there are people who do a lot of harm, who kill children,

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<sup>322</sup> Nuanase is main father of all negative thought (2018, 70), however in that book the mamos are also clear that they are not really talking about negative and positive binaries but relationships of organizing and disorganizing, or directing thought.

women, armed groups, and corrupt governments. They are of the spirit *Nuanase*. They say they are going to defend you from others, that they are protecting you, helping you, but they are the ones who are causing damage, extorting, robbing, and killing their own people. That is a legacy left by *Nuanase* and that is why it is difficult for peace (2018, 71)".

Recognition of "negative" principles, is part of healing, as mamo Shibulata suggests, by not justifying or camouflaging violence under the guise for some imagined better end. Hanna Arendt travels over similar territory affirming that "collective violence" cannot be a justification for trying to create a just society as many armed groups pretend. Violence as a social project only misleads "many good people into the hope that a new community together with a 'new man' will come out of it (Arendt 1970, 69)". Power and law are "indeed the essence of all government (Arendt 1970: 51)", inasmuch as they are based on the Roman concept of *civitas* that ends the rule of "man over man", in favor of laws to which citizens have willingly consented. In a similar vein, the Kaggaba remind that being constantly aware of these contradictions between violence and life, inherent in the relationships of everyday life, and of "the self" projected on "the other", is key to transforming and healing.

This section includes about some indigenous practices of resistance to the violence from the times of the "Colombian armed conflict". I am going to try to talk backwards, to not say what shouldn't have happened. A few indigenous people have related to me some of these moments, but this Chapter only included general processes from citable documents and a couple of situations that stand out and as events around healing.

#### 8.1.1 Kuntinurwa - The Mountain of the father of trees heals the bullet holes.

The reader may remember, when I first came to the OGT Danilo and Arregoces told me that I could not just write my dissertation about something useful to me, but also it had to be useful. I should collaborate with what they were working on, to help repairing their communities from the effects of years of Colombian armed conflict. While perhaps Kaggaba and the Arhuaco had not suffered as many deaths from the conflict as other people in Colombia, and refused to participate, they were subject to its effects.

So, I was on the lookout for possibilities to submit grant proposals around 2006. At that moment, the OGT had a proposal to make a ring of frontier towns around the lower areas of the Sierra. These frontier towns would help to recover indigenous territory and community damaged by the armed conflict. I wrote it up and presented it to a European Union call for projects on resilience to violence and recovery from armed conflict. They approved it. Apparently since I had written the project, I was also responsible for it. The Kaggaba Governor, put me in charge of the project for the OGT with Rogelio Mejia, the delegated Arhuaco governor of the CIT for the RKMA, who had been promoting the whole idea. At that time the OGT was comprised of the three indigenous peoples, the Wiwa, Arhuaco and Kaggaba, in the Resguardo Kogui Malayo Arhuaco.

The idea for frontier towns had started in 2004 when guerillas killed an Arhuaco mamo "Celestino Suarez" in the Valley of the Rio Fundación. Somewhat before then the Arhuacos had already stated to mobilize against violence in their territory. That assassination ticked off massive protests from the Arhuaco organizations pressuring the United Nations, Colombian human rights

organizations, and the government to do something<sup>323</sup>. The government agreed to set up a program that would build a frontier town called Gunmaku for the Arhuacos lower down the mountain. Both the guerrillas and the paramilitaries confronted with the recognition of their own violence, started to lose position. The project we presented with the OGT was to build more of those ancestral frontier towns as a strategy for peace.

Before that European Union project started, the Arhuacos had been holding massive preparatory meetings on the frontier town initiative as a method to end the armed conflict. Each meet brought together hundreds of Arhuaco from all over their territory. A precept of the Law of Origin is not to participate in or ally with forms of violence so as not to give back to them. The Arhuaco, and all four indigenous peoples of the Sierra were in an internal debate about the frontier towns, and the relationship of the indigenous people in the SNSM to curing violence. The frontier town process was going to involve working with the Colombian State, which at the time was under President Alvaro Uribe's right-wing government.

One group of indigenous authorities argued that we could not be allies with anyone related to armed conflict, even if it was the government. It was better to find another way to resist armed violence. The indigenous authorities in favor, said that even though Uribe perhaps was implicitly involved with the conflict he was still the President of Colombia. We would be dealing with the Colombian state, legitimized as the closest thing to the law, and we had to work with that.

I went to one those meetings with the Arhuaco mamos who had consulted that the work needed to be done in alliance with the State, and the Law of Origin. They were trying to push forward that form of healing violence and their consultations had indicated that this was the route. It was in 2006. There was a sense of urgency because indigenous territory was still under threat from armed conflict, the paramilitaries, the guerrilla, and the government armed forces themselves. The Mamos had consulted the "spiritual payments" that the communities had to massively do as a gift to territory.

Every day of the meeting, the traditional work under the direction of the mamos, at the selected sacred site, would start in the morning and go well into the night. The Arhuaco would mold cotton and other materials into the form of little balls, coins and other things and deposit into them specific classes of thought, as food to those sacred sites. All the families worked on that, mothers, fathers, and children for days. Everyone had to concentrate on the same things, give the same thought to the mothers and fathers so that they would give back the right response, the governments collaboration to heal, to end the armed conflict.

And in fact, it did work. The indigenous people were able to get support from State programs that promoted respect for of the indigenous people and their right to self-government. Through the program "Acción Social" the government in coordination with the indigenous people set up about 8 frontier towns, with schools and health posts built by external contractors, alongside land purchases (DNP 2012)<sup>324</sup>. Like the National Parks expansion, the indigenous people located

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<sup>323</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/colombia-condena-por-asesinato-de-mamo-arhuaco>

<sup>324</sup> The Colombian government of Alvaro Uribe also saw this alliance as a way to stabilize war torn zones through supporting indigenous communities. This could be seen as indigenous authority being coopted within State sponsored neoliberal practices of governmentality, which in effect many indigenous leaders were worried about. The debate went much deeper. It was about

the frontier towns along the rings around ancestral territory, each town associated with sacred sites their mamos had consulted. The work was based on healing, around the principles of reciprocity with life. The 'armed actors' and drug producers gradually left the areas.

The OGT positioned the European Union frontier town project, which was much smaller, as independent of the Government effort, also based in the principles of Mama Sushi and healing, but directly implemented by the indigenous communities. It centered around building three "frontier" towns, one for each indigenous people, in the places selected by their Mamos as the hardest hit by the armed conflict, left barren by years of armed violence. By then the paramilitaries had apparently "demobilized", and the guerrilla had mostly disappeared from the scene. But fear and desolation were still there.

The Arhuaco mamos consulted that they would locate their Frontier Town along the Ariguani river, next to a mountain called "Kuntinurwa", the house of the father of forests. Coincidentally, Kuntinurwa was downriver from the community of Serankua, where the Arhuaco Mamos had sought refuge from the Capuchinos in Nabusimake some 100 years ago and that same Arhuaco community was in charge.

In preparation for the project, the OGT decided to visit the future site of Kuntinurwa in 2007. An Arhuaco leader, Laredo with his group would come walking down the mountain from Serankua to meet us at the site of the planned town. The OGT commission set out from Santa Marta with the Arhuaco leader, Rogelio and a small group of Arhuaco mamos. Franki, the Arhuaco's trusty driver during decades was at the wheel of the Toyota. No one from the OGT had been up there in years. It was off limits due the harshness of violence, crossfire between the paramilitaries, the guerrilla, and the government. We left the main highway at the exit to a town called Lomo del Balsamo, and tried to find our way through twisty dirt roads, and finally coming across a military checkpoint, where the soldiers very suspiciously almost didn't let us through.

We were all rather nervous in the car, but no one said it. The mamos had consulted that we would get there and back. The road headed up a bit and we arrived in the peasant village of Bellavista, "Beautiful View". It was almost the size of a town, with at least two paved streets. But there was not one person in Buenavista. It was like Juan Rulfo's Pedro Paramo, the ghost town of Comala (1981). The houses, and what were once salons and shops, were full of bullet holes, many of their walls blasted down, totally stripped of their doors, windows, and roofs. I asked our group what had happened. No one was quite sure, but that the guerrillas and paramilitaries had pushed through in waves, looking for sympathizers of the other until nothing was left. I wondered how something like this could have happened so close. Nothing ever got into the news about that. I started to remember many houses along the main highway from Santa Marta to Valledupar with that same look. I had thought they were just old and abandoned, but that probably was not the case. I realized the extent of what had happened in many parts of the peasant occupied Sierra Nevada, and Colombia for that matter, hidden behind a muted silence.

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adopting an appropriate form of articulation in the assemblage of reciprocity, the Law of Origin, that would respond with through strengthening the Law of Origin, and not perpetuating violence.

The only thing left intact in Bellavista was a prominent statue of a Virgin perched on a high pedestal, still well painted and unharmed, watching over the blown out remains and giving her blessing. I wanted a photograph of that, but no one was disposed to get out of the car. We wanted to get out of there as fast as possible. Who knows what might have been watching us. The road started to go up the mountain. The settler farms repeated the same story, their houses empty and ripped apart with bullet holes pockmarking the walls. Only one farm still had people, the "XXXX" family. They sat on their front porch looking at and away from us as we passed. From there on, no car had used the road for a long time. The grass had grown so high, whipping up above the windshield, that it was hard to see. Even if we had wanted to, there was no turning back. The mission the Mamos consulted was to recover that territory, to bring it back to life.

About two hours further up, we crossed over a small river, and next to it were a couple of abandoned burnt out Toyotas, tossed to the side of the road like toys. I asked, but no one knew how they got there. Finally, we arrived at the site where the new Arhuaco town was to be built. Laredo had come down from the town of El Cincuenta below Serankua and was waiting for us as promised with a small group of Arhuacos. Quite relieved, we greeted each other.

He showed us around the site that the Arhuaco were hoping to buy for the town. Once, it had a school, several houses, and a community building, now with nothing left, but their bullet ridden shells. Laredo remorsefully observed that this was a good community, with a lot of people, settlers on their farms, but the paramilitaries and guerrillas pushed everyone out. It was the last stop along the "ruta de la línea", the route that the collective Toyotas would traverse to bring settlers and their produce up and down the mountain. "Over there", he pointed at an overlooking mountain, "was the paramilitary base". They controlled everything that happened here and kept watch with their radios. It was also the mountain of Kuntinurwa, a manifestation of the Law of Origin, people, place and spirit, now damaged by the armed conflict.

I asked him about the burnt-out cars. "Oh, those were people that the Guerrillas kidnapped from the main highway in the 'pescas milagrosas'". Those were random roadblocks where the guerillas would stop cars and kidnap just anyone who looked like they might have access to a little money, or just a little of anything. They pretty much had the whole country paralyzed. Laredo continued, "The guerillas would have them drive up here in their own cars. They would take them out, burn the cars, and make them walk. We saw many of those kidnap victims tied up behind the guerrillas up in the Sierra, it was a shame, but there was nothing we could do". That made me just a notch more nervous. In the not so faraway past, almost everyone prudently tried to avoid those roadblocks. The Arhuacos eyed me, and laughed it off. We would all be OK. But the "armed actors" had not been on particularly good terms with the Arhuacos either, sometimes recruiting their youth, intimidating their leaders and some assassinations had taken place.

It was a very somber arrival, and a hopeful one. The younger Arhuaco showed us the yucca that they had started planting to have something to eat for when the community would come down and build the houses. They brought us around to where they were going to set up the Kankurwa and the houses for the indigenous community, and hoped to get the school going again one day. We went to the Kadukwe, the sacred site for consulting. The mamos who had come down explained a bit which Laredo translated. This is the site of the father of trees, and water. The mamos consulted that these were the sites from where we will start to repair the damage that has been done, we have to repair the water, the animals, the forests, the people, the spirit. That



is what we are doing here, that is our mission, to bring this back to life. The frontier town project was based on the same principles of curing violence from Ancestral territory, and Law of Origin, like the first Resguardos, Parks, the violence of the settlers and police inspectors, all the way back to the Spanish.

During the next two days the Arhuaco talked about how they were going to set up the town and build the houses. We were still getting the project ready. The Arhuaco had built just one house, the meeting house, in palm and mud, where we stayed. One evening, I went outside to get a rest from the meeting and the hours of sitting on the hard stools. While looking up at the stars, I heard what sounded like a car driving along a road high up in the mountains. "How strange" I thought, "There are no cars up there, no people really, and all the roads are out". And I listened again, more carefully. It definitely was not the echo of the river, nor the wind, it was the sound of a car, with its motor grinding away far off up the mountain. Laredo came out for a rest too, and I asked him, "I thought you said there were no roads up there", he responded, "Well, there aren't". "So, what's that sound?". Laredo looked at me for a second, "Sometimes we hear that too, it's the sound of the spirit of drivers who were assassinated while doing their route". And he told me happened to the driver of the last community Toyota, how the armed groups had killed him, and how they did similar things to many others. "I knew him, I rode in his car. That's his spirit still running over the mountain, that's what the Mamos have told us. We need to do a lot of work to set this straight again. The mamos need to do *eisa*, -mortuary work-, to heal all that violence to people, to the land, to bring their spirit' home. It is going to take a long time.

We didn't stay much longer. Everyone was apprehensive. There was a lot of uncertainty in the air. Even the Arhuacos from El Cincuenta and Serankua, well cured from having to live alongside the conflict wanted to get home. The time indicated by the consultation of the Mamos had run out. In the morning, we all set off. Laredo and his group headed on foot for the 8 hours walk back up the mountain. Rogelio and our group got in our car to go back to Santa Marta. A few hours later, on the way through Buenavista. I said that I needed to pee, and everyone else did too. We stopped the car and got out. I asked the mamos if we could take a photograph of them walking under the statue of the Virgin. I said it was a historical moment of the indigenous people coming to recover life from the shell of territory burnt out from violence, with only the Virgin Mary left to look on. They agreed. But unfortunately, I can't find that photograph, so it only rests in the imagination.

I asked Rogelio again, and this time he responded, "the origin of this violence is the result of the damage of centuries of abuse and misuse of the principles of life, to the sacred sites and to the Law of Origin. The violence here was the response to itself. Now we as the indigenous people are the only people left who can try to recover it". And yes, the indigenous people were the only ones who were still left standing after those waves of violence started to end in the 2005.

I didn't get back to Kuntinurwa that often. Rogelio and the Arhuacos were very well organized, and I had to concentrate more on the Wiwa and Kaggaba towns. The European Union project took another three years to finish. The Arhuaco, Wiwa and Kaggaba little by little resettled the land, and populated their new communities. Human life came back, and many peasants then could return to their farms too, without the armed conflict that came with it.

### 8.1.2 Traces of Armed conflict and healing in Kaggaba territory.

With attention to the privacy of people's personal memories of the armed conflict, this section cites the public studies that the Kaggaba did on how they survived the armed conflict, how it affected them and how they repair its effects. Around the year 2004 representatives of the indigenous peoples in Colombia sued the Government for having neglected to appropriately protect them from the effects of armed violence that had started after 1991. They argued that armed violence generated "differential" and more severe damages on indigenous peoples than on the Colombian population in general. The Constitutional Court agreed, and in 2009 emitted a sentence, called the "Auto 004" ordering the Colombian state to compensate those indigenous peoples most affected by the armed conflict (Corte Constitucional de Colombia 2009). The four indigenous peoples of the Sierra were included in that list.

The Court then mandated the indigenous peoples do several studies. One was the Programa de Garantías (CIT 2011), and another called the "Plan Salvaguarda" on how the Kaggaba and the other 3 Peoples of the SNSM had been affected by the armed conflict and the measures to be taken to "repair" the damage. It was several years after the "armed conflict" had started to wind down, and the Kaggaba governor Santos was having his doubts. He mused with me one day in his office, "We really can't have these representatives from the Government going up to our communities and asking us how violence affected our people, our families. They promise they will compensate the orphans of Kaggaba leaders, and our land and people. It's not fair to have to talk about it, and then nothing results from it. The spiritual healing of the Law of Origin is what really counts, not the money". Just like Santos predicted, to this day, the State has still not compensated the Kaggaba for the damage done by the armed conflict.

But at least they did the studies. For their "Plan Salvaguarda", the OGT organized community meetings amongst the Kaggaba mamos from each of the main ezuamas, along with their leaders and communities. I was one of the OGT "anthropologists". I had to help with the logistics of the meetings and write down and then organize what the Kaggaba had said.

All the meetings followed basically the same pattern. The focus was on healing. The community was to talk about how they were affected by armed conflict and how those affectations could be "repaired". The Mamos consulted in zhatukuwa what they would say, words that could heal what had been affected. To talk about healing conflict, they had to talk of the Law of Origin. They didn't really talk so much about the armed conflict. The mamos would give very detailed explanations of how their ezuamas are organized from the Law of Origin. How all the sacred sites, jabas and jates are connected to nature and people through the same spirit. Then they would talk about the specific ways the work of the mamos at the ezuamas would heal the Law of Origin in terms of the configuration of the territories they are responsible for taking care of.

At the end of each meeting the community and some mamos briefly mentioned some of the types of problems the armed conflict had over them. The armed groups would seize food from Kaggaba families, not let people go up and down the Sierra, interfere in OGT and other community internal governance meetings and consultations, not let the mamos do their spiritual work, abduct community members and leaders, and upon occasion kill people suspected of

collaborating with the other side. But the communities at those meetings saw that as only one moment in a long history of violence against them and their territories.

Much more than these physical affects, what concerned the Kaggaba community and the Mamos, was how the armed conflict altered the Law of Origin itself, at the level of territory, people, and nature, and how that interfered with the Mamos permanent work of healing. The bombing and shooting often destroyed the sacred sites themselves. All the negative thoughts, words and actions fed the Law of Origin with the wrong gifts, altered it and it would start to give the wrong responses, to everything and everyone involved. The principles of life were affected.

From the Ezuama of Suribaka, the mamos in their meeting echoed that shared concept. “Many sacred sites were contaminated by the armed conflict, either through bloodshed, bombings and contamination of sacred mountains and lakes, which caused a lot of damage to the Mother and a lot of pain among the Mamos and the Kaggaba population in general. The Mamos were affected on an emotional and psychological level. The pain and sadness overwhelmed them and 8 Mamos died because of that, their pain related to a feeling of enormous frustration caused by the contamination of the Mother earth (RKMA 2016b, 18)”. Violence affects relationships with the Law of Origin, people, territory, and spirit, past and present.

Mamo Merejildo from Makutama talked more about the effects of the recent armed conflict. “All those affectations, those noises, that energy affects the sacred spaces. They are the ears of the Mothers, of animals and forests. They had been damaged. Everything must be healed and repaired spiritually, because it affects our *Shibulama* - law. Everything that has been affected, the mothers, the stones, and sacred objects, must be returned spiritually, to regain balance. If they are not healed, the negative begins to appear in nature in the form of droughts, landslides, flooding, negative thunder, and changes that affect everything (RKMA 2016a, 9)”.

The armed conflict was part of a long history of harm done to the Law of Origin. The key was to be able to cure that damage done from the Law of Origin itself. Mamo Merejildo reflected, “That damage ... cannot be compensated or paid for with money. For us, the only way to work on this is to heal spiritually. .... In our culture, everything depends on everything: nature on us and we on nature. If we do not do the procedure for healing, then authority, the process of formation of the self, health, crops, our self-government, and territory all get weakened (RKMA 2017, 15).

Mamo Luntana elaborated on relationships between curing and violence. “As part of our being Kaggaba, we pay tribute (Shala). Bad thoughts or vice versa in the spiritual world become real, that is why we pay spiritual debts for nature, that is how we live in balance with all beings. if someone commits an infraction they must repair it spiritually, pay the spiritual debt (Shala)... Sacred sites have their ways of being spoken to: with musical instruments, dances, songs and spiritual materials. That is how we heal the body...and that which can be seen, felt and imagined (RKMA 2016b, 4-5)”.

When I had gone up to Pueblo Viejo in 2006, for the first meeting that the OGT had been able to hold with its mamos and communities after years of armed violence<sup>325</sup>, the Kaggaba had asked the United Nations to come along, and do a report on the effects of the armed conflict. They

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<sup>325</sup>See page 8 of this dissertation.

interviewed Mamos and leaders in Pueblo Viejo. One interview that impressed was with Mamo Jacinto Zarabata. Mamo Jacinto passed away in 2020 and over the years we had made pretty good friends, and so I borrow some of his words to sum up the effects of armed conflict on the Kaggaba and its relationship with healing.

“The impact is not only on us humans but on all of nature. ... When we lose a person [by murder] everything loses strength, ... it is as if the mother loses a child. Because we are the ones who spiritually pay to maintain the water, the air, we give food to the Mother. So, when someone dies suddenly, the hills, the mountains, the lagoons, the rivers are left without food, and they don't know what happened. .... So, you need to heal fire, to heal water, everything and all the work that that person did. The Mother herself, Nature, will charge the debt to those people who did the killing, that is why we do nothing against those who did the killing (ACNUR 2006, 27)”.

The Mamos who just spoke here summarize the Kaggaba's principal practices through which they have resisted involvement in violence, developed over this entire dissertation. These practices are based on “healing”, and reciprocity with the law of Origin, as the same assemblage of Mamo Sushi: sacred sites, the mountains rivers and water, what people think, hear, and feel, all held together by the same spirit of care. Those practices of reciprocity would be the “ancestral norms”, leading back to the moment of origin, of birth constantly recreated in the present through the self. “The mother”, in that wide assemblage, responds to what she receives. The Mamos, or any person doing that work of healing, or reciprocity with the spirit, does not take action against the person who did the damage, but “la misma madre, la naturaleza”, responds by healing the person, or sometimes “charging” the debt to those who did the damage, who do not recognize what they are doing and change it.

The armed conflict” did fade away from the Sierra Nevada and from much of Colombia after 2006. The Colombian President of that time, Alvaro Uribe reached an agreement to demobilize the paramilitaries. The guerrillas started to disappear. As Nordstrom argues. terror and particularly the excess of terror simultaneously generates resistance to violence of any sort (1997, 171), it brings the focus on life to bear. The war in Colombia seemed to have burned itself out. The Sierra Nevada, once hotly contested amongst those armed groups was calm. It was now possible to walk through the ezuamas, the paramos, the high lakes without fear.

In the Sierra Nevada, it was not only that the armed conflict extinguished itself. The armed conflict never fully prospered in Kaggaba nor Arhuaco territory as it did in other regions of Colombia. Yes, their communities were heavily affected. However, the number of “violent acts” against at least Kaggaba and the Arhuaco were significantly lower (CNMH-ONIC 2019, 336). The mamos who just spoke about the times of the armed conflict keep on repeating that they avoid being drawn into the false logics of reverse debt as violence. To the contrary, they maintain a posture from where they can recognize and heal those debts. It is difficult for violence to get a foothold or expand in those assemblages of reciprocity based on the Law of Origin.

## **8.2 Kaggaba Histories of Healing: Five Centuries of transformation and permanence.**

With those reflections on healing from the “mother” we have rounded out our history of a Kaggaba history of resistance to violence, how the Kaggaba and other indigenous peoples of the Sierra have maintained their focus in the “Law of Origin” over at least the last 500 years. It is a linear history, and a collage of times going back to the “principles” of time, as the Kaggaba say the beginning of time. Until very recently, the Kaggaba, Arhuaco, the Wiwa and Kankuamo, did not have writing to help them remind themselves of the past. As laws of reciprocity tied to the principles of origin, the indigenous people do not have to always remember and forget and remember again, as seems to frequently happen over generations of repeating waves of violence in Colombia and elsewhere. The Law of Origin is a permanent process of healing from the origin, brought to the present. What was the past is the present, a motion of rebirth and creation. The Law of Origin arises from that origin at this very moment.

In the sense of a succession of linear time this dissertation presents histories of Kaggaba relationships with “occidental society” since the arrival of the Spaniards, up to recent times. The Kaggaba as much as possible maintain their relationships to territory and the spirit through practices of reciprocity the move along links of “debt” with the principles of life embedded in territory, people, and nature. They have used these same deployments of reciprocity to relate with territory since before the Spanish conquest, as embodied in territory, “Tayrona” objects and in knowledge of care for the spirit. For the Kaggaba mamos, resistance to the Spanish Conquest, to catholic missionaries, the violence in the settler system and the police inspector, the recent armed violence, is basically all the same, as is the violence itself.

The history starts with moments of inscription of violence during the Spanish “conquest” that subject the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada to relationships of domination through of debt and violence. What we have called in this dissertation, “reverse debt,” appropriates forms of production of wealth based on reciprocity with nature, mediated through the Law of Origin. Different manifestations of these assemblages of debt and violence are reproduced over the colonial period, during the “encomienda”, and later under the Catholic church. These links of debt, of violence misrecognized as “merit”. move though grounded relationships of caciques, mestizos, slaves, encomenderos all the way to the King and Queen of Spain.

The Kaggaba transform those “reverse” debt relations by articulating them with assemblages of reciprocity based on Law of Origin, paying the “spiritual debt” for what was taken. Reciprocity inextricably links the indigenous people together with the Spanish, in relationships of transformation. We see traces of these relationships through reciprocity and reverse debt in the histories of the first encomiendas, where which the Kaggaba and other indigenous people exchange gold and tribute for their right to territory and life. Later the Kaggaba develop other forms of articulation of reverse debt, like the Kukutabe gold piece, the Statue of San Pedro, and the Catholic church towns. They transform and manage these debts as assemblages of reciprocity, silently linked to the Law of Origin.

Through these strategies, the Kaggaba and the other indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada were able to position themselves within the colonial system, and to gain access to land and other legal rights available for indigenous peoples under colonial law. It was more than that, the Kaggaba would transform their position relative to those chains of debt and domination by giving

back to those same assemblages of debt, at the level of the spirit though an awareness of a much wider context of reciprocity. Kaggaba mamos remember histories from those times. They are histories of recognition of participation in assemblages of debt and violence, of non-Kaggaba figures like Kamejuna or the Nañiba lineages and how they involved themselves, and lost themselves in those forms of violence, unable to recognize their own participation. And likewise, how the Kaggaba linked those forms of debt to the Law of Origin through “healing”, as articulation with those forms of reverse reciprocity to be able to transform them as a recombination of violence and healing.

Those assemblages of reverse debt and violence against the Kaggaba returned with a vengeance after the Wars of Independence. The new nation of Colombia, enacted policies that denied the indigenous peoples their rights as citizens dissolved their lands, and placed them under forms of domination with Capuchino missions and police inspectors to permanently convert them into citizens who are never yet citizens.

By the 1870s, formal legal regimes based on what we call “the law of the Police Inspector”, combined with the settlement of colonists in indigenous territory, who extracted wealth from the Kaggaba as fines, underhanded debt schemes and the appropriation of crops, land and livestock, cemented together with violence and abuse. These were assemblages of violence and debt inherited from colonial times, employed for personal benefit, but dressed up as law, camouflaging their real intention of silent subjection of a “savage” other, as a mirror into the self in a “Heart of Darkness”. During those times, practically up to the 1980s, the Kaggaba continued their attempts to enmesh those debts within the Law of Origin to transform those relationships of violence and debt, though their time-tested forms of articulation through reciprocity, including the Catholic church towns, and the statue of San Pedro, linked to Kaggaba ezuamas, territory and the Law of Origin.

By the 1960s, the “Police inspector” system of extracting wealth from the Kaggaba had reached unbearable levels. Processes of eliminating the “savage other” often associated modern projects, had subject the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada to decades of torture, violence and exclusion. The violence of “Police Inspector” and setter system, after the 1920s, was particularly extreme, practically a form of genocide, similar in many respects to the Jewish Holocaust. These invisible genocides were buried under misrecognition, and generally ignored during most of that century. Even today most people are unaware of the grave situations that the indigenous people of the Sierra confronted during those times, and that these forms of violence against indigenous peoples were common all around Colombia and the Americas (CNMH-ONIC 2019).

Finally, for the Kaggaba and Arhuaco this kind of excessive violence could no longer be articulated with assemblages of reciprocity based on the Law of Origin. They were totally incompatible with the Law of Origin, as forms of extreme violence hidden under the guise of legality. It was a “standoff” between assemblages of reciprocity based on of violence and debt, and those related to healing.

Misrecognition and recognition are intertwined in healing and violence. As Phillipe Bourgois reflects, “perpetrators, bystanders, and even victims need to be made to misrecognize genocide in order for it to occur efficiently on a large scale (2005, 118)”, as is the case for most forms of violence. Violence “connects the intimate to the macro-structural” sublimated and legitimized

as a normalized and even necessary natural order, even within the self. Violence is constituted through misrecognition. Recognition is the first step towards healing, and that is precisely what the Kaggaba Law of Origin does. In that sense, we can say that the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada have lived under the “State of Exception” from the absence of the legal protection of the State. But they have always been always covered by their own “Law of Origin”, that has enabled them and any other willing participants, to recognize these situations and find a way out along a delicate divide of violence and curing. These are non-violent practices, that at once re-articulate violence through links of reciprocity,

By the 1960s, a redeployment of strategies of articulation was required. Many Mamos had consulted that direct recognition of the Law of Origin, in the form of ancestral organization of territory, called the “Black Line” or “Mama S̄shi” was the path that would lead the indigenous people of the Sierra out of those apparently insurmountable situations of violence of the 1960s. The “Mama S̄shi” refers to the ancestral forms of organization of territory and reciprocity with people, nature and spirit that the mamos have maintained during generations and before the arrival of the Spanish to the Sierra Nevada. All through the 1900s, and especially after the 1960s and the Kaggaba and Arhuaco, alongside the Wiwa and Kankuamo, attempted to position the Law of Origin as a form of law before the Colombian State to facilitate its articulation with legitimate forms of legal protection of indigenous territory and peoples. Incipient “indigenista” movements emerging in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Colombia and around Latin America, provided opportunities for articulation of institutional norms favorable to the indigenous people, with the Law of Origin.

One strategy of articulating the Law of Origin with “western law” was what the Mamos called “writing” the Mama S̄shi into a written “book”. That process had lasted several generations, and finally materialized as the “Black Line” Resolution of 1973. We look at scenarios of how the Mama S̄shi is transformed into law, including the creation of the declaration of the SNSM Park and indigenous reservations in the Sierra Nevada in the 1960s to the PNN SNSM park Expansion of 2023, alongside newer versions of the Black Line Resolution. By including written versions in the assemblage of the Mama S̄shi, the indigenous people can integrate these more legitimate forms of law with the Law of Origin, versions which can become part of the assemblage of “healing territory” and continue expanding those links of reciprocity of care.

These processes of resistance after the 1960s, including legal strategies, arise from the recognition of the Mama S̄shi and its embodied practices of reciprocity and articulation with ancestral territory. These are variations on the same historical strategies of establishing relationships, that enable the Mama S̄shi to produce responses within horizons of possibility that engage processes of care for the principles of the Law of Origin, while recognizing and displacing those practices of violence and debt which would weaken those principles of life.

Responses from the Law of Origin are both are manifested at broad levels of policy or policy making, and in localized interpersonal situations. People, and sacred sites are nodes of articulation with these assemblages of reciprocity. Through strategies of direct recognition of the Mama S̄shi, the Kaggaba were finally able to liberate themselves from the chains of debt passed down from Spanish conquest. Out of these practices, emerges the first Black Line Resolution, and the first indigenous reservations and organizations of self-representation, all based on recognition of the Law of Origin, alongside the exodus of the settlers and their debt-

peonage system from indigenous territory. This would be a response from the Mother Earth to the gifts of spiritual reciprocity and healing.

This situated history of Kaggaba practices of resistance over almost 500 years traces clear continuities between the indigenous people in the Sierra of the early colonial period, and the four indigenous peoples of the SNSM today. We find early “pueblos” in the encomienda named as some of today’s same Kaggaba ezuamas that have been permanently inhabited by the lineages of Kaggaba mamos since pre-Hispanic times. The fact that these are the same peoples present in territory since the time of arrival of the Spanish, enables the dissertation to identify transformations in the forms of representation of these peoples, their emergence and reemergence in written history, but as the same peoples. What the indigenous people themselves narrate down the generations, fits in perfectly with the historical record.

This is a history of the Kaggaba struggle to maintain their existence as an indigenous people up to today, since the arrival of the Spanish. It partially based arises from Kaggaba’s own book of history (Mestre and Rawitscher 2018), and re-contextualizes colonialist versions of identity and power. These are not indigenous practices of purity and spirituality, but grounded practices of centuries, if not millennia of political resistance and survival shared amongst the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada, based on practices of reciprocity and spirit guided by ancestral law that have constantly protected their peoples.

The Black Line Resolution of 1973, for example, is firmly imbricated in the assemblage of Mamo S̄ushi, at the heart of many centuries of indigenous ancestral practices and knowledge. Relationally produced does not mean that the Kaggaba and Arhuaco identities are delinked from their historical roots. Quite to the contrary, assemblages of reciprocity rely on forms of articulation that hold together the processes of transformation amongst their elements. The Kaggaba are attentive to forms of articulation that imply caring for those same principles. This enables the Kaggaba to permanently articulate with changing circumstances in new ways based on maintaining the same principles of reciprocity. A focus on the creation of categories of identity through assemblages of production or reciprocity, constantly consumed, reproduced and transformed over time helps to get over dichotomies of fixed and relational. Healing can at once be transformative and static and attention to the static, brings upon the transformation.

### **8.3 Territories of Origin: Articulated assemblages of reciprocity and healing.**

This history of 500 years of practices of resistance amongst the Kaggaba indigenous people, emphasizes practices of reciprocity. The role of reciprocity in human relations is something that often goes overlooked, especially in writing on the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada<sup>326</sup>. The Kaggaba, and the other indigenous peoples of the SNSM are clear that reciprocity with the spirit is at the heart of practically all their relationships between people, things, territory, and nature, including situated practices of resistance to violence and political processes.

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<sup>326</sup> Earlier anthropologist like Reichel Dolamatoff, Pruess and Uribe tend gloss over role of reciprocity, with the outstanding exception of Ferro Umaña’s work on the Arhuaco (2012), and (Parra Witte 2020) recent writing on the Kaggaba.



For this dissertation, we propose the term “articulated assemblages of reciprocity” that complements Marcel Mauss’ work on “systems” of reciprocity that “can take on a life of their own”, as expansive forms of reciprocity that “embrace the whole of ... economic and civil life” (2002, 10, 34). The term assemblages of reciprocity takes into account such expanded forms of context, including those that transcend the merely material, to incorporate the spirit. Assemblages of reciprocity articulate their individual elements through practices of reciprocity that include forms of contiguity, embodiment, and the unity of its individual elements with the totality. These concepts meld well with the Kaggaba “Law of Origin”, held together through reciprocity with the “spirit” and embodied practices, based on care for the principles of life.

The Kaggaba have developed a complex language of practices of reciprocity that incorporate the spirit. Indexicality is key to strategies of finding position in and transforming these assemblages, especially through practices of copresence or embodied contiguity. The capacity to recognize the origins of chains of debt are important to locate the person with assemblages of reciprocity based on care, or alternatively based on violence. Through practices like code switching or shifts in footing, in stance, posture, etc. people can articulate their position in assemblages of reciprocity, without necessarily having to define those assemblages.

Concepts from linguistic anthropology including participation frames and indexicality are useful to analyze how practices of reciprocity articulate with participation frames as strategies for the transformation of context. “Assemblages of reciprocity” both include and surpass spatial frames of reference and share much in common with expansive notions of context, for instance what Hanks proposes as the “interspectival space consisting of that which is mutual, reciprocal or distributed among co-participants is also part of the frame of space (Hanks 1990, 200)”. The dimensions of expanded participation frames, seen as assemblages of reciprocity transcend the merely spatial or interpersonal, encompassing processes of social relations of production, embodiment and contiguity, and reciprocity between “spiritual” and material elements.

The Kaggaba and the other indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada, based on practices of reciprocity, recognize and work directly through spiritual or “invisible” connections between territory, things, and people. Likewise, the ancestral territory of the “Black Line” can be seen as an expanded participation frame, bounded around the four cardinal points which extend out to the infinite. It is possible to see how people and place are locally situated in and simultaneously embody those frames of reference through reciprocity. Assemblages of reciprocity situate smaller frame spaces or reproduce them within the wider assemblage, at once transforming and forming part of that same unity.

The Kaggaba work with assemblages of territory, spirit and things, by giving them spiritual gifts, what they call “payments” in spirit or thought. The spiritual gift can assume many forms, like thoughts given to the mother earth, or the right words given at the right sacred site. Words given as a “payment” are not necessarily understood by the spiritual mothers or fathers, but are received and in turn the Mother Earth gives the gifts back in through transformations in elements articulated with the spiritual dimensions of that same assemblage.

The form of ancestral territory the Kaggaba call the Mama S̄shi, as an assemblage, produces responses to gifts, which are given back to people as gifts again, all parts of a chain of reciprocity that includes spiritual and material exchanges. In this dissertation we presented several cases of

indigenous practices of reciprocity and the transformation of context, as responses. They can occur can at a personal levels like Ramon's double "00" shotgun standoff story, with effects at much wider levels, for instance when violent settlers leave ancestral territory. Responses from the Mother earth, can become manifest as better health, crops, rain, improved political and territorial strategies, better human relations, etc. The Kaggaba are clear that they have maintained themselves as an indigenous people through those kinds of practices of reciprocity, and the responses from territory, for as long as they can remember.

These kinds of responses to practices of reciprocity include, and transcend mediums of verbal or physical communication. Kaggaba mamos and people in general are very carefully articulate their gifts to the mother, with the understanding that they will get a response. Specific outcomes are difficult to predict, but strategies of giving,- of reciprocity, can open up horizons of possibility. The entire set of ancestral practices of the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada depend on recognizing and practicing relationships of reciprocity. To the degree that people participate in these assemblages of reciprocity, the more they recognize those links, they embody and can interact with aspects of these principles of reciprocity.

Deployment of these practices or reciprocity can be seen through the lens of referential practice, and transcend the idea of context, as the references made always articulate the participants within an unbounded space, as the same thing, all linked together through relations of reciprocity. Discrete, individual, and definable elements emerge from the unity of the assemblage, and are constantly transformed through exchange and reciprocity. Once a person receives that debt, embodies that process, they become involved in that chain of reciprocity. These practices of reciprocity imply that assemblages of reciprocity, as spirit, have agency.

These concepts do not necessarily fit well with existing forms of understanding communication that consider agency of the non-human, of inanimate things as living, as do the Kaggaba. A recent and growing body of work in anthropology has been recognizing these forms of non-human communication and expanded forms of context. These forms of relationship between the self and context respond to new ways of conceptualizing context. Such a notion of context, would be based on "a level of nonseparation that is ontologically prior to the subject-object distinction (Hanks and Sachiko 2019, 64)". In a similar note, Povinelli, in what she calls "Geontologies", takes on a search for "political topologies, then, that have to permit the recognition of existences that are neither biologically nor anthropologically legible (2022a, 190)"<sup>327</sup>. This kind of work also addresses communication between non-human entities, that would include their agency and capacity for response (Kohn 2022).

I think that the focus on articulated assemblages of reciprocity put together in this dissertation, opens a route to considering forms of human practice based on reciprocity and spaces of participation that precede the separation between the subject and the non-subject, as collective spaces. Including these expanded practices of reciprocity as a form of communication, I think opens very productive horizons. These expanded spaces of healing that include the spirit is something shared by many peoples around the world.

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<sup>327</sup> I translate from the article in Spanish, which was republished from (E. Povinelli 2015).

#### **8.4 The key words of healing.**

Attention to reciprocity, the spirit and response is something the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada have been doing for ages, and is a substantial part of what ancestral Kaggaba practices of resistance and healing are based on. The Kaggaba do not box themselves in with concepts like “articulated assemblages of reciprocity”, participation frames, or habitus. The Kaggaba are focused on the universal spirit, the Law of Origin, which holds people, territory, space, nature and life together, based on reciprocity. The indigenous people of the Sierra over the ages have developed precise knowledge of ways of deploying reciprocity as healing and transformation.

Practices of “healing” are what this history of 500 year of resistance the Kaggaba to violence evolves around. In their meetings on armed conflict cited in the previous section of this Chapter, Mamo Jacinto, and the other mamos, reflect that healing rests on the -permanent reconfiguration of relationships between the “mother”, and people – or “the self”, as the recognition of the relationship between violence and healing as part of human existence. We remember from Aulagnier (2001), that forms of violence can find their origin at the moment of ‘inscription’ of the mother on the child, generating feelings of both rejection, debt and guilt or acceptance of the self, as owing existence to the mother, to ‘others’ and to categories of social existence, through which the self can exist. The moment of birth implicitly brings together those contradictions. The recognition of mutual interdependence is at the heart of the forms of healing that we have talked about all along during this history of Kaggaba resistance.

The Kaggaba mamos keep on repeating that they are not only talking about moments of resisting armed violence, at political or social levels, but also as personal moments of situating the self within relationships of reciprocity. The forms of healing through reciprocity we have discussed bridge those gaps between the self and the other, within larger assemblies of the spirit. In that sense, healing incorporates and surpasses the individual subjectivity. It lies in the “mode of representation, prior to the possibility of representation itself (Pandolfo 2018, L 1974)”, perhaps similar to context as the “nonseparation” of “object-subject”.

Healing based on articulation of the self to these wider spaces, or assemblages of the spirit would be what Pandolfo brings in “a Qur’anic medicine of the soul, based, ... on a prophetic medicine of the heart (L 244)”. That medicine probably shares many traits with Kaggaba practices of healing where the spirit and the soul are at the heart of the material. Thus conceived, symbols and images can have healing power, “at once flesh and spirit” an “emblem staging an exchange of life and death, presence and absence, proximity and infinite distance, future and remote past (L. 3558). The cure is “both the life of the person in pain, and a mode of collective therapeutics whose larger scope is to heal the heart of the community (L. 10214)”.

These same imageries of the unity of self and context, would seem to accompany many practices of healing. Taussig reflects on the inverse of the split between the other and the self as healing. “The power [of healing] lies not with the shaman, but with the differences of the coming together of the shaman and the patient, differences constituting imagery essential to the articulation of what I call implicit social knowledge. Ground in this interplay of otherness such knowledge brings being and imagining together in a medley of swirling discourses (1987, 460)”, as a space that transcends difference.

In this decertation, several Kaggaba mamos and saka explain healing from Kaggaba practice. As Mamo Luis reflected, healing the self is related to the heart of the spirit in everything, through reciprocity with that wider collective. It is based on spiritually returning the recognition of debt, of damage to the spirit, and of spiritually giving it back. That debt, often what the Kaggaba literally call spiritual “debt” - *shala* is permanently returned to the mother, to that assemblage of care, which in turn produces responses of healing. These are practices based on concentration and awareness of the self, and the recognition of a shared collective existence.

Kaggaba practices of healing are also based in the recognition of the form of the articulation of self at part of these wider assemblages. The basis of practices of healing, of the Law of Origin, for the Kaggaba, also rests on expansive spaces that relate the body, people, nature, territory and the principles of life as all interdependent, as bounded yet at the same time localized space. The awareness that the person is part of a larger assemblage of reciprocity situates that person as part of the assemblage, and not apart from it.

That positionality enables a sense of shared care, from which it is possible to relocate the relationship between the self and context, as a unity. As we have seen, Goffman’s “Facework” and use of participation frames helps see how relationships are mutually constituted between the self and context, based on reciprocity. It also relates to healing in terms of the creation of the “subject”, that constantly renegotiates a double distance between the “I”, the “me” and to situate the self within, and negotiate socially available categories (Goffman 1974a). This double distance in a certain sense is that of the empty husk of the father of trees - the dancing puppet of Kalashe. It is through those spaces the fundamental paradoxes of violence, of the **inscription** of “the self” in context, are cured through their positioning in these wide assemblages of reciprocity, thus reframing the self as unified in that totality in those reverse, hollow spaces of articulation.

Through this awareness it is possible to articulate forms of debt based on violence or the Law of Origin. The stakes are high. If a person perpetrates chains of debt by resolving those conflicts based on violence by giving back with more violence, then that person is immediately linked into chains of debt that have at its origin, violence itself. By ‘paying” back these debt relations spiritually, the person at once distances the self from that same chain of debt, and makes something new out of it, the problem becomes a food for rebirth by giving it back.

Moments of “Euphemization” or what Freud calls “sublimation” would seem to be right of the middle of healing, as invisible spaces, or locus points of negotiation or “articulation” of these original moments of “inscription” of becoming and transforming. Moments of transposition that can either heal or destroy. Both potentialities combine, they go together as invisible moments, split seconds of misrecognition that allow people to keep on living, to create life out of its own contradictions. They lead into spaces of possibility linked to the infinite.

These are invisible moments, of the permanent positioning and repositioning of the subject in society, the realization of the self, as both limited and enabled by power and domination. Althusser reflects on this permanent movement in which the subject may not exist without being positioned within an ideology, alongside a certain recognition of the condition as subjects, which vastly surpasses that same dichotomy. This “recognition only gives us the ‘consciousness’ of our incessant (eternal) practice of ideological recognition ... but in no sense does it give us the

(scientific) knowledge of the mechanism of this recognition (Althusser 1971, 173)”. Do we have to explain those mechanisms, see them, for them to heal? Once they are explained the explanation falls apart again. Kaggaba practices of dealing with violence and healing ride right along that invisible double bind, between violence and healing. From there arises the “medicine” that the Mamos talk of, the healing of the land and the spaces of the heart in people.

Recognition of what constitutes violence is key. If healing implicitly implies recognizing violence as part of life, as a precondition for healing, then at what point does violence become too much? That contradiction or paradox flows through this entire history. During the times of the encomienda the Catholic church was worried that the encomenderos, like “leeches” would extinguish the encomienda system of indebted indigenous people they depended on. The Catholic church based its presence in the Sierra Nevada both on defending the souls and humanity of the indigenous people, while violently attempting to extirpate the mamos and their ezuamas.

Finally, the Kaggaba during the time of the police inspector rejected that violence as excessive and refused participate in any further forms of reciprocity with that system, leaving that violence to be healed by the mother earth, through recognition and paying back that debt but not working through it. The indigenous people took measures to heal that violence before it could get out of hand, while maintaining a focus of detachment and discerning located in the principles of care.

One summer, the Center for the Greater Good at UC Berkeley gave me a research fellowship to explore work on healing with the indigenous peoples of the SNSM<sup>328</sup>. After coming back, I sat down with the director, Dacher Keltner. He was interested in hearing about what I had brought back on healing. “So, what does this do for us, what can we learn from the way that the Kaggaba live, to help us live happier lives?” I gave him an answer based on how the indigenous people of the Sierra practice healing. But I am not sure how useful that was. To say that to live a more meaningful life, we have to work in relationship to sacred sites, thought and territory, as the Kaggaba might, is for most people, not easy to relate to.

In his writing, Dacher likes to offer certain key words that people can identify with to transform themselves, to heal. One of those words he suggests is “awe”, as “being in the presence of something vast and mysterious that transcends your current understanding of the world (Keltner 2023)”. Experiences that lead to feeling ‘awe’ can be very simple, like visiting an enormous tree. Those moments make us aware we are part of a wider collectivity, and help to “reaccommodate” ourselves in a universal context. “Brief experiences of awe redefine the self in terms of the collective” and make us “more inclined to participate in a collective life”. That practice of feeling is also correlated with good effects on the human immune system (Keltner 2016).

Mamo Merejildo proposed a similar key word in his reflections on how to heal violence. I repeat, people “must think as the collective and not as the individual. Culture does not think ‘I am well’, but ‘we all have to be well for me to be well’. From our vision, as Kaggaba, the only way to work through all of this is by spiritual healing, ... In our culture everything depends on the totality:

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<sup>328</sup> [https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/who\\_we\\_are/our\\_people/fellows/past\\_fellows\\_grad](https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/who_we_are/our_people/fellows/past_fellows_grad). Summer, 2003

nature depends on us and we depend on nature". Healing depends on our awareness of that shared collectivity, which we must care just like it is a part of ourselves.

In essence Mamo Meregildo's keyword is *sharing*. Sharing is reciprocity, and requires the recognition that people live in relations of giving and receiving, that unite us with a wider sense of working through the relationships of sharing. We all depend on that totality, and our relationship to it. The challenge is to recognize the relationships of sharing, to see oneself in the other and respond to it like it was myself, and transcending it. That gives perhaps a feeling of awe that heals, and that basic recognition of collectivity is also the essence of healing amongst the Kaggaba.

The Kaggaba "Law of Origin", is the guide the Kaggaba use for healing. It is a very complete guide of how to give back and receive and be part of that totality of sharing. Kaggaba sharing is based on reciprocity of the spirit embedded territory, and techniques of reciprocity with the spirit developed over the millennium. The Kaggaba mamos in the first part of their book "Shikwakala" describe the principal spiritual mothers and fathers that make up ancestral territory, as the embodiment of certain kinds of spirit, for instance - family, sharing and grown, or envy, violence and greed. These are techniques for concentration on each kind of thought a person might have so that the person can recognize those thoughts, especially the negative ones, and give them back to the mother, to reconcile with the origin which gives life. It is a permanent process of rebirth and relocation, of recognition, linking the person to these principles, of curing the self in recognizing our relationship to the spirit. The mamos offer these techniques because they think they are useful ways of healing based on universal principles of life.

That does not mean that Kaggaba processes of healing are only psychological or physical processes. For the Kaggaba they are very clearly associated with the embodiment of universal spirit, relationships that heal and transform in and beyond the self. All people depend on relationships of reciprocity, and those relationships take on an essence, a spirit, or at least a sense of collectivity which we owe our existence to, and is part of where healing starts.

To heal, to be a healer, the person must have something to heal. Taussig reflects, "Folk healers and shamans embark on their careers as a way of healing themselves. The pursuit of this calling is a more or less persistent battle that lies within themselves as much as their patients.... The cure is to become a curer (1987, 447)". Curing starts with curing of the self, without necessarily having to look to the indigenous people to cure the "other".

Different forms of reciprocity are historically constituted from specific relationships with place, and practices, there is no unique response. As assemblages, forms of sharing will have a way towards a universality that brings them together. Healing runs along the unseen divides where the self and other mix together, hidden and euphemized. The power of healing rests on sharing an agreement that healing is taking care of a sense of the collective to generate life.

We have presented these Kaggaba legacies of healing, through a lens on histories of resistance to violence. We have described some of these embodied moments of how the Kaggaba live in the world, based on permanent attention to participation in relationships of reciprocity and care, from the Law of Origin. These are lived experiences of millennia. The Kaggaba are one of the indigenous people on the planet who maintain their faith that the principles of life exist as a spirit,

as a legacy of living practices of healing. The indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada still orient their practices to where the spirit is inherent in land, people and everything else.

This history helps bring to light the struggles of the generations the indigenous people of the SNSM and other peoples who live according to that relationship with the land and spirit. If they had not been working from those principles of the Law of Origin, then I would not be writing this history today. This dissertation also emerges from those practices of caring, and from recognition. My grandparents had the foresight to leave Germany in time. Thanks to that spirit, I can be writing this today. I am giving it back, as an experience of healing. Writing can be a part of healing. Words are part of the collective of reciprocity and placed right, can transform.

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## APPENDIXES

### A. Glossary of frequent terms

Baldíos	Untitled land owned by the Colombian nation, and can be assigned to settlers or others
Bozal	Term from the colonial period that refers to an indigenous person not baptized by the Catholic church and who in general does not speak Spanish
Cabildo	Term presently used in Spanish amongst the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada as the title for the Governor of each indigenous people. Cabildo also means indigenous governing council.
Cabo	The name the Kaggaba use in Spanish for the second civil authority in Kaggaba towns, in responsible for maintaining order in the community, <i>alcalze</i> or <i>Nikuma</i> is the principal authority.
Cacique	The title that the Spanish used for the leaders of indigenous communities under the encomienda, in colonial times, and that the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada sometimes still use today as a title for well recognized Mamos.
<i>Ezuama</i>	The sacred sites where the ancestral lineages of Kaggaba mamos and Sakas maintain their nujue and do their spiritual work to manage all aspects of nature and people in their respective territories. Ezuamas are usually located on pre-Columbian stone terraces occupied by the same lineages of Kaggaba mamos have lived there since pre-Columbian times. An ezuama also refers to the territorial “jurisdiction” under the management of its lineage of mamos and Sakas. See page 3 of the dissertation.
Fanegada	A Spanish land area measurement equivalent to 6,550 square meters.
Guaquero	Term in Spanish for a treasure hunter or grave robber, who loots tayrona burial sites and sacred sites of their gold, stone, and ceramic objects. This for the Kaggaba mamos causes great affectation to the Law of Origin. Those objects are the sewa for those sites, and link them to the spiritual principles of origin and when stolen, or deposited in museums, alter the Law of Origin.
Jaba, Jate	Jaba means mother in Kogian, and Jate is father, both in the sense of parents of a family and spiritual parents, often as part of a sacred site. For example, Jaba Nabukaiuman in the San Salvador Valley means the place of the mother of the Danta and all forest animals.
Jañu	Coca leaf toasted by hand for traditional exchange and eating with the Poporo.
Jukukwui	The traditional name in Kogian for the civil authority in a Kaggaba town, as is the Maku.
<i>Kaguba</i>	A term in Kogian for “the spiritual origin” of living things, usually embodied by mother plants of origin of a plant species.
Kaldoka	A low four legged stool used in Kaggaba houses.
Kankurwa	The term in Ikən, the language of the Arhuaco people, for ceremonial houses, the equivalent to the Kaggaba nujue, and Ezuama.
Kasougui	The spiritual father of trees.
Kuibi	A Mamo’s young apprentice.
Kanzhi	A tree species ( <i>Metteniusa edulis</i> ) endemic to some Kaggaba ezuamas, that grows in certain mixed forests at an approximate altitude of 1800 masl. It produces an edible nut, important as food for Kaggaba communities and for wild animals. These forests are ancestrally protected and can only be used for collecting that Kanzhi “fruit”.
Ladino	Term that refers to a Christianized indigenous person from the colonial period, who usually also speaks Spanish.
Maku	A traditional term in Kogian for the principal authority of a Kaggaba town or Ezuama, in charge of working with the mamos to organize the people in the community according to the Law of Origin, and is often also a mamo.
Mamo	The male spiritual authority in charge of Kaggaba communities, pronounced as “Mama”.

Mestizo	A person with mixed Spanish and indigenous ancestry.
Mulato	A term used during the colonial period for a person born of African and Spanish ancestors.
Nañiba	Indigenous lineages related to the Kaggaba, and the other three present day indigenous Peoples of the SNSM, who in the past lived in the lower areas of the Sierra Nevada. They, like the Kaggaba, used poporos, and followed the same “Law of Origin”, but sometimes were rivals of the Kaggaba. After the colonial period, they disappeared, integrated into Kaggaba communities, or into the general present day non-indigenous population, which the Kaggaba also call Nañiba. The Kaggaba also use the term Ñañi – younger brother or sister.
Ñiuba	A tayrona gold piece with links to the spirit. “Ñiuba Santo”.
Nujue	The ceremonial house located at the center of each Kaggaba town, where all men in that community come to meet most nights, discuss events, and receive orientation from the Mamos and authorities. The Nujue also represents the structure of ancestral territory as a mountain. Kaggaba ezuamas also have nujue. Sometimes the Kaggaba call them “Cansamaria” in Spanish, a term dating from colonial times. The meeting house for women is called jitema.
Paramo	An upper Andean ecosystem similar to alpine tundra, located at altitudes of approximately 3,500 masl, and in the Sierra Nevada is home to the mother lakes of the rivers of the SNSM.
Poporo	The term in Spanish for a gourd, filled with quicklime made from seashells, used by most all the men of the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada to chew coca leaf when they come of age. In Kogian it is called Sugi, and symbolizes the mother, the connection with the mother earth.
Reserva Indígena	An untitled land parcel owned by the nation, “Baldios”, which the Colombian State assigns to an indigenous people for their use as a special land reserve, but without assigning property rights. This figure is no longer in use in Colombia, having been replaced by the Resguardo.
Resguardo Indígena	Indigenous Reservation. These are lands that the Colombian State titles to an indigenous people or communities, as their collective property in perpetuity, protected by Colombian law.
Saka	The female spiritual authority in charge of Kaggaba communities
Sewa	Is usually a shimana - a quartz Tayrona bead, given to a person to connect him or her to the spiritual origin of the kind work the person is “authorized” to do.
Shala	A term in Kogian that means spiritual “debt”, and also the thought or spiritual offering people give to the spiritual mothers and fathers, to “pay” that spiritual debt.
Shimana	Polished quartz tayrona beads that are made with different kinds of crystal in different colors. Each color “connects” with a different spiritual “principle” of life. The indigenous people carry them or use them as “sewa” to connect to each kind of principles and pay their spiritual “debts”. Shimana also means seed, as these crystals are the seed of each element that exists. For instance, nikwitz, transparent quartz, is the seed of water.
Tuma	Term in Spanish for the shimana, tayrona quartz bead.
Yali	Non-indigenous person, in Kogian
Zhatukuwa	The divining bowl used by Kaggaba mamos to consult the Law of Origin, the voice of the mother. It is a totumo cut in half, filled with water into which the Mamo drops his quartz sewa bead which produces bubbles which he reads to indicate the voice of the mother. Most Kaggaba mamos consult together in meetings to arrive at a consensus.

## B. Acronyms

AGI	Archivo General de Indias en Sevilla
AGN	Archivo General de la Nación de Colombia.
ANH	Archivo Nacional Histórico de España
ANT	Agencia Nacional de Tierras. The Colombian Lands Agency, presently responsible for assigning lands to indigenous people and others.
CIT	Confederación Indígena Tayrona - The organization of self-representation of the Arhuaco indigenous people
Corpoguajira	Corporación Autónoma Regional de La Guajira. The public environmental authority of the Department of the Guajira.
CTC	Consejo Territorial de Cabildos Indígenas de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. – The political space of self-representation of the four indigenous peoples of the SNSM.
INCODER	Instituto Colombiano de Desarrollo Rural - The Colombian lands agency once responsible for assigning indigenous reservations.
INCORA	Instituto Colombiano de la Reforma Agraria The first Colombian lands agency responsible for assigning indigenous reservations
INDERENA	Instituto Nacional de los Recursos Naturales Renovables y del Ambiente The first Colombian Ministry of the Environment and National Parks office.
OGT	Organización Gonawindua Tayrona The organization of self-representation of the Kaggaba indigenous people
PNN	Parques Nacionales Naturales de Colombia The Colombian National Natural Parks office.
PNNSNSM	Parque Nacional Natural Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta
POMCA	Plan de Ordenamiento y Manejo de Cuencas Hidrográficas. Hydric Basin Zoning and Management Plan
RA	Resguardo Arhuaco de la Sierra
RD	Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff
RKMA	Resguardo Kogui Malayo Arhuaco
SNSM	Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta
UniAndes	Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá-
USEMI	Union de Seglares Misioneras/ A Catholic Mission which supported indigenous rights most notably during the 1970s.



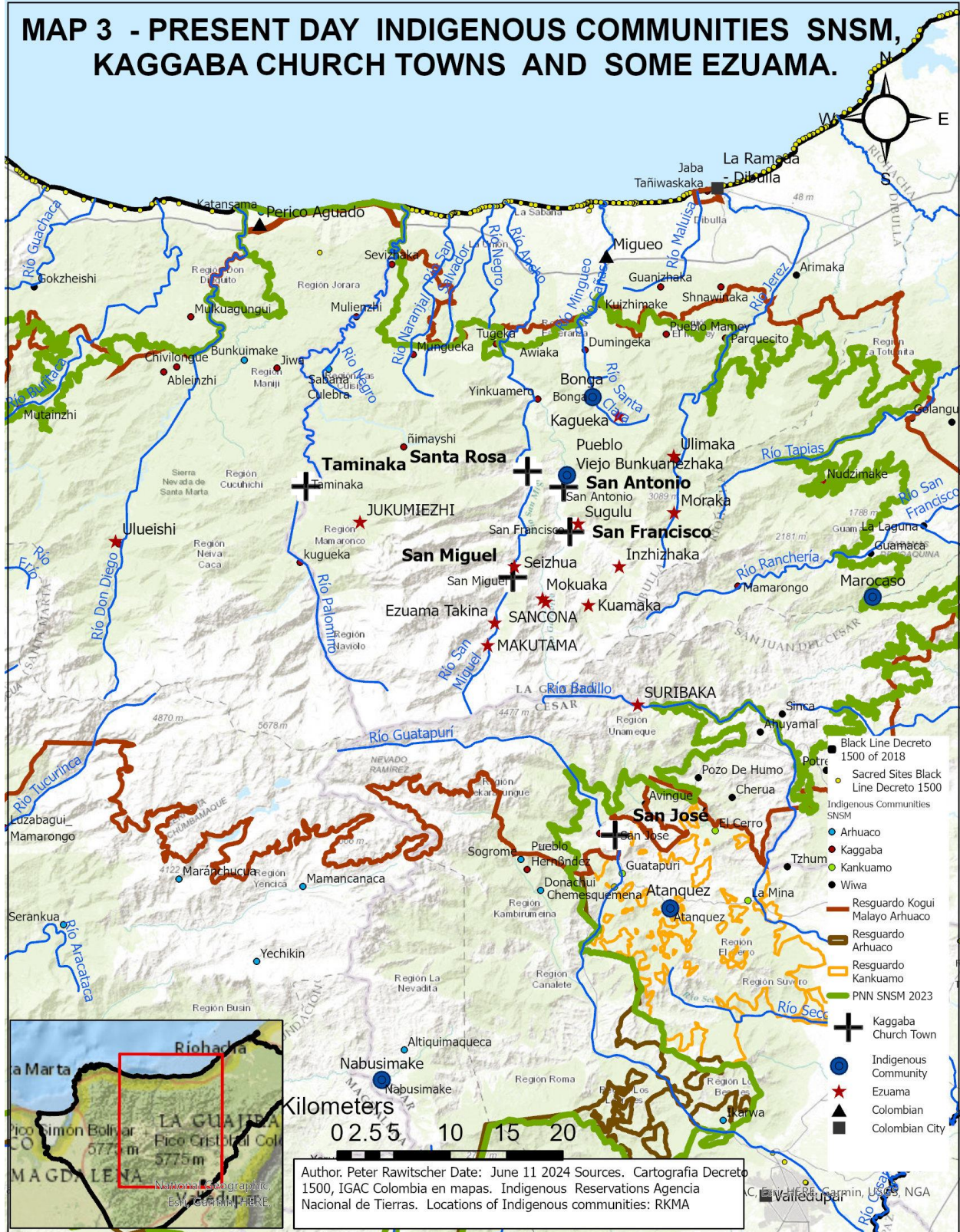






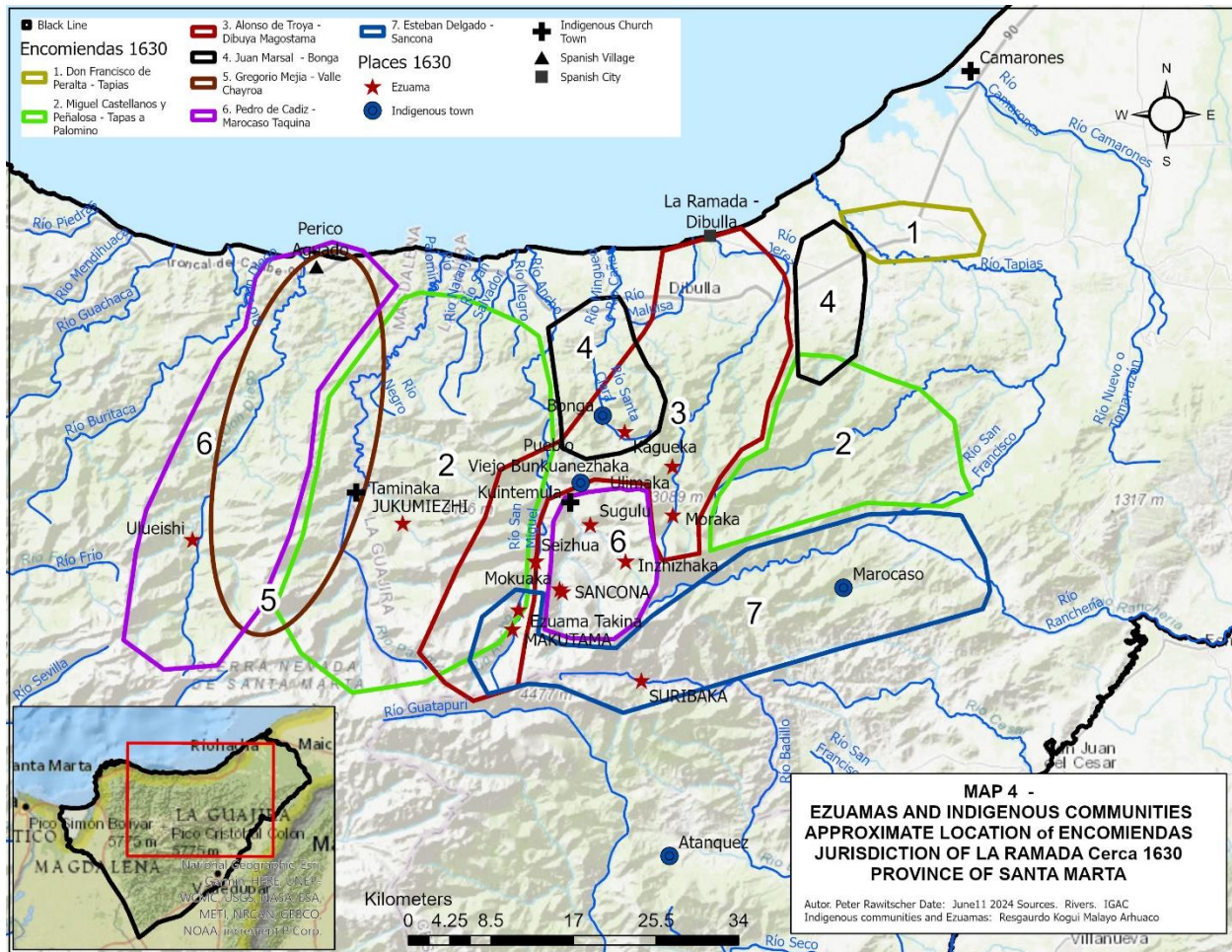


# MAP 3 - PRESENT DAY INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES SNSM, KAGGABA CHURCH TOWNS AND SOME EZUAMA.



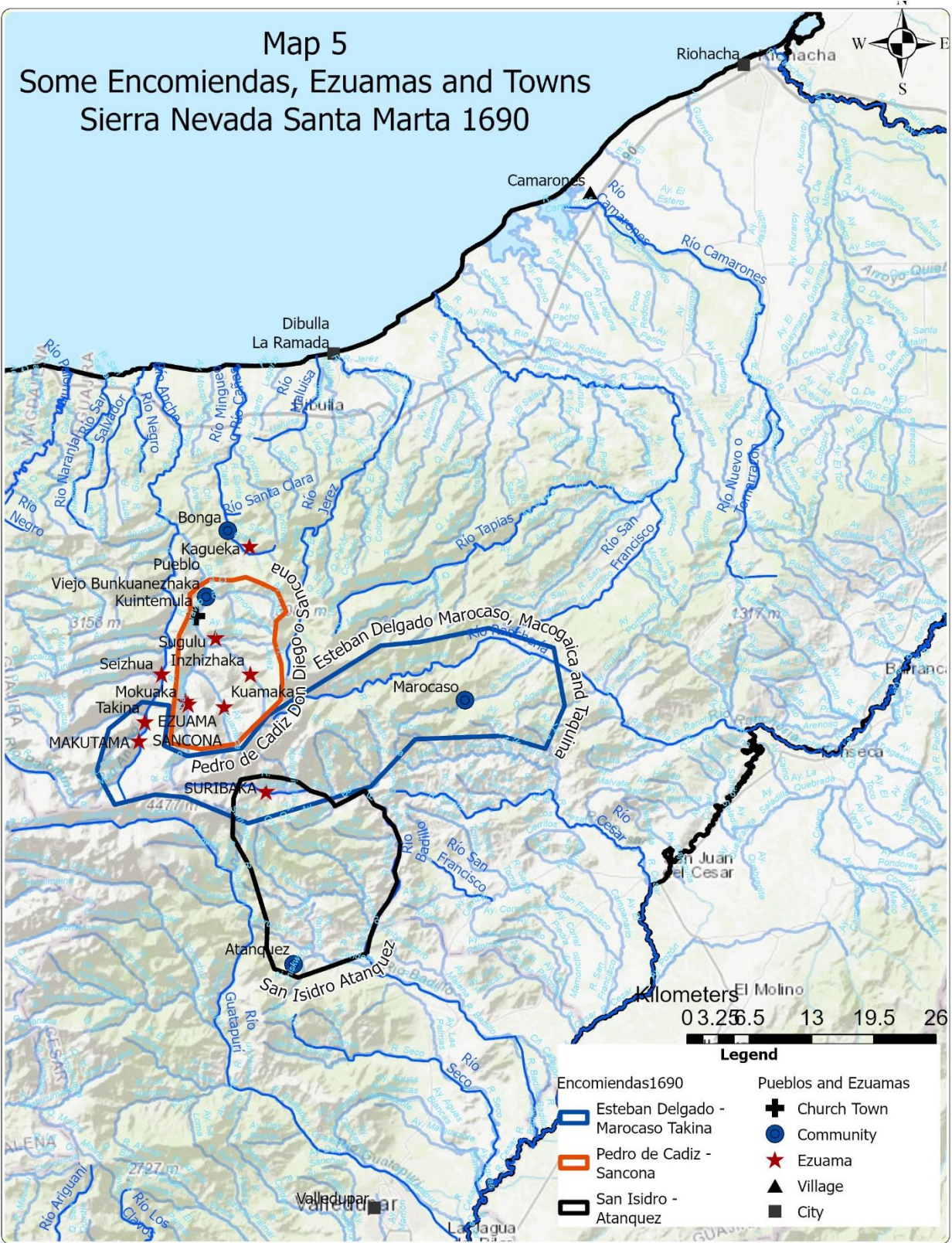
Map 3 Some present day Kaggaba communities Ezuamas and Church towns that appear in this dissertation.





Map 4 Ezuamas, indigenous communities and approximate territories of Encomiendas in La Ramada cerca 1630





Map 5 Some Encomiendas in the Jurisdiction of La Ramada 1690, associated ezuamas and indigenous communities. P Rawitscher.



D. Other Photographs







