

The Black Line of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta; a Red Line for a mountain

Alan Ereira

This chapter engages with the contemporary conversations with mountains via the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the world's highest coastal massif, and refuge to some thirty thousand indigenous people who claim descent from the 'Tairona' culture. They regard it as the centre of creation. They believe they are responsible for sustaining its well-being and, through it, the whole earth. The least acculturated group is Kogi. Hidden, they protected their culture from conquest. Their spiritual leaders (*Mamas*) speak no Spanish and are trained for years, from infancy, in darkness. They are considered guardians of knowledge needed to maintain fertility. They work in the material world and in *aluna*, the cosmic thought space where they consult with the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. They make offerings at mid-mountain locations called *ezuamas*. Each *ezuama* invisibly connects to a lower site, and a designated *Mama* is its human manifestation. They appear to perform a form of earth acupuncture as advised in *aluna*. The Tairona made remarkable gold-copper objects, found throughout the Caribbean, Central America, and the northern Andes, to connect with *aluna*. Christopher Columbus found they were valued at two hundred times raw gold.¹ The Kogi believe these objects are central to species' survival. To protect the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta from newly aggressive commercial exploitation and degradation its indigenous communities have jointly defined a circumscribed 'Black Line' within which they insist only indigenous rules should apply. This was agreed by the Colombian government and signed into law in August 2018, hours before President Santos left office. The Black Line is now a red line that the indigenous believe they have been asked by the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta to defend.

Background

The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, on Colombia's Caribbean coast, is the highest coastal mountain in the world. Its indigenous people understand it not as a geographical feature but as a living entity. The Sierra is well known to mountaineers, students of biodiversity, mining contractors, enthusiasts for adventure holidays, and anthropologists of Latin America. It rises steeply from tropical beaches to two permanently snow-capped summits 5,770 metres high in just 42 kilometres. In 1892 the highest peak was christened Cristóbal Colon, representing it as a geographical monument to the father of colonization, but no one could say where that peak was until it was conquered by an American expedition in 1939.² To mountaineers, who assess peaks by 'prominence' above the start of the climb, it is ranked as the fifth in the world.

In terms of biodiversity this 17,000 square kilometres massif has a unique status. It is a UNESCO biosphere reserve.³ It is also considered the most irreplaceable protected area in the world for threatened species.⁴ Its astonishing capacity to support a huge variety of species with quite different needs is a consequence of its unusual structure. The massif is an equilateral triangular pyramid with each side measuring 80 kilometres, positioned at a collision point between the Caribbean and South American plates. S. Giraldo described it as a 'biogeographical island'.⁵ It sits on its own tectonic plate quite unconnected to the Andes and has been forced upwards and rotated clockwise through 30 degrees.⁶ The north face rises steeply from some 600 metres below the surface of the Caribbean. On the west it is sharply bounded by the plains of the Magdalena river valley and on the east by the narrow valley of the Cesar river and the Guajira desert. The surface is structured by thirty steep-sided river valleys originating from lakes of snowmelt. The variety of temperatures (tropical to arctic), precipitation (rainforest to desert), and saturation (mangrove swamp to tundra) creates a dense variety of microclimates, ecological niches that largely mirror the range of life-supporting land environments over the rest of the planet.

It inevitably has potential as a resource for rare metals. By November 2017 the Colombian government had granted 132 mining titles there and was considering 285 pending requests.⁷ The exercise of these titles is challenged by indigenous people.⁸ The main attraction noted by the exploratory mountaineers in 1939, apart from its sheer natural beauty and variety, was the opportunity for hunting birds and beasts such as jaguar, puma, bear, and docile creatures such

as iguana and anteater which might have made rather unfortunate trophies.⁹ According to their expedition's report, all that was needed to make the Sierra profitable and useful was an airport at about 2,000-metre altitude on the south side, and a comfortable resort hotel. The indigenous people, who were given the generic name Arhuacos, were described as uncooperative and lacking enterprise, so it was reported that they were unlikely to make good use of the place. In any case, the population appeared to consist of tiny groups that might total 1,500 people.¹⁰ The report viewed them as having no more rights to the territory than did the iguanas, and they were said to be so degenerate that they could not be connected to the sophisticated culture described on the northern slopes by Spanish conquistadores. The Spanish had called that culture Tairona and apparently destroyed it in the seventeenth century.¹¹

Tairona culture has now been brought back into focus by ecotourism to the Tairona National Park and treks to 'The Lost City' (*Ciudad Perdida*), the partly restored remains of a 'Tairona' settlement of stairways, stone paths, and 169 terraces with the foundations of buildings.¹² Discovered in the dense jungle of the Buritaca river valley in 1972 by professional tomb robbers, it was handed over to archaeologists in 1976. It is only 40 kilometres from Santa Marta, but because of the difficult terrain, the trek takes several days and is demanding. There used to be a risk of kidnap by armed guerrillas, but travellers have been safe since 2005. I am informed by Juan Mayr, who was the minister for the environment in 1998–2002 and who has sustained a long involvement with the Sierra, that the treks are now controlled and, in practice, taxed by the paramilitary forces that have supplanted the guerrillas. This information was given to me privately at a meeting in June 2019 when the paramilitaries had just announced that they were using armed force to 'take back control' of the Sierra from narco-traffickers, and they would not attack tourists. The site is the largest pre-Columbian settlement known in South America, six hundred years older than Machu Picchu. According to D. Wilson, it may have housed over seven thousand people and the indigenous people of the area now lay claim to it as ancestral and 'sacred' space.¹³ As Andrés Ricardo Restrepo Campo and Sandra Turbay have noted, although some of them act as guides, the indigenous communities here are generally not comfortable with tourism today, any more than they were with mountaineering visitors eighty years ago.¹⁴ The Lost City and hundreds of other Sierra sites are, according to the República de Colombia, Ministerio del Interior, Decreto numero 1500 de 6 Ago 2018, untouchable and connect directly to the source of life within and beyond the Sierra.¹⁵

Which brings me to those indolent, uncooperative inhabitants, who now hold a special place among anthropologists of Latin America. In truth the Lost City brought me very directly face to face with them. In 1988, as a BBC documentary film-maker doing a short shoot in Bogota, I was asked by my employers to see if there was a film to be made about the remains. That was when I learned that there were other related communities in other, effectively trackless river valleys of the Sierra, who think of themselves as the guardians of ancestral memory and caretakers of the world. There are four distinct cultures, called Kogi (or Kággaba), Arhuaco (or Ika), Malaya (or Wiwa), and the almost totally acculturated Kankuamo. I chose to seek contact with the Kogi, who were the least acculturated group, and the most shy of contact. Their isolation was not total. There was intercourse with Colombian peasant traders – Kogi would exchange cattle for machetes and cookware – and encounters with government officials and missionaries, but their spiritual leaders ('Mamas') would assess the gifts offered and if they felt they did not belong in their lands, would refuse them.

They had chosen to remain hidden, so far as possible, from the colonial invaders, but they eventually told me that they had recently decided their hidden offerings could no longer protect the world against the depredations of 'civilization'. I was told this when I was brought to meet the Mamas of seventeen communities. They had assembled at what was now a border town at about 1,500 metres called Pueblo Viejo, accessible by a steep climb and 'off-grid' but shared with a small group of farmers (colonos) and a settlement of nuns.

The modern world had begun to intrude aggressively since the 1970s with the arrival of large commercial marijuana operations, left-wing guerrilla armies, and right-wing paramilitaries. The government's presence was represented by Asuntos Indigenas, the Office of Indian Affairs, who ran a very basic lodge and clinic in Santa Marta, but it was not effectively sustained. To communicate with the local office I had first to pay off its unpaid telephone and pharmacy bills. The Mamas had decided that they needed to engage directly with the state but since they could not speak Spanish, and their own language Kaggaba was spoken by no one else, they needed to establish their own organization. To do this they needed Kogi who spoke Spanish and Kaggaba, or Spanish-speaking Wiwas and Arhuacos whose languages they could understand. The nineteenth-century missionary Rafael Celedon had attempted to produce a grammar of their language but failed to produce the religious texts he intended.¹⁶ Furthermore, Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, the godfather of Colombian anthropology, after many years in the Sierra and extensive publication, had never mastered Kaggaba. I consulted him before my first visit: he told me that his informants were not

approved and that his notes had to be made secretly at night in a hammock with a torch in his mouth, from informants mumbling while chewing wads of coca leaf. He advised me that they were so difficult to approach that I should go to the Arhuaco instead. I found there were some Kogi who spoke fragmentary Spanish largely drawn from their experience of the conquest; their word for their own people was 'vasallos', 'vassals', the liminal meditative ceremony on arriving was 'confessio', 'confession', and the communal men's house was the 'cansamaria', which translates as 'worn out Mary' and appears to be derived from 'casa Maria', 'The House of Mary'. That may be part of a cynical remaking of Spanish, like their word for 'office' – *piscina*, swimming pool – instead of *oficina*.

So in 1987 they had founded the Organización Gonawindua Tayrona (OGT). *Gonawindua* is the highest peak, the one we name after Columbus. 'Tayrona' is the archaeological designation of the culture that built the Lost City. They appointed Ramon Gil, a half-Wiwa, half-Kogi who spoke Spanish, as head of the OGT and called him *cabildo gobernador* – the council and the governor.¹⁷ His training for the role had been initiated by a small group of Mamas several years before.¹⁸ He told me that his grandfather had been a Wiwa Mama but his powers had not been passed down. Ramón said he had grown up 'wild', quite apart from the traditional world and had known little of it, living on the very permeable boundary between Wiwa and Colombian peasants. He had become a hustler and political activist, combating the settlers' incursions. Then Kogi Mamas appeared before him and told Ramón they had a special role for him. Completely shocked, he was removed from his wife and child and placed in a cave. Over fourteen months he was reshaped. He was taught cosmology and culture, Kogi history and philology, and their theory of translation, and emerged with the authority of the Mamas and the mountain at his back, to put a final end to the Colombian conquest.¹⁹ My request had, it seems, arrived at the moment the Kogi were ready for it. It had gone through Asuntos Indigenas, who controlled access to the Sierra, and was taken to the Mamas by Ramon. He accompanied me to the Mamas, who were ready to consider this as a part of their effort to push back encroaching colonization.

Who are we

I was taken by night to the circular nuhue, the men's meeting house. Seated in their white woven robes around four fires, they listened to my explanation of television. They interrogated me about the experience of watching it (in what

sense does the viewer experience a meeting with the person filmed?) and about the power of the film-maker (where is the truth in the result?). The next day, at a formal gathering in the square building missionaries had once erected as a church, I was asked if I had a machine that remembered what they would say. Three Mamas spoke; I never learned anyone's name but for external purposes they were Mamas Valencio, Bernardo, and Jacinto. They spoke in turn, telling the story of the world from its first conception as thought in the dark void of the cosmic mind, *Aluna*.

In the beginning, there was blackness. In the beginning there was no sun, no moon, no people. In the beginning there were no animals, no plants. Only the Mother. The Mother was not people, she was not anything. Nothing at all. She was memory and potential. She was *Aluna*.²⁰

Aluna thought through the experimental construction and collapse of various forms until there was a detailed blueprint for a workable structure with viable creatures. It was then made real. Past and future separated, between memory and potential was the present, the material world, and light. Reality was spun around a central spindle, the place of immanent creation, the mountain *Gonawindua* (Figure 10.1). Humans link the consciousness of *aluna* to materiality, and have to keep the world in balance.

Then, I was told, came a second creation of humans, younger brothers, who have no respect for the mother, for the earth, for the mountain. So they were expelled, across the sea. The lands where they now live are all mirrored in the mountain; it includes all kinds of places on the larger earth, and what happens there can be seen here. During the day I had been interrogated about the ecology of my home environment, and its equivalent, my place, on the mountain had been established.

But then came Columbus. I was told the story of the conquest and destruction of indigenous people everywhere, and the retreat of the Mamas into the high Sierra to continue taking care of the mountain and the whole world. But the conquest is not over yet. Younger brother's advance continues. When it is complete, if it is complete, the Kogi Mamas, the mountain, and the world will all perish. Younger brother must learn, and must change.

So they took me in and took over my projected film about the Lost City. My account of this experience, and the efforts of the Kogi to use television to communicate their warning to the wider world, is documented in my book, originally published as *The Heart of the World* (1990) and in the materials available on the website of the Tairona Heritage Trust (www.taironatrust.org) which I subsequently established to channel support from their audience.



Figure 10.1 Drawing, approved by the Kogi, illustrating the threads that connect parts of the north face of the Sierra. Illustrator: Mauricio Montaña Maldonado.

What are the Kogi for

They turned the production into their own explanation of the immediate need for outsiders, who they call ‘the younger brothers’, to stop devastating nature and learn how to care for it. They set out to demonstrate the continuity and efficacy of their knowledge and guardianship from the time of the Tairona.²¹ That claim is supported by archaeological evidence, which suggests that the Sierra had a much larger population before colonization, and that colonization was now diminishing the land’s capacity to support life. According to Alvaro Soto, who was responsible for the excavation, the Lost City shows ‘that it’s possible to have a good density of population in a very beautiful environment like this one without destroying it.’²² But now, according to the Kogi, the land itself was dying.

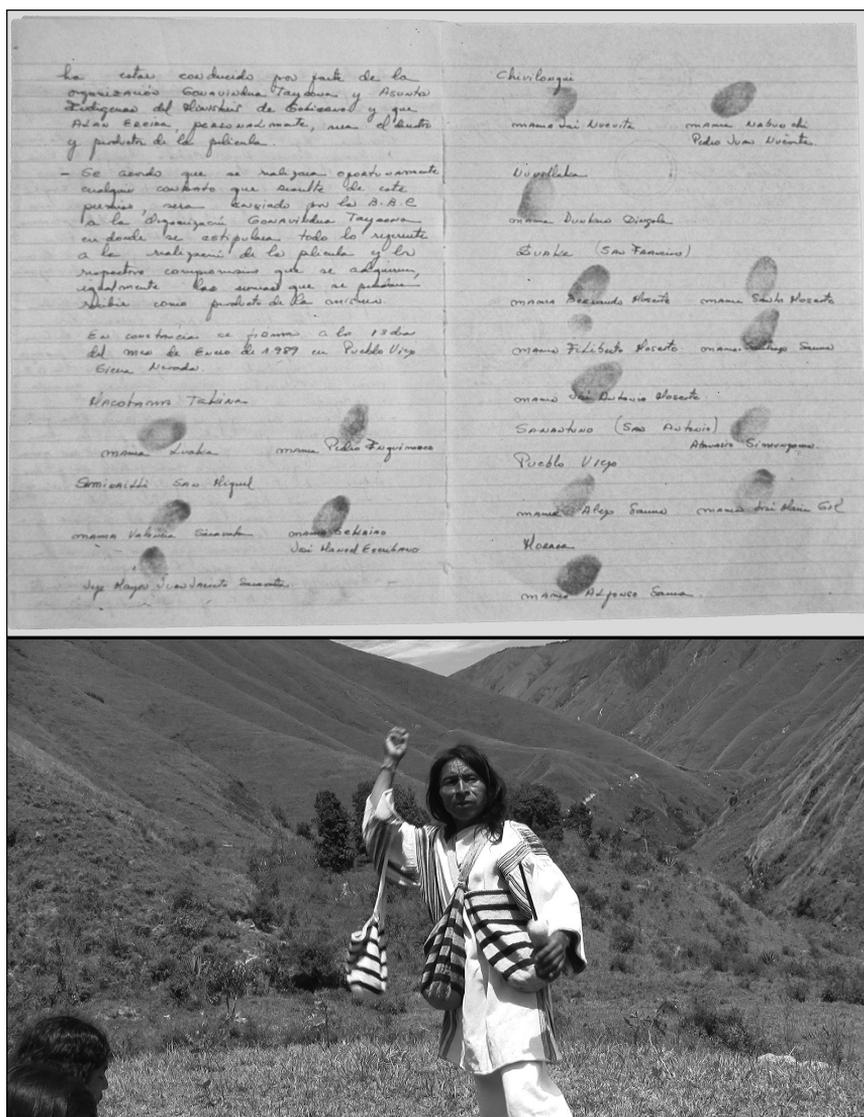


Figure 10.2 Top: Communal declaration and agreement to filming by the Mamas of seventeen communities, 1990. Image: Alan Ereira. Bottom: Mama Pedro Juan dramatically declaiming the statement made by Gonawindua to the world. Photo: Alan Ereira.

Their message was not the statement of any individual, any leader, or any town. To emphasize that fact, the Mamas of seventeen communities insisted on putting their fingerprints to a formal document written out by a government official (Figure 10.2, top). I was being presented with a terrible communal

declaration made by a people who believe their purpose on the earth is to be its guardians, and who understand that they are experiencing its destruction. They spoke as the mountain.

The Great Mother taught and taught. The Great Mother gave us what we needed to live and her teaching has not been forgotten right up to this day. We all still live by it. But now they are taking out the Mother's heart. They are digging up the ground and cutting out her liver and her guts. The Mother is being cut to pieces and stripped of everything. From their first landing they have been doing this.

The Great Mother too has a mouth, eyes and ears. They are cutting out her eyes and ears. If we lost an eye we would be sad. So the mother too is sad, and she'll end and the world ends if you do not stop digging and digging.²³

The language is significant. The Kogi do not see the exploitation of the land as the plunder of a resource, but as a physical assault on a living body. The viewer may choose to see that as a metaphor: it is easier to grasp. But that is not what is being said.

The obvious and somewhat bewildering questions that this posed were, what did the Kogi think the world actually is, why should they believe that they had ever been protecting it, what were the procedures they had been using to carry on this work, and what were they now trying to achieve? The seriousness of their intention was beyond question, as this was why they were taking the existential risk of exposure after centuries of defensive withdrawal. They had revealed that there were far more Kogi, in far more small towns, than any administrator, missionary, or anthropologist had supposed. G. Reichel-Dolmatoff, the anthropologist who most studied them, said in 1967 that they numbered perhaps two thousand.²⁴ By 1987 he had raised that to six thousand.²⁵ I learned from the Kogi that there were around eleven thousand, including many in towns which were effectively inaccessible except to themselves. They had been protecting themselves in the folds of the river valleys so that the Mamas could continue their work of healing the world. They were puzzled that we did not understand this. The most senior Mama ruminated,

What would they think if all we Mamas died? Would they think, 'Well, so what?' What would they think? If that happened and all we Mamas died, and there was no-one doing our work, well, the rain wouldn't fall from the sky. It would get hotter and hotter from the sky and the trees and the crops wouldn't grow. Or am I wrong and they would grow anyway?²⁶

The Kogi understand the Sierra to be the core of all creation, the spindle on which the world was spun, the heart of the living earth where all reality is reflected. So taking care of the Sierra is taking care of all existence, and that work is their *raison d'être*. Their act of deliberate exposure was, they believed, putting not just themselves, but all life at risk. Any substantial outside contact would, they concluded centuries ago, result in the collapse of their culture and the consequential death of the mountain and of the world. They developed a culture of silence in the face of intrusion.²⁷ But if they continued as before, the advancing intrusion of the unfinished Columbian conquest (as they put it) would kill the living world anyway. They felt they had no choice but to speak. Genuinely desperate and terrified by what we have been doing to our shared home, they had set about persuading their people to come out of isolation into direct and dramatic engagement with younger brother and his strange devices to deliver their warning. Ramon Gil spelt out formally the grim future to be expected in a world where the Kogis's work of stabilizing nature is no longer effective.

The world is weak and diseased, The animals die, the trees dry up, people become ill. Many new illnesses will appear, there will be no cure for them, and the reason is that Younger Brother Is violating fundamental principles, continually and totally. Drilling, mining, extracting petrol, minerals. Stripping away the world!

We know that this is destroying all order and damaging the world. BBC, tell the Younger Brother, 'Open your eyes. Hear the Mamas' law and story. Learn how things really are.'²⁸

What is a Mama

I found it hard to know what to make of the Mamas. Anthropologists referred to them as 'priests' or 'shamans', but that never seemed appropriate. A small number of investigators had tried to get close to them, such as Konrad Theodor Preuss in 1926, Tobón Uribe in 1986, and Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff in 1976, produced an extensive literature, and described the Mamas as a priesthood.²⁹ Kogi with whom I discussed the notion of religious belief invariably considered the question and decided they were atheist. The Kogi have no organized religion and regard their engagement with transcendence as pragmatic, rather than a matter of faith or belief. They have no writing (indeed, they are very suspicious of it). Kogi Mamas, normally selected at birth, are trained to concentrate,

meditate, perform ritual dance, and memorize the lore and knowledge of their ancestors.³⁰ This involves keeping the student (*kuivi*) from birth in a dark hut or cave for up to eighteen years, awake at night and sleeping by day, fed on white foods and warm water. He learns the arts of divination, including especially divining from the movement of bubbles, and how to make offerings to what are called the ‘mothers’ and ‘fathers’ of everything in the world. These offerings are spoken of as nourishment, and also as payments, *pagamentos*, meaning that they are required both to sustain life on another plane and to restore damage done there. All this was demonstrated in order to show how they have preserved their traditional knowledge. Once educated, he is a constant presence in the community and plays the role of trusted (indeed, infallible) adviser to families and the community, conveying what he learns from divination. ‘Mama’ means the sun. The Mama warms and illuminates everyone – and, as I was solemnly told by the Mama Jacinto, the Mama has a duty to care for the future of all kinds of creatures and all kinds of people, even the younger brother, ‘although he has done us harm.’³¹

What is the mountain

To understand what a Mama does, and who he is, I had to learn to understand the Sierra from a Kogi perspective. That meant moving beyond the list of attributes I gave at the beginning, which enabled it to be analysed, tabulated, celebrated, and exploited from different perspectives. When younger brothers come to the Sierra as investigators, each brings a different expertise, applying their own way of knowing and experiencing, gathering, and utilizing what they want, and generally then leaving for a life elsewhere. For the Kogi, the great rock pile we call the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta – the Snow Peak of the oldest colonial city of the Americas – is an entire cosmos. It is the entire cosmos and their only home. They, like the trees, ants, iguanas, rivers, and stones, are an integral part of the place. They cannot really grasp how younger brother fails to understand that we, too, are an integral part of the living world.

Spanish colonists invented this name, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. It puts a label on a resource. The Kogi do not have a word for mountain. Falk Xué Parra-Witte has pointed out that they have a word for summits, *guinue*.³² The closest they come is *Nulkujaluwa*, which starts with *Nuk*, ‘everything’, and is related to *Nuhuakalda*, the idea that underpins the earth. But its name, attached to, but certainly not limited to, the most significant summit, is *Gonawindua*.

Every Kogi understands *Gonawindua* to be alive, and to be the generating power that makes everything else alive. It is the constitution of the world, in every sense. It is the law. And it speaks. That is what the Mamas are for. To know and respond to what *Gonawindua* is saying.

This was spelt out to me by Ramón Gil. As *cabildo*, Ramón reported to, and took instruction from, the Mamas. They report to, and take instruction from, *Gonawindua*. *Gonawindua* cannot be easily translated into any 'younger brother' language because it is not simply a word. Ramón explained that it is four ideas, *go na win dwa*, each of which is dense with meanings and which, when placed together, tell the story of the beginning of life. *Go* sets the stage for this narrative; it conveys 'something being born' or 'birth'. It also signifies 'in the beginning'. *Na* means 'something coming'; a Kogi may lift his head towards the east as astronomical dawn softens the darkness and exclaim *na!* *Vin* means quickening: new life is signalling its presence, as a woman feels the first surprising movement in her stomach when she is four months pregnant. Then comes the eruption of life into the world that is *du*: *dua* means all living things, especially the tiny seeds of life, tiny sea creatures; *duas* signifies sperm and the spectacular spray of ejaculation that fills the sky, and that we call the Milky Way.³³ It is the word for the quickening of the world. It also means 'the mountain where the world began, the law-bringer'. The OGT say that

Gonawindwa contains the origin sites of humankind. Here is the original placenta of our species and of all the knowledge placed in our hands. It is the navel of the Universe. It is where the totality of life is shaped; for us it is the beginning and it is history. And it is where life continues, transcendently. (trans. Ereira)³⁴

The great eruption of life that is *Gonawindua* began with a conception in the sense in which we use it, an idea. The mother of everything, the universal consciousness in which all ideas were conceived, is called *Aluna*. The first ideas of *Aluna* would be the living templates of material reality, the 'spiritual parents' of everything. They were and are bound by the laws that define the nature of things, laws which, one could say, structure the uncreated space in which *Aluna*, pure consciousness, lives. That space, the source of nature's laws, is called *Sé*.

At the time of making the film the Kogi thought that indigenous people had largely vanished from the earth, but once the film travelled among indigenous people worldwide, they were made aware of large communities in the lands of the younger brothers, who had to a large extent lost touch with their ancestral knowledge. They told me they were planning an international indigenous

conference in the Sierra, in the hope that they could initiate a programme of recovery which might help reshape the world. It was intended to take place in Kogi territory, but then the Kogi decided to move it to an Arhuaco town, Nabusimake, 'Birthplace of the Sun.' They took me in their delegation, assuring the guerrillas who controlled access that I was a Mama and taking an impressive, if unusual, deaf-mute interpreter. Ramón controlled the agenda, and at the public meeting in Santa Marta which concluded the event, he spelt out the concept of original law which the Kogi wanted everyone there to internalize.

The original laws, the fundamental principles, are in Sé. Sé has no beginning, it has always existed. It is spiritual existence, the spiritual principle of existence. Sé is not a person, not a thing. It is the sum of things. Sé is complex. Sé brought the material world into being, but it embraces far more than that. Sé *organises* everything so as to create harmony.

When everything was dark, on a level which our view can not reach, the first spiritual Parents originated spirit and thought. They created everything in spirit, in the non material world. They were not people, not air, not anything, just idea.³⁵

One of these first parents is Seizhankua, the active driving principle that now keeps movement flowing in the sky and on earth; Seizhankua is associated with the passage of time, which had yet to begin. All that there was were the threads of thought, which formed the woven cloth of past and future, memory and possibility. Ramón went on:

Then Seizhankua crossed a thread of thought to make the centre and he lifted it. The peak Gonawindua appeared. There was a peak above and a peak below and it began to work as the motor of the world.

This separation of two layers was the beginning of reality, the opening of the gap between past and future. Gonawindua encompasses reality and idea, essence and existence, the blueprint and the manifest life of everything. Everything has its spiritual parent, and the whole is a single transcendent living being. In the words of Parra-Witte, 'Kogi perceive and relate to the mountains, valleys, waters, trees, rocks, and other landmarks of the Sierra Nevada as conscious, influential agencies with particular names, histories and significances. ... In the Sierra Nevada, the whole mountain range is considered an integrated living totality, the Mother's body, and globally the world's "Heart."³⁶

In 2013 the Mamas started on the extraordinary journey of supervising the recording and translation into Spanish of a thousand hours of oral statements, edited under the supervision of trusted non-Kogi into a Spanish text setting out

the meaning of *Gonawindua* and the ‘Law of Origin’, their place and history.³⁷ They titled the work *Shikwakala*. The pattern of forces which control the movements of earth and sky is called *Shikwá*; it is seen as a non-material cosmos-spanning fabric, and those of its threads enfolding the Sierra are *Shikwakala*. But the book is not a treatise on the Kogi version of gravitational and electromagnetic forces. Its subtitle is *El Crujido de la Madre Tierra*, ‘the creaking of Mother Earth’, and the text opens with an explanation that when the fabric is damaged, as is happening now, ‘Mother Earth trembles and cries.’³⁸ Their object is to show what that means and stop the damage. It is an effort to explain how they work with the living mountain of which they form part, and why our use of the land is catastrophic.

The work was published in 2018, and it is carefully organized to set out the case for the complete protection of the territory. So far it has only been privately distributed. They have been nervous about its effect and are very anxious about how it is read – partly because, as the text itself says, using Spanish ‘inevitably means that we are producing a “mestizo” book. ... For example, for us, the territory is *Haba*, which is roughly translated into Spanish as *La Madre*. Because the deep meaning of an expression depends on that culture’s vision of the world, this book should be understood as a dialogue between *Haba* and *La Madre*.³⁹

In 1973, the four peoples of the Sierra had physically marked the boundary of *Gonawindua*, with a group of Mamas walking what they call ‘The Black Line’.⁴⁰ This invisible path around the whole Sierra links a large number of ‘sacred’ sites on its periphery.⁴¹ In 1999, OGT contributed to an official declaration of the need for protection of the territory, but at that time the Kogi restricted themselves to saying that the territory was filled with sacred space.⁴² Their constant demand to have the Black Line respected was an uphill struggle, partly because they never clearly articulated the meaning of this sacred space. It is only now, after they have declared that there are ‘no more secrets’, that the indigenous people of the Sierra have explained how these sites function.⁴³ At the end of 2018 they achieved government recognition by decree of the territory within the Black Line as filled with interconnected living features which are essential to their survival, and which, in the words of that decree, connect ‘the spiritual principles of the world and the source of life’. It describes the waters of the mountain as the veins of a body.⁴⁴ In *Shikwakala*, the Kogi say that fundamental to describing *Gonawindua* is the understanding that for them, ‘the ancestral territory is a living body, like a person. Its sacred places interact with everything related to the cycles of life, to health, behaviour, correct action, the territory’s government, the work of the Mamas and of the traditional authorities, as well as constructions and crops. In short, they interact with all human and non-human life.’⁴⁵

Parra-Witte concluded that the Kogi and the mountain can only be understood together 'as an organic composition.'⁴⁶ This has profound implications for their understanding and practice of medicine. The Mamas address medical issues in humans by direct engagement with *Gonawindua*. By the same token, what we understand to be their ecological advice and practice is their concern to take care of and heal its living body. An explanation of this was published by Camilo Arbeláez Albornoz. This remarkable medical practitioner lives in the Sierra and has worked for many years with Kogis helping them formulate a cross-cultural form of medical practice. He reported that the Mamas perceived an equivalence between the human body and the land. They carefully map the geography of the massif onto the symbolic form of a human; blood and bile have their exact equivalents within the earth. 'Both have sacred places, major and minor, the colour and consistency of their secretions have similarities, the signals they emit, ailments and diseases have precise territorial references ... That is why the pollution of the mouths of the rivers, the destruction of the forests and the theft of sacred sites have caused many diseases. The relationship between body and territory begins with birth and is woven throughout life.'⁴⁷

The Mamas work as bridges between *Aluna* and reality. It seems that *Aluna* has no direct presence in material reality; consciousness is memory and possibility, but material existence is the present, the place between. Birth and death involve life entering and leaving the world, and *Aluna* is the source of generative energy, so there must be transition between material reality and the transcendent. *Aluna* also requires a material agent to be present, so to speak, in the present, to take preventative action when the vigour of real life throws nature out of balance. The Kogi have a strong consciousness of the eruptive competitive energy of life, and the constant threat of chaotic disruption. Humans, endowed with consciousness, can, if trained, engage with *Aluna* and work as the agents of transcendental consciousness, acting directly in the world. Mama Valencio said, 'Human beings were made to care for the living things. The plants, the animals. This is why people were made.' That is what Mamas are trained to do.

The work is done at *Ezuamas*, locations that can be regarded as portals to *Aluna*. The word is used to convey a place of authority, so may be used for a government office, but its roots are 'hot' and 'one'.⁴⁸ An *Ezuama* is a primary hotspot, a dangerous and powerful vent into the living conceptual reality of *Gonawindua*. There the Mama directly encounters *Haba Aluna*, the Mother of everything, and the laws of *Sé* that are, roughly, like our idea of laws of nature. Every Mama who contributed to *Shiwakala* is identified not by his town but by the *Ezuama* where he has his seat. In the words of the text, 'There we find all the principles, standards

and procedures of the Law of Origin to legislate and direct the administration of our ancestral territory and every aspect of the cultural life of our people. They are, in a manner of speaking, the cultural universities of our people.⁴⁹

The *Ezuamas* are situated on invisible fissures in space and time. These are the original 'Black Lines'. They radiate from the peaks, offering direct access to inner reality. They connect each river valley from top to bottom, and operate like a vascular system, with capillaries reaching out to lesser sites (Figure 10.1). The Mamas may therefore make 'offerings' at an *Ezuama* to affect connected sites many kilometres distant. Mama Shibulata stressed this at Seizua.

So why is this place an *ezuama*? This is a place where we can connect. From here we can concentrate and understand where payments are needed all along the coast. We are told where work is required. When it is not possible to go down we concentrate here to make the payment from here. When it is not possible to go down.⁵⁰

Those 'payments', represented by fragments of leaf, of cotton, of shell, held between thumb and forefinger, are the focus of a tremendous concentration. So the job of the Mama is to strive to comprehend, by concentration and observation, his place in the laws that shape reality. He participates in the laws of nature. In fact, he participates so closely that each lineage of the Kogi is



Figure 10.3 Three Mamas at the *Ezuama* of Seizua. Photo: Alan Eriera.

directly connected with particular *Ezuamas*, and certain individual Mamas are the permanent guardians of the sites, spending their whole lives there.

Some of the connections that pass through an *Ezuama* are more visible than others. They include underground flows, air currents, the movements of birds and animals, and so on. Much of the pragmatic understanding the Kogi draw from seeing the Sierra as a biological entity can be fairly readily translated into a holistic science that we can hope to learn to understand, for the benefit of the environment and therefore for ourselves. But there is another dimension to all this, the dimension of direct communication between *Gonawindua* and humanity, that is not so susceptible to our understanding.

The mountain speaks

The Mamas do what they do because they are instructed. The Mamas who took over Ramón Gil's life did not think that they were acting on their own initiative. They had been told what to do by *Gonawindua*, and they believe that there are times when their voices are not their own. I was given a startling demonstration of this in April 2009. I was invited to sit before the leader of the Mamas at an *Ezuama* around 3,000 metres high and listen to what I was told this mountain had summoned me to hear.

I had never before had a Skype call on behalf of a geographical feature. It had come three weeks earlier, and I had to scramble to get there from my home in London by the required date. I was told that a Kogi leader and healthcare expert, Jose Santos Sauna, was being installed as their new supreme political authority (*Cabildo Gobernador*) and had requested my presence on a journey of inauguration that would take him high into the mountain. I was required.

I barely knew Santos, but when our documentary film was shot in 1990 he had worked on translation. I flew via Madrid and Bogota to Santa Marta, now a major and prosperous coal port. I met my long-time helper, the American anthropologist Peter Rawitscher, and after a short night's sleep he took me in a Toyota land cruiser to load up with sacks of dried fish, the customary gift for a Kogi community. We then set off around the Tairona National Park and up a dry river valley into the foothills. In the past I had ascended with the luxury of a helicopter and I doubted my ability to make the climb without one, but Santos supplied me with his own mule and up we went for two days, dropping the fish at a lower community, then crossing high passes which were sometimes too steep for laden mules.

We arrived at Seizua, an *ezuama* with a small town where the circular houses are insulated with thatch to ground level, making them look like shaggy beasts in the mist. There were ritual meeting places of small stones and larger boulders, and I was taken through the customary process of arrival, standing before a seated Mama just outside the town, holding a cotton thread and explaining everything that had brought me to this point, everything I had felt and experienced, and what drove me. I spoke in English.

After a further communal interrogation, this time with translation, about the effectiveness and fate of that film, *From the Heart of the World*, a gathering began. There were some fifty men with white tunics and pantaloons seated on the grass, facing a wall of rock. In front of them were four white-robed women heavily draped with red necklaces. Facing them was the leading Mama, who spoke standing, with vigour and flamboyant extravagance (Figure 10.2, bottom).

I am Mama Pedro Juan, speaking in Seizua

Then he began. But he was not speaking alone. The four women seated at his feet, *Sakas* or female Mamas, were simultaneously reciting the same words. They all were in complete harmony, the Mother, *Haba Gonawindua*, breathing her words into the *Sakas*, amplified by the theatrical voice of the great Mama.

This was what I had been brought to hear.

The speech was long and impassioned. The Mama spoke of the mountain's essence as *Nulkukeje*, which embraces *Gonawindua* and the whole world, 'a Lord who knows the whole of the Law'. The Mother, *Haba Aluna*, said that its manifestation in physical reality, *Nulkujaluwa*, manifests the Law (what we call scientific laws, the laws of nature) and knows it. 'He was given responsibility not only for the *Ezuamas* but for everything down to the sea, to keep out everything that is damaging to it.' The *Ezuama* also 'knows the whole of the Law. It must warn those who are thinking of doing harm so that they understand that they cannot destroy the seas and everything that exists. They are not the owners of the world.'

The Mama declared that deforestation is wounding the living body, 'the Mother feels this like an amputation, or tearing out her heart. To that extent the Mother is like us', a suffering acutely experienced by the student Mamas in the dark, 'that do not eat red meat or conventional food, are the most important observers of the *Nukujaluwa*. We listen to them and know that the armed groups that are now here are making nature itself sick.'

This had brought the speech to its heart, the need to exclude outsiders from the mountain for the safety of the world. The mountain was demanding international respect for its boundaries. In return, the Mama said, younger brother could be shown how to manage the world's health without going there.

The Younger Brothers also have their *Ezuamas*, and some of them do prepare themselves, though in a different way. I believe that it is important to do this, and not only do it in theory but also in practice, and I want the Younger Brothers to listen to what we say and not continue causing damage, or nature itself will finish us off. That is why we speak to the Younger Brothers.

But that requires a change of behaviour. So the *Sakas* and the Mama, still speaking in unison while the men listened, spelt out what they felt impelled to say as the voices of the earth itself.

Originally there were no strange things like airplanes intruding, and this intrusion has an effect on nature. We must also tell you that *tuma* (ancestral divination stones) must not be taken out of the ground. We behave respectfully but the Younger Brothers do not. As soon as they see something in the earth they grab it. They are taking advantage of the frailty of nature, and the Mother does not resist, but ... This is what we Mamas want to make clear to the Younger Brothers.

The birds have gone from us, because the Parents of Teyuna (the humming bird, the Lost City and the spirit guardian of the *tumas*) have been taken. (They were made manifest in buried gold figurines that have been looted).

If Western society wants to have *sewa* (small stones for payments), if they want to work well and help us, there are stones that we can provide ... Tourists are gathering these stones and we say to them that they do not have authority to do that.

The sea also has stones and shells that we can gather. All the rivers that flow to the beaches come from *Ezuamas*. These rivers must not be damaged or they cannot carry anything down to feed the sea. The clouds are raised down there to complete the water cycle to the peaks. The lagoons high on the mountain are the Mothers of the sea and they supply its needs. The daughter of the lagoons is the sea, and like a daughter it supplies the lagoons through this cycle of the water ...

It is not possible to repair the damage that the Younger Brothers have done to the sacred sites. The Mother cannot survive this. So we now see the rivers drying out, avalanches, landslips, drought, unfamiliar weather, and all this is being brought about by the Younger Brothers. We can no longer feed nature with its ancestral sustenance, ...

There used to be different species of birds here. Nowadays there are almost no birds. Already there are no traditional foods. Previously we took care of the *Makú*, *Nulkujaluwa* and the sea without help. Now the Mother cannot be cared for by us alone, nor the Heart of the World. But as we said, we must look after these sacred sites.

Makú, which can represent the 'Father' of Thunder, is a transcendental force with powers over the world, and was here signifying the destructive force of the climate. In its defence, the mountain itself was setting out the Black Line as an absolute final boundary, what we might call a red line, a non-negotiable limit beyond which younger brother's behaviour is not just unacceptable but totally prohibited.

We Mamas have analysed that you may not destroy the hills, but many sacred sites have been destroyed, cut into, and constructions erected over them. Can the Mother's existence continue?

... Perhaps we did not work hard enough to make the Younger Brother understand. But we think that nature is going to support us so that the Younger Brothers understands us.

If Mama Pedro Juan was indeed giving utterance to the voice of the world, the world was now issuing an unequivocal threat,

We Mamas know the function of each site, but the Younger Brothers do not listen. All this has been the cause of avalanches, destruction and massacres. This affects the Younger Brother as much as us. New diseases are appearing, travelling from place to place.

The death of the sea was imminent.

One sacred site was the place of the Mother who had to take care of the sea, and we must take care of the sea just as of the Earth so that it produces fish, shellfish and everything. We human beings are her children. Now she is slowly fading. The Organisation Gonawindua Tairona and their Cabildo exist to make public declarations about all this since the Mothers cannot take care of things unaided.

And so we were brought back to the uncrossable line. Permission to enter the Sierra is now only to be obtained from the OGT, and the OGT does not speak of its own volition.

Really the decision is made by the *Ezuamas*.

The new Cabildo of the OGT, Santos Sauna, is not a Mama and his inauguration was taking the form of a tour of the *Ezuamas* at which he had to learn to listen and

listen to learn. He had been at pains to tell me that he had begun now to speak words that were not his own, but the voice of the mountain. This was how he negotiated (very successfully) with the other Santos, the country's president. The Mama ended his speech by stressing that the new Cabildo was '*not appointed by the organisation, but named by Nulkujaluwa and by the mountains*', and that the prohibition on non-indigenous access to the Sierra was demanded by the earth itself.

The Mamas are not speaking out on their own initiative, but the sites themselves have begun to ask for this support. The *Ezuamas* used to be places where the Mamas alone held council, but now people simply walk wherever they want. There are sites where no-one can go. They have always been required to ask permission to go to sacred hills. These are sites that the Kogi of the Sierra Nevada believe may not be walked without permission of the Mama. You can only go there to make offerings, and only with prior permission. The mother suffers when people go without permission.

Failure to heed this would have consequences.

We do not know who is going to fall sick first, but we are expecting pandemics, and because these are manifestations of the sickness suffered by nature itself, it is going to be hard to find drugs that can cure the coming sickness.

All *Ezuamas* agree with this declaration ...

Ah!

The world may begin to tremble.

More and more indicators appear, like the birth of deformed children, as sacred sites are interfered with. That is our thought and this above all we will continue saying to the world.

This is why we were born and live and this is what we declare. We invite other indigenous people and all people in the world to grasp the situation in which we now live.

That was the message of the mountain, spoken through the *Ezuamas*, articulated by four women and a man trained from birth in darkness. I was there to convey it. Eventually, the Mamas asked me to help them make a new film, called *Aluna*, in which they tried to make it heard. It did not make much of a splash.

Mama Pedro Juan's speech was made ten years ago. The Mama, who was in his prime, has suddenly died. The OGT still stands squarely behind the proclamation of the Black Line and the prohibition on uninvited incursions, but the political power to enforce it is lacking. Tourism has increased. A recent visit to the Kogi of the Palomino valley by artists, organized by Mia Pfeifer, found

that their traditional work was entirely for tourists. Artisanal products were simply too profitable to keep. Their own bags are now woven with yellow plastic fibre, which is also used to tie together the beams of their houses and to make hammocks.⁵¹ The artists were charged a fee by paramilitaries for being there, and local Kogi required them to pay for an electric saw to make a new loom.

The president who signed the Black Line decree did so as his final act before being replaced. Paramilitary power seems to have taken over. At the time of writing, the Black Line decree does not appear to have any effective force, and on 22 February 2019 the OGT felt compelled to publicly declare that ‘the indigenous peoples are now intimidated by threats, extortion and even kidnapping by armed men who freely travel the mountain massif’.⁵² Two indigenous individuals were said to have been kidnapped and held for ransom for ten days. Indigenous teachers and health workers are in danger. This is seen as the start of a possible larger assault on indigenous land and property. Control of the Black Line frontier is now in the hands, not of the OGT, but of the armed group. They said in their declaration, ‘We used to go down quietly to perform spiritual works anywhere, but now, we do it with fear and we have to ask for permission from them to authorize us to go to places marked in the black line.’⁵³

The warning was for the life of the world, a call to the defence of the Black Line. That was the reason for the historic act of producing a book, *Shikwakala*. They have now charged me with seeking its translation and international publication, and we are working together on developing a pilot project with UWTSD and UNESCO to share their knowledge with recognized scientific researchers, publicly demonstrating a ‘new’ approach to restoring the health of damaged territory. The end of the Kogi, the mountain, and the world is, in their mind, the same. The question they asked in our first film was,

What would they think if all we Mamas died? Would they think, ‘Well? so what?’ What would they think? If that happened and all we Mamas died, and there was no-one doing our work, well, the rain wouldn’t fall from the sky. It would get hotter and hotter from the sky, and the trees wouldn’t grow and the crops wouldn’t grow. Or am I wrong and they will grow anyway?

We may soon find out.

Notes

- 1 Marcos Martín-Torres, Roberto Valcárcel Rojas, Juanita Sáenz Samper, María Filomena Guerra, ‘Metallic Encounters in Cuba: The Technology, Exchange

- and Meaning of Metals before and after Columbus', *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 31, no. 4 (2012): 439–54, at 446.
- 2 Thomas D. Cabot, Walter A. Wood, and Frank B. Notestein, 'The Cabot Expedition to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta of Colombia', *Geographical Review* 29, no. 4 (1939): 587–621.
 - 3 Maria C. D. G Tribin, Guillermo N. Rodríguez, and Maryi Valderrama, *The Biosphere Reserve of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta: A Pioneer Experience of a Shared and Co-ordinated Management of a Bioregion: Colombia*, Working Paper No. 30 (Paris: UNESCO, 1999), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000118591> (accessed 18 January 2018).
 - 4 Soizic Le Saout, Michael Hoffmann, Yichuan Shi, Adrian Hughes, Cyril Bernard, Thomas M. Brooks, Bastian Bertzky, Stuart H. M. Butchart, Simon N. Stuart, Tim Badman, and Ana S. L. Rodrigues, 'Protected Areas and Effective Biodiversity Conservation', *Science* 342, no. 6160 (2013): 803–5.
 - 5 S. Giraldo, 'Lords of the Snow Ranges: Politics, Place, and Landscape Transformation in Two Tairona Towns in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 2010), 43.
 - 6 Camilo Montes, Georgina Guzman, Germán Bayona, et al., 'Clockwise Rotation of the Santa Marta Massif and Simultaneous Paleogene to Neogene Deformation of the Plato-San Jorge and Cesar-Ranchería Basins', *Journal of South American Earth Sciences* 29, no. 4 (2010): 832–48, at 847.
 - 7 Adriaan Alsema, 'Colombia Vows to Ban Mining in One of World's Highest Coastal Ranges', *Colombia Reports*, 27 November 2017, <https://colombiareports.com/colombia-bans-mining-one-worlds-highest-coastal-ranges/> (accessed 19 January 2019).
 - 8 Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca – CRIC, 'Arhuacos Ganan Batalla Contra Empresa de Hidrocarburos Azabache', 23 February 2018, <https://www.cric-colombia.org/portal/arhuacos-ganan-batalla-empresa-hidrocarburos-azabache/> (accessed 19 January 2019).
 - 9 Cabot et al., 'Cabot Expedition', 594.
 - 10 Cabot et al., 'Cabot Expedition', 611, 615.
 - 11 Alan Ereira, *The Heart of the World* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1990), 138–41.
 - 12 Álvaro Soto-Holguín, *The Lost City of the Tayronas* (Bogotá: Colombia I/M Editores Editorial Nomos S.A., 2006).
 - 13 David J. Wilson, *Indigenous South Americans of the Past and Present: An Ecological Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 276.
 - 14 Andrés Ricardo Restrepo Campo and Sandra Turbay, 'The Silence of the Kogi in Front of Tourists', *Annals of Tourism Research* 52 (May 2015): 44–59, at 48–9.
 - 15 República de Colombia, Ministerio del Interior, Decreto número 1500 de 6 Ago, 2018, 3–4, <http://es.presidencia.gov.co/normativa/normativa/DECRETO%20>

- 1500%20DEL%2006%20DE%20AGOSTO%20DE%202018.pdf (accessed 14 August 2019).
- 16 Carlos Alberto Uribe Tobón, 'Pioneros de la antropología en Colombia; el padre Rafael Celedón,' *Boleten Museo Del Oro* 17 (1986): 3–31.
 - 17 Yanelia Mestre Pacheco, Peter Rawitscher Adams, and 23 Mamas, *Shikwakala; El Crujido de la Madre Tierra* (Santa Marta: Organización Gonawindua Tayrona, 2018), 225.
 - 18 Alan Ereira, *The Elder Brothers Warning* (London: Tairona Heritage Trust, 2009), 42.
 - 19 Ereira, *Heart of the World*, 44–5.
 - 20 Ereira, *Heart of the World*, 115. This is not a uniquely Tairona vision; see for instance the Rig Veda creation hymn, 10:129.
 - 21 *From the Heart of the World: The Elder Brothers' Warning* [video], YouTube (televised by the BBC 1990, uploaded 29 June 2018), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfSnTUc52C8&t=9s>; Ereira, *Heart of the World*.
 - 22 *From the Heart of the World* (1990): 09.28–10.24.
 - 23 *From the Heart of the World* (1990): 26.34–27.13.
 - 24 Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, 'Notas Sobre el Simbolismo Religioso de los Indios de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta,' *Razón y Fábula* I (1967): 55–72, at 57.
 - 25 Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, 'The Great Mother and the Kogi Universe: A Concise Overview,' *Journal of Latin American Lore* 13, no. 1 (1987): 73–113, at 73.
 - 26 Mama Valencio in *From the Heart of the World* (1990): 28.22–28.27.
 - 27 Restrepo Campo and Turbay, 'Silence of the Kogi in Front of Tourists,' 48–9.
 - 28 Ramon Gil in *From the Heart of the World* (1990): 36.06–36.46.
 - 29 Konrad Theodor Preuss, 'Forschungsreise zu den Kágaba, Beobachtungen, Textaufnahmen und sprachliche Studien bei einem Indianerstamme in Kolumbien, Südamerika,' *Anthropos* 21, no. 5/6 (1926): 777–96; Tobón Uribe, 'Pioneros de la antropología en Colombia; and Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, 'Training for the Priesthood among the Kogi of Colombia,' in *Enculturation in Latin America: An Anthology*, ed. Johannes Wilbert (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Centre Publications, 1976), 265–88.
 - 30 Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, *The Sacred Mountain of Colombia's Kogi Indians* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 5.
 - 31 From the video *From the Heart of the World*: 38.10–38.40.
 - 32 Falk Xué Parra Witte, 'Living the Law of Origin: The Cosmological, Ontological, Epistemological, and Ecological Framework of Kogi Environmental Politics' (Doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2018), 167. <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.22047>.
 - 33 Parra Witte, 'Living the Law of Origin,' 117.

- 34 Organización Gonawindua Tairona, <https://gonawindua.org/organizacion/fundamentos/> (accessed 19 January 2019).
- 35 Ramon Gil, 'The Law of Sé: Linking the Spiritual and Material', in *Art and Cultural Heritage: Law, Policy, and Practice*, ed. Barbara T. Hoffman, trans. Alan Ereira (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 21–7, at 21.
- 36 Parra Witte, 'Living the Law of Origin', 20.
- 37 Mestre Pacheco et al., *Shikwakala*.
- 38 Mestre Pacheco et al., *Shikwakala*, 7.
- 39 Mestre Pacheco et al., *Shikwakala*, 19.
- 40 Matthew T. Evans, 'The Sacred: Differentiating, Clarifying and Extending Concepts', *Review of Religious Research* 45, no. 1 (2003): 32–47.
- 41 Guillermo Rodríguez-Navarro, 'Traditional Knowledge: An Innovative Contribution to Landscape Management', in *Conserving Cultural Landscapes: Challenges and New Directions*, ed. Ken Taylor, Archer St. Clair, and Nora J. Mitchell (New York: Routledge 2015), 277–94, contains a summary identification of sites on the territorial boundary.
- 42 G. Sánchez Herrera, M. L. Hernández Turriago, G. Mayor-Aragón, C. Gómez-Rangel, I. P. Corredor Bobadilla, M. Y. Puentes Amaya, W. Blanco-Ortiz, M. Muñoz Díaz, J. M. Pinzón Cáceres, and R. Franke Ante, *Plan de Manejo 2005–2009, Parque Nacional Natural Tayrona* (Santa Marta: Ministerio de Ambiente Vivienda y Desarrollo Territorial/Unidad administrativa Especial del Sistema de Parques Nacionales Naturales, 2006), 74.
- 43 Personal communication from Cabildo Santo Sauna to me, April 2009.
- 44 Republica de Colombia, Ministerio del Interior, Decreto número 1500 de 6 Ago 2018, Artículo 4 (b), (c), 9, 10 (accessed 14 August 2019).
- 45 Mestre Pacheco et al., *Shikwakala*, 230.
- 46 Parra Witte, 'Living the Law of Origin', 44.
- 47 Camilo Arbeláez Albornoz, 'Diversidad cultural: el mayor desafío a la salud pública contemporánea', *Palimpsestvs* 5, (2005), 42–51 at 47, bdigital.unal.edu.co/14236/1/3-8057-PB.pdf, accessed 5 March, 2019.
- 48 Parra Witte, 'Living the Law of Origin', 78.
- 49 Mestre Pacheco et al., *Shikwakala*, 113.
- 50 Mama Shibulata speaking at the *ezuama* of Seizua, 'Aluna' [video] YouTube (2012, uploaded 4 February 2018), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftFbCwJfsII>, 50.36–51.7 (accessed 5 March 2019).
- 51 Personal communication from Mia Pfeifer to me, January 2019; Mia Pfeifer, 'FIBRA', <http://www.miapfeifer.com/index.php?/selected-works/fibra/> (accessed 31 January 2019).
- 52 Roger Urieles Velasquez, 'Amenazas, extorsiones y secuestros a indígenas en la Sierra Nevada', *El Tiempo*, 22 February 2019, <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/>

- otras-ciudades/amenazas-extorsiones-y-secuestros-a-indigenas-en-la-sierra-nevada-330112 (accessed 5 March 2019).
- 53 Velasquez, 'Amenazas.'

Bibliography

- Alsema, A. 'Colombia Vows to Ban Mining in One of World's Highest Coastal Ranges.' Colombia Reports, 27 November 2017. <https://colombiareports.com/colombia-bans-mining-one-worlds-highest-coastal-ranges/> (accessed 19 January 2019).
- Arbeláez Albornoz, Camilo. 'Diversidad cultural: el mayor desafío a la salud pública contemporánea.' *Palimpsestvs* 5 (2005): 42–51. bdigital.unal.edu.co/14236/1/3-8057-PB.pdf.
- Cabot, Thomas D., Walter A. Wood, and Frank B. Notestein. 'The Cabot Expedition to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta of Colombia.' *Geographical Review* 29, no. 4 (1939): 587–621.
- Campo, Restrepo, Andrés Ricardo, and Sandra Turbay. 'The silence of the Kogi in front of tourists.' *Annals of Tourism Research* 52 (May 2015): 44–59.
- Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca – CRIC. 'Arhuacos Ganan Batalla Contra Empresa de Hidrocarburos Azabache,' 23 February, 2018, <https://www.cric-colombia.org/portal/arhuacos-ganan-batalla-empresa-hidrocarburos-azabache/> (accessed 19 January 2019).
- Ereira, Alan. *The Heart of the World*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1990.
- Ereira, Alan. *The Elder Brothers Warning*. London: Tairona Heritage Trust, 2009.
- Evans, Matthew T. 'The Sacred: Differentiating, Clarifying and Extending Concepts.' *Review of Religious Research* 45, no. 1 (2003): 32–47.
- From the Heart of the World: The Elder Brothers' Warning* [video], YouTube (televised by the BBC 1990, uploaded 29 June 2018), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfSnTUc52C8&t=9s>.
- Gil, Ramon. 'The Law of Sé: Linking the Spiritual and Material.' In *Art and Cultural Heritage: Law, Policy, and Practice*, edited by Barbara T. Hoffman, translated by Alan Ereira, 21–7. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Giraldo, S., 'Lords of the Snow Ranges: Politics, Place, and Landscape Transformation in Two Tairona Towns in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia.' Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 2010.
- Le Saout, Soizic, Michael Hoffmann, Yichuan Shi, Adrian Hughes, Cyril Stuart, Tim Badman, and Ana S. L. Rodrigues, 'Protected Areas and Effective Biodiversity Conservation.' *Science* 342, no. 6160 (2013): 803–5.
- Martinón-Torres, Marcos, Roberto Valcárcel Rojas, Juanita Sáenz Samper, and María Filomena Guerra. 'Metallic Encounters in Cuba: The Technology, Exchange

- and Meaning of Metals before and after Columbus'. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 31, no. 4 (2012): 439–54.
- Mestre Pacheco, Yanelia, and Peter Rawitscher Adams, and 23 Mamas. *Shikwakala; El Crujido de la Madre Tierra*. Santa Marta, CO: Organización Gonawindua Tayrona, 2018.
- Montes, Camilo, Georgina Guzman, Germán Bayona, et al. 'Clockwise Rotation of the Santa Marta Massif and Simultaneous Paleogene to Neogene Deformation of the Plato-San Jorge and Cesar-Ranchería Basins'. *Journal of South American Earth Sciences* 29, no. 4 (2010): 832–48.
- Organización Gonawindua Tairona. <https://www.gonawindua.org/orden-de-la-naturaleza/> (accessed 19 January 2019).
- Parra Witte, Falk Xué, 'Living the Law of Origin: The Cosmological, Ontological, Epistemological, and Ecological Framework of Kogi Environmental Politics'. Doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.22047>.
- Pfeifer, Mia. FIBRA, <http://www.miapfeifer.com/index.php?/selected-works/fibra/> (accessed 31 January 2019).
- Preuss, Konrad Theodor, 'Forschungsreise zu den Kágaba, Beobachtungen, Textaufnahmen und sprachliche Studien bei einem Indianerstamme in Kolumbien, Südamerika'. *Anthropos* 21, no. 5/6 (1926): 777–96.
- Reichel-Dolmatoff, Gerardo. 'Notas Sobre el Simbolismo Religioso de los Indios de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta'. *Razón y Fábula* I (1967): 55–72.
- Reichel-Dolmatoff, Gerardo. 'Training for the Priesthood among the Kogi of Colombia'. In *Enculturation in Latin America: An Anthology*, edited by Johannes Wilbert, 265–88. Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Centre, 1976.
- Reichel-Dolmatoff, Gerardo. 'The Great Mother and the Kogi Universe: A Concise Overview'. *Journal of Latin American Lore* 13, no. 1 (1987): 73–113.
- Reichel-Dolmatoff, Gerardo. *The Sacred Mountain of Colombia's Kogi Indians*. Leiden: Brill, 1990.
- República de Colombia, Ministerio del Interior. 'Decreto número 1500 de 6 Ago 2018', <http://es.presidencia.gov.co/normativa/normativa/DECRETO%201500%20DEL%2006%20DE%20AGOSTO%20DE%202018.pdf> (accessed 14 August 2019).
- Rodriguez-Navarro, Guillermo. 'Traditional Knowledge: An Innovative Contribution to Landscape Management'. In *Conserving Cultural Landscapes: Challenges and New Directions*, edited by Ken Taylor, Archer St. Clair, and Nora J. Mitchell, 277–94. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Sánchez Herrera, Gustavo, Marta Lucía Hernández Turriago, Gustavo Mayor Aragón, Camilo Gómez Rangel, Irina Patricia Corredor Bobadilla, Mary Yolima Puentes Amaya, Wilson Blanco Ortiz, Mirith Muñoz Díaz, Juan Manuel Pinzón Cáceres, and Rebeca Franke Ante. *Plan de Manejo 2005–2009, Parque Nacional Natural Tayrona*. Santa Marta: Ministerio de Ambiente Vivienda y Desarrollo Territorial/Unidad administrativa Especial del Sistema de Parques Nacionales Naturales, 2006.

- Soto Holguín, Álvaro. *The Lost City of the Tayronas*. Bogotá: Editorial Nomos S.A., 2006.
- Tobón, Carlos Alberto Uribe. 'Pioneros de la antropología en Colombia; el padre Rafael Celedón'. *Boletín Museo Del Oro* 17 (1986): 3–31.
- Tribin, Maria C. D. G, Guillermo N. Rodríguez, and Maryi Valderrama, *The Biosphere Reserve of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta: A Pioneer Experience of a Shared and Co-ordinated Management of a Bioregion: Colombia*, Working Paper No. 30. Paris: UNESCO, 1999. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000118591> (accessed 18 January 2018).
- Urieles Velasquez, Roger, 'Amenazas, extorsiones y secuestros a indígenas en la Sierra Nevada'. *El Tiempo*, 22 February 2019, <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/amenazas-extorsiones-y-secuestros-a-indigenas-en-la-sierra-nevada-330112> (accessed 5 March 2019).
- Wilson, David J. *Indigenous South Americans of the Past and Present: An Ecological Perspective*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.