

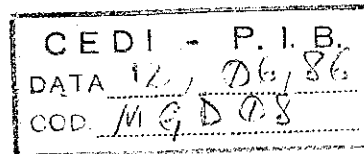


Ill. 6 Men playing a traditional 'hockey'-game (post Mēkrāgnoti)

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The Intertribal Relations between the Juruna and the Kayapo Indians (1850–1920)

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(With 1 color frontispiece, 6 illustrations on plates XXXVI–XXXIX and 1 map)

The Kayapo are nowadays one of the largest Indian tribes in Brazil. Divided over eleven villages, with a total population of about 2400 Indians, they occupy an enormous territory in Central Brazil, situated between the Rio Fresco (a confluent of the Xingú River) and the Rio Jamaxim (a confluent of the Tapayoz River), and between the Transamazonica and the Xingú National Park, — in other words, between lat. 5°–11° S. and long. 51°–55° W.

Linguistically, the Kayapo belong to the Gê language group. They speak, more specifically, a dialect the linguists usually classify into the Northwest-Gê group — together with the Timbira (Canela or Ramkokamekrá, Apanyekrá, Krahô, Krikati, Gavião and Apinayé), the Suyá and the Krã-yokãr.

Among the eleven Kayapo villages, four belong to the Mëkrãgnoti-group: the posts Bau, Mëkrãgnoti, Jarina and Kretire. The two most southern groups (of the Jarina and Kretire posts) are generally called Mëtùktire or Txukarramãe in the literature.

During my field-studies, I visited all the Mëkrãgnoti villages, except for the post Jarina. Most of my fieldwork was done at the Mëkrãgnoti-post, situated between the rivers Iriri and Curua. During the period of December 1974 and June 1979 I went eight times to the Mëkrãgnoti: altogether I stayed there for about 24 months. The fact that I learned to speak the language reasonably well enabled me to write down in detail the verbal history of this group.

The Mëkrãgnoti are still living isolated. Although some external changes can be noticed (wearing clothes, playing football, etc.) the traditional culture remains the unquestionable soul of their society. Actually, the village counts 315 Indians, with a yearly increase of 3%.

In the following article I shall deal with the intertribal relations between the Kayapo (more specifically the Mëkrãgnoti) and the Juruna.¹ Most anthropologists do not pay much attention to the verbal history of Indian tribes. But ever since the beginning of my fieldwork I have been interested in this subject. The history of the Kayapo is much more complex than one supposed. The material on which this article is based dates from the end of 1978 and the beginning of 1979. While I was writing down the Kayapo history of the last century, some informants told me about the frequent contacts they have had with the Juruna. They went more into detail by telling the following stories. These stories were recorded on tape, and hereafter I shall give the transcriptions. I tried to stick to the original wording of the stories as much as possible,

¹ Juruna: a tribe linguistically classified within the Tupi language group. There are actually some 80 Juruna, living in one village (in the northern part of the Xingú National Park).

although sometimes I had to shorten the texts for the sake of clearness in this limited context.

The aim of this article is to draw the intertribal relations in outlines, based on the verbal tradition of the Kayapo themselves. Then I intend to explain some aspects of the cultural dynamics of this tribe.

The intertribal relation Mēkrāgnoti – Juruna (1850–1920)

The Mēkrāgnoti call themselves, as well as all other Kayapo, *mēbengokre*². Sometimes they say that tribes as the Suyá and the Timbira (of whom they know that their languages and cultures are very similar) belong to the *mēbengokre* as well. Other tribes are given descriptive names. For instance, the Juruna are called *ngo-rén* (rowers). The Juruna people were always living near big rivers and are excellent canoeists. The Kayapo, on the other hand, lived in the savannahs and forests, and during their long trips large rivers were considered as obstacles.³

In their mythology the Mēkrāgnoti explain the origin of the Juruna as follows:

“A long time ago there were no *ngo-rén* (Juruna). Then the Kayapo went for a long trip, far away from the village. During this journey the boys of the *mē boktīre*⁴-group played with bow and arrow. They were shooting at a termitary. This termitary grabbed at the *mē boktīre* and threw them in the water – where they stayed. They grew up, and are now the Juruna. Afterwards the Kayapo killed a lot of Juruna, because they were no longer Kayapo, no family any more.”

For a better understanding of the evolution of this relation between the Juruna and the Kayapo I have to give a short sketch of Kayapo history at the beginning of the last century. The Mēkrāgnoti informants did it as well.

At the beginning of the last century the Kayapo lived at the Rio Tocantins, at about lat. 6° S. Forced by the western migration of other Indian tribes and the appearance of the first Brazilian settlements in that area, the Kayapo moved to the left side of the Rio Araguaya (at about lat. 8° S.). There were three large Kayapo groups: the Put-karot (or Xikrin), the Ira-amrāire and the Gorotire. The Xikrin lived at the north, in the area of the Itacaiunas and Bacaia rivers. They still live there, divided in two villages. The Ira-amrāire stayed in the area at the left side of the Araguaya river. They became extinct at the beginning of this century. After internal dispute with these Ira-amrāire, about 1840 the Gorotire moved farther westward, to the territory between the Fresco and Xingú rivers. They lived there in one big village (of which the number of inhabitants was estimated at 1500 Indians⁵).

At that period the Kayapo had their first hostile contacts with the Juruna:

“In the big Gorotire village, Kubendjāgogo (a big chief) was killed. After this, Katāpkrōiti left the village and went to a Juruna village with Tamariko and Kadjāt-nhinti as chiefs. They were the Juruna that had already killed a lot of Kayapo. Afterwards, during an

² “People of the watery places”.

³ The Kayapo always lived near small creeks. (Nowadays all Kayapo villages are built near big rivers: only the post Mēkrāgnoti is still situated near a creek, an affluent of the Xixé river).

⁴ *mē boktīre*: age grade of boys between four and nine years.

⁵ COUDREAU, 1897.

attack on these Juruna, the Gorotire ran away with a boy of this tribe. His name was Tākāk-ti. When he became a *mē noronūre*⁶ he said: ‘Let’s go to the Juruna, be friends with them, and kill them.’ And so a lot of Gorotire men, among which Beb-mòr’i (the brother of Katāpkrōiti), went to the Juruna. When they arrived, they asked for Katāpkrōiti, but he was gone down the river. The Juruna told the Kayapo to wait for Katāpkrōiti, because he would not be long away, and at his return he would give them a lot of glass beads. The Juruna gave food to the Gorotire men. Later on Katāpkrōiti arrived in his canoe.

The Juruna told the Gorotire then that Katāpkrōiti would kill them. The Gorotire sent Beb-mòr’i to meet his brother, just to see if he was angry because of their arrival. Katāpkrōiti was already pulling his canoe ashore. He had a lot of glass beads. Katāpkrōiti saw the Gorotire men, reached for his club⁷ and shouted: ‘I am alone!’. Beb-mòr’i said to his brother: ‘Give me that club, we did not come to fight. We are family. We came for glass beads.’ And they sat next to each other and talked. Tākāk-ti became angry, and started to fight with the Juruna. Beb-mòr’i fought with his brother and killed him. They took all his glass beads and went back to the village.”

The Juruna chief, Tamariko, of whom the Mēkrāgnoti were talking, was indeed mentioned by HENRI COUDREAU as a former chief about 1880⁸. We may assume that this story took place between 1870 and 1880. The place the Mēkrāgnoti mentioned as the one where the contact was made, is conform to the one which HENRI COUDREAU described: the rapids, a little upstream from the confluence of the Fresco and Xingú rivers.

The only thing the Gorotire really wanted from the Juruna, at that time, were glass beads⁹. These beads had been given to the Juruna then in large quantities by Brazilians or Europeans who sailed up the Xingú river.

After this incident a little group under the leadership of Motere separated from the big Gorotire village. They left for the north-west, nearer to the Juruna. They wanted to live on friendly terms with this tribe in order to obtain the glass beads. Some Mēkrāgnoti informants even pretended they wanted to join the Juruna and live together with them in one village. They wanted to accept the Juruna as *ombikwá* (family). It is interesting to compare this with the mythological explanation of the origin of the Juruna tribe: the Juruna were originally Kayapo, who then lived in the water, and ever since no longer lived on friendly terms with them.

Obviously, the Juruna who did lose a lot of victims during the wars with the Kayapo were very suspicious.

Hence the large Gorotire group remained in their traditional tribal territory. The small group that separated from the Gorotire to go and live near the Juruna are actually known as the Mēkrāgnoti. At that time both groups still lived on friendly terms with each other. They were living no more than 60 km from each other.

The Mēkrāgnoti decided to become good friends with the Juruna:

“Motere and his group (the Mēkrāgnoti) visited the Juruna regularly. But they were frightened of Tamariko and Kadjāt-nhinti, because each time the Mēkrāgnoti visited them, they sang the song of angryness.¹⁰ One day, a lot of Mēkrāgnoti went to the Juruna for

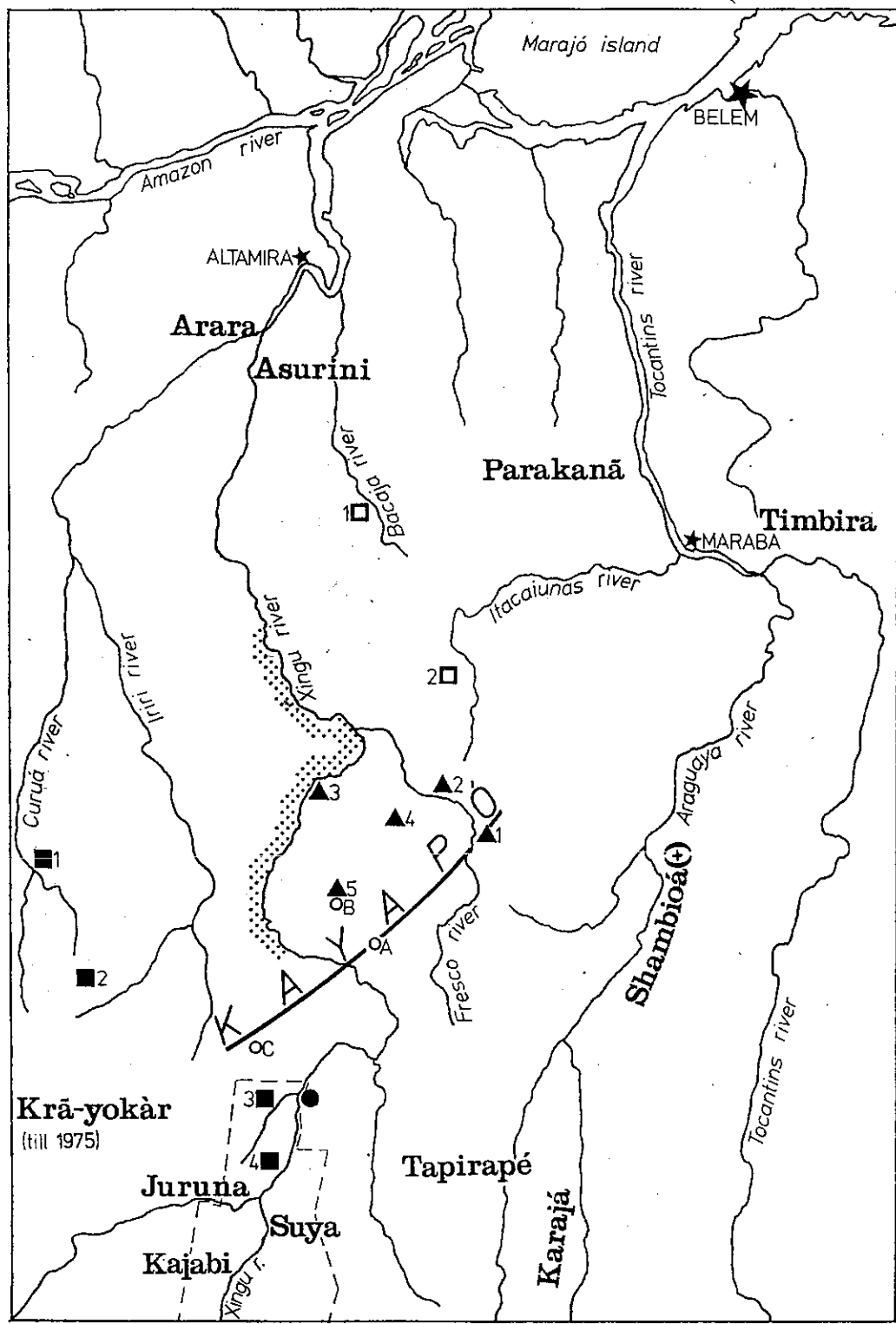
⁶ *mē noronūre*: age grade of boys between 14 years and the time when they marry.

⁷ The traditional Kayapo weapon.

⁸ HENRI COUDREAU (1897) mentioned Tamariko as one of the Juruna chiefs, some 20 years before his journey up the Xingú river.

⁹ The Kayapo still ask for big quantities of glass beads.

¹⁰ A song (with dance) performed before attacking.



Map indicating Indian village locations

– Kayapo-Mëkrãgnoti village locations (■):

1. post Bau (60 Indians).
2. post Mëkrãgnoti (320 Indians).
3. post Jarina (100 Indians).
4. post Kretire (160 Indians).

– Kayapo-Gorotire village locations (▲):

1. post Gorotire (600 Indians).
2. post Kikretum (120 Indians).
3. post Kokraxmôr (150 Indians).
4. post Kubenkrankain (northern) (350 Indians).
5. post Kubenkrankain (southern) (140 Indians).

– Kayapo-Put Karot (Xikrin) village locations (□):

1. post Bacaja (180 Indians).
2. post Catete (220 Indians).

– ancient Kayapo village locations (○):

- A. ancient Gorotire village (1840–1930).
- B. ancient Mëkrãgnoti village (kra'a bom) (1880–1900).
- C. ancient Mëkrãgnoti village (1900–1950).

– Juruna village locations:

- ∴ Juruna tribal territory (1850–1900).
- Juruna village location (about 1910).

Juruna actual Juruna village location.

– other indications:

- Arara Central Brazilian Indian tribes.
- Xingu National Park.

glass beads. The Juruna washed all the Mēkrāgnoti at the riverside and looked for *mē iré*.¹¹ Those who had the *mē iré* were engaged: they were given little white, yellow, green and pale-blue beads¹² by the Juruna and were sent back to the village. The ones who did not have *mē iré* were permitted to the village: they were not engaged. A lot of dark-blue and big white beads were given to them, and they stayed in the Juruna village. But then the Juruna started to kill those Mēkrāgnoti in revenge for the death of Katāpkrōiti. The Juruna killed them one by one. After there were only a few left, the Mēkrāgnoti wondered where the rest of their group might be. One day the Mēkrāgnoti went on hunting *mōn-l* keys with the Juruna. The Mēkrāgnoti were trapped and they all were killed. Thus, only three *mē noronūre* (Tōp-ti, Kaingārti and ?) and two *mē kurerere*¹³ (Mrū-karà and Ire'ōti) were left. Ire'ōti returned to the Mēkrāgnoti village. Her fiancé over there became very angry because of her having sexual intercourse with Juruna men, and cut her inner lips. The Juruna had built a new canoe and asked the Mēkrāgnoti to clear a large path in order to remove the canoe to the river. Kaingārti stayed in the village. The two other *mē noronūre* went to the place where the new canoe was left. They agreed to revenge the death of their congeners. They killed two Juruna men and a few women, and took refuge in the Mēkrāgnoti village. So only Kaingārti and Mrū-karà remained with the Juruna. The Juruna wanted to kill Kaingārti as well. But he had been adopted by an old Juruna couple who did not want the death of their adopted son because they did not have any other children. Several times Kaingārti went hunting with the Juruna, but he was constantly afraid of being trapped. So he was never without his bow and arrows. Mrū-karà was told in the village that the Juruna planned to kill her congener and warned him. So he said to her: 'Tonight you must dance, dance a lot. When everyone is asleep, I'll leave. You don't have to be frightened, they won't kill you. You are a woman. I'm a man, they want to kill me, but now I leave.' In the late afternoon Mrū-karà started dancing. She danced and sang parts of all Kayapo festivals. Late at night she was performing the *mē nire biyók*.¹⁴ The Juruna were very sleepy and told her to stop because they were tired. She stopped and everyone went to sleep. They all slept very soon. Kaingārti was lying in his hammock. Underneath the hammock were placed a lot of gourds so that they would make a lot of noise when he would get up. But Kaingārti was very careful and when he had taken an axe, a chopping-knife, matches and glass beads of his adoptive parents, he left. He took a canoe from the Juruna and crossed the Xingú river. While he was rowing he heard the Juruna searching for him. He heard his adoptive parents crying and wanted to return. But then he decided to go on. He made a fire, took a few torches and went on. He slept little. The next day he moved on, all day long. He ate hearts of palmtrees and killed a forest chicken. The following night again he slept only a little and the day afterwards he walked without resting. The next evening he arrived near to *kra'ā bom*¹⁵ where the Mēkrāgnoti village was situated. People were dancing at the village. Kaingārti swam across the river, and stayed at the riverside until he was dry. Afterwards he went to the village, shouting. Someone in the village heard it and said to the others: 'Be quiet, somebody is coming.' They all took a torch and went looking for him. Then they saw Kaingārti. He wore a lot of glass beads, and everyone shouted: 'Kaingārti is

back' His family cried. Later on Kaingārti said: 'Let's celebrate the *kwor-kangó*-festival¹⁶. He had seen the Juruna perform it and taught it to the Mēkrāgnoti.'

This story proves that the relations between the Juruna and the Kayapo (Mēkrāgnoti) were not very good. The Juruna were afraid of the Kayapo, because they were so numerous.¹⁷ The Juruna then decided to kill their enemies by means of a trap: first of all by sending back a group to their village, later on by trapping the others, one by one.

Some Gorotire (of the big Kayapo village) had occasionally contact with the Juruna. Bekrô (a Gorotire) did trade with the Juruna:

'The Mēkrāgnoti received glass beads while trading with the Juruna. Afterwards, the Juruna asked for Bekrô. The Mēkrāgnoti told them he was at his village (Gorotire). A Juruna man said: 'Bekrô still owes me some parrots. He took all my glass beads with him.' The Mēkrāgnoti said they would inform Bekrô. Later on the Mēkrāgnoti met Bekrô on his way to the Juruna. The Mēkrāgnoti told Bekrô not to go, because the Juruna were going to kill him. Bekrô on the contrary wanted to go to obtain more glass beads. He was with his wife (Ngokwoiti) and his father-in-law (Kengāre). When they approached the Juruna, those were crossing the Xingú river. They asked right away for the parrots, but Bekrô answered that he had forgotten them. The Juruna offered more glass beads to Bekrô and his family. Afterwards the Juruna returned to their village, took their carbines, divided some munition, and crossed the river again. Kwatê (a Juruna man) brought more glass beads along for Bekrô. Kadjāt-nhinti and Tamariko were standing up in the canoes, singing the song of angriiness, while the others were rowing. When they reached the riverside, Kwatê showed his beads. Bekrô approached and said: 'Those are for me. They will make me look beautiful during the festivals.' Kengāre warned Bekrô not to go too close to the Juruna, but Bekrô went on. He gave arrows to Kwatê, who offered him his glass beads. Right away the Juruna killed Bekrô and Kengāre, and they shot in Ngokwoiti's arm. They shot with their carbines.¹⁸ The Juruna took the body of Bekrô with them in their canoe until they reached the rocks at the middle of the river. They cut his head off and opened his body.¹⁹ Kengāre lay dead on the riverside. They left his body. Ngokwoiti ran away to the village. On the way she met a small group of Mēkrāgnoti, and she told them that the Juruna had killed her husband and her father. The Mēkrāgnoti answered: 'We warned you. The Juruna wanted the parrots, but you wouldn't listen.' A few Mēkrāgnoti accompanied Ngokwoiti to the village and warned those Gorotire. The Gorotire said to the Mēkrāgnoti: 'Why do you want to keep on living near those strangers (*kuben*)? Now they killed Bekrô, we will kill them.' And the Gorotire did the dance of angriiness. They did not want to be familiar with the Juruna. They continued: 'We will kill the Juruna, and then the Mēkrāgnoti will return. They like the Juruna! And Tayo, a Mēkrāgnoti leader, said: 'If you want to kill them, that's up to you. We don't do it. You don't know their language, we do.'

And the Gorotire went to the Juruna without passing the Mēkrāgnoti village. All the

¹¹ *mē iré*: scars on the shoulders, the back or the face, made by the women during sexual intercourse with an unmarried man (i. e. with a man of the *mē noronūre* age grade).

¹² The Kayapo prefer dark-blue, red and big white beads.

¹³ *mē kurerere*: age grade of girls between 10 years and the time they have their first child.

¹⁴ *mē nire biyók*: women's naming festival.

¹⁵ *kra'ā bom*: the 'cachoira da fumaça' (falls of the smoke). This is the actual location of the southern Kubenkrankin village (see map).

¹⁶ *kwor-kangó*: 'manioc liquid'.

¹⁷ At that time (1880-1900) there were about 250 Juruna and about 1500 Gorotire-Mēkrāgnoti.

¹⁸ At that time, the Juruna had already guns (which they obtained by trading with the Brazilians at the Lower Xingú river). The Kayapo had only their traditional weapons: clubs, bows and arrows.

¹⁹ In earlier times the Juruna were cannibals. (The last time they practiced this was in the beginning of our century, when they killed a Gorotire Indian). - See KRAUETLER 1953.

Juruna men, except for Ha'a-mã, were in the forest. The women were in the village. The Gorotire called for Ha'a-mã. He answered: 'Wait until the others return. They are in the forest.' But the Gorotire urged Ha'a-mã to come and said they had a lot of arrows and parrots. They were telling lies. Mrù-karà²⁰ shouted: 'Wait until the men are back from the forest.' The Gorotire persisted, and so he did slowly cross the river. On the moment he noticed there were so many Gorotire, he was frightened and slowed down. The Gorotire showed arrows and jenipapo.²¹ A few Gorotire climbed into the trees to see if Ha'a-mã had brought his gun with him, while the others hid their clubs in the water. One of the men in the trees noticed the carbine and informed the others. When Ha'a-mã arrived the Gorotire offered him a lot of arrows. Mróre (Gorotire) took Ha'a-mã's carbine. The Gorotire started hitting Ha'a-mã with the jenipapo, but Ha'a-mã succeeded to escape in his canoe. He shouted: 'Go away. If you return, we will kill you all.' The Gorotire left and told the Mëkrãgnoti about what had happened. They said: 'Join us, let's stay together now that the Juruna want to kill you'. So the Mëkrãgnoti all returned to the Gorotire village.'

So we see that the Gorotire provoked a rivalry with the Juruna in order to make the Mëkrãgnoti return and to share the village with them. The reason why they did so is not very clear. Our informants did not have any answer to this. My opinion is as follows: in most cases a Kayapo group is divided into different villages, these villages are rather hostile to each other. The worst enemies of a Kayapo village are other Kayapo villages. The informants told me that in the case of the Mëkrãgnoti, living 60 km from the Gorotire, there were no quarrels between the groups. But in earlier days the Gorotire and the Ira-amrãire were also living in two villages next to each other and friendly, until one day there was a disagreement. And from then on the Ira-amrãire and the Gorotire really became enemies: their wars made a lot of victims. Possibly the Gorotire were afraid of hostilities with the Mëkrãgnoti.

After that the Mëkrãgnoti again joined the Gorotire. It was during the rainy season.²² According to our informants there was an internal discord during that very same rainy season. It resulted in a definite separation between the Gorotire and the Mëkrãgnoti under the leadership of Motere. The Mëkrãgnoti moved westwards, across the Xingú river, and settled down in the territory between the rivers Xingú and Iriri. This time the relation between both groups was very tense. The Juruna experienced a period of rest. They moved to the south, to the area of the Cachoeira von Martius. Later on they were attacked by the Mëkrãgnoti for the last time²³:

"Motere had left the village with few of his men. A *wayanga*²⁴ was talking about the Juruna in the men's house.²⁵ His name was Pidjo'ùh. When Motere returned to the village he heard about it, and he went to Pidjo'ùh to discuss the matter with him. Motere said

²⁰ Mrù-karà was still living with the Juruna. Mëkrãgnoti informants told me that Mrù-karà liked the Juruna a lot and that she did not want to leave them. This is probably one of the two Kayapo women KARL VON DEN STEINEN has mentioned living as 'captive' with the Juruna (VON DEN STEINEN, 1886).

²¹ *jenipapo*: the fruit which gives, mixed with ashes and water, the black dye for the body-paintings.

²² The rainy season in Central Brazil is from October to April.

²³ The Juruna were attacked by the Gorotire and Kubenrankein still after 1910.

²⁴ *wayanga*: shaman. After the split of the Mëkrãgnoti with the Gorotire, the Juruna moved southward. The Mëkrãgnoti did not know their new village location. They therefore appealed for the help of a *wayanga* to indicate the new Juruna site.

²⁵ The men's house (*ngã-be*) is situated in the center of a Kayapo village.

to him: 'I want to go to the Juruna and bring some women and children with me; so they can teach us their music and we can dance.' Pudjo'ùh answered: 'The land of the Juruna is over there,' and he pointed to the Cachoeira von Martius. A few days later the men left. They went very far. After some days a few *më kurerere* joined them. They went on and on, crossed the Jarina river, and noticed traces of the Juruna. On that place they fixed a camp. Some of them went on a little further and fixed their camp near the river (Xingú), so that they could see the Juruna village.²⁶ At night they did not light a campfire, so that the Juruna would not notice them. Early in the morning a few Juruna came crossing the river to go to their plantations. The Mëkrãgnoti had a meeting and discussed how they were going to act. A few men pushed the canoes in the water so that it was not possible for the Juruna to escape. They saw an old man and his daughter on a plantation. They shot (with bow and arrow) at the old man. But he was very strong and kept shooting back (with his carbine). The old man and his daughter with her little son, and another boy tried to run away. The Mëkrãgnoti killed the boy, ran after the old man and killed him as well. Then they took the woman with her little boy and ran away with both. When, on the way to the Mëkrãgnoti village, Kaiwa's²⁷ dress was teared to pieces, she threw herself to the ground. She was very ashamed. Motere called for the *më kurerere*, so Kaiwa could see that those women were not ashamed to walk naked. When Kaiwa saw this, she was not embarrassed any longer. Two days later Kaiwa asked for meat. After she had finished her meal, she started singing. She sang the songs of the *kwor-kangô*-festival."

I assume this attack took place approximately in 1910.²⁸ After this attack there were no other hostilities between the Mëkrãgnoti and the Juruna. The Gorotire still had some disputes with the Juruna and the Suyá. In this century, the Mëkrãgnoti fought only against the Mundurucu, the Kra-yokàr²⁹, the Tapirapé, other Kayapo-groups, and the Brazilians.

Cultural dynamics: some considerations

After having gone through all these stories, it is not surprising that several aspects of the Juruna culture are to be noticed in the Mëkrãgnoti villages. For instance, the Mëkrãgnoti and other Kayapo groups use the *po-krüre* (a traverse flute made of bamboo) of the Juruna. The Mëkrãgnoti copied the Juruna tribal characteristic: a red spot on the forehead, made of resin mixed with the red pigment of the urucu shrub. They call it *itã*, and only men with children may wear it, as well as those who stayed for several years in the men's house.³⁰

Nevertheless, among the adoptions from the Juruna culture the one having the greatest impact is the *kwor-kangô*-festival. The Mëkrãgnoti perform it as a naming-festival; on this occasion ceremonial names are bestowed on boys and girls from one

²⁶ The Juruna village was built on an island in the Xingú river, so that the Juruna could feel more secure against Kayapo attacks. The Kayapo did not have canoes to cross big rivers. (They only made very simple rafts.)

²⁷ The name of the Juruna woman.

²⁸ At that time the Juruna had moved southward to the 'Cachoeira von Martius' (see map).

²⁹ Krã-yokàr (or Kreen Akrore): a Gê-tribe, contacted in 1973 by Claudio and Orlando Villas Bôas, and moved into the Xingú National Park in 1975.

³⁰ The eldest *më noronãre*.

to ten years. This festival is celebrated about every two years; it is one of the festivities most frequently kept. Generally it lasts one or two months (which depends on the number of donors), and takes place during the rainy season.

The Mēkrāgnoti learned the songs and the performance of this feast at the end of the previous century (from Kaingārti). The words they sing are unintelligible: they are imitations of Juruna words. The Mēkrāgnoti told us they used to sing this song differently in former times (some old people still remember the elder version). They say that Kaingārti did not listen very well, but Kaiwa, the woman they abducted about 1910, taught it properly to them.

Via the Mēkrāgnoti, other Kayapo groups (for instance the Xikrin)³¹ learned to know the *kwor-kāngô*-festival.

This fact is not unique. According to the oral history of the Kayapo, they copied the Aruana-festival of the Shambioá (Karaja)-Indians (about 1800–1830).³² It is called *bô kam me tor*: the dance with the leaves (masks). This feast is still celebrated, very rarely indeed, and in quite a different manner than the Karaja do.

Since the Mēkrāgnoti lived on friendly terms with the Brazilians (1953 and 1957), a lot of men visited Brazilian towns and cities, as for instance Altamira, Itaituba, and Belém. Over there, they often attended the local dances (carimbo). For about ten years now, the Mēkrāgnoti have a similar festival. It lasts one night only, and the music is played by tapping on empty tins. They sing whatever they remember from songs they heard in the towns (or by radios). This language is unintelligible as well: it is an imitation of Brazilian words.³³ The feast is called *me tor kaikep*.³⁴ According to the Kayapo ceremonial system, it has its donors, the children in honour of which the feast is performed. But it is not (yet?) a naming-festival.

The conclusion of all this is that the Kayapo, during the last two centuries, copied festivities from three different groups with whom they (temporarily) lived on friendly terms: from the Shambioá-Karaja the *bô kam me tor*, from the Juruna the *kwor-kāngô*, and from the Brazilians the *me tor kaikep*.

The Kayapo used to attack a lot of other tribes. On these occasions they were able to notice some external characteristics of other tribes (body-paintings for instance). Besides this, they abducted a lot of women and children, from whom they could learn as well some aspects of the foreign cultures. For example, about 1930 the Mēkrāgnoti already learned the names which three Krā-yokār-groups gave to themselves (*mē tūktire*, *mē krūre* and *mē krāne*).³⁵ From the Tapirapé they remember some songs (as *tamā riohé*). The construction of the huts in the main villages (only those situated in the savannah) was already in 1945 an imitation of the Neo-Brazilian style. The Brazilian captives taught them how to use guns, etc.

Indian cultures are obviously not stationary: elements of other cultures are adopted,

and in the group itself changes take place. The Kayapo have always had a very dynamic culture, and accepted a lot of elements of other cultures.

In 1944, the Mēkrāgnoti already wanted to contact the Brazilians (near the Jamanxim river). These Brazilians received their visitors very hostile. In 1952, it were the *mē noronire* who took up contact with the Juruna again. And in 1953 they had their first contact with the Brazilians. For the Kayapo there is no difference between the contact they used to make with the Juruna or Shambioá, and their actual contact with the Brazilians. They are not aware of the fact that those earlier contacts were made with similar cultures, and that the contact they actually have is with a dominating society: our society.

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³¹ See VIDAL, 1978.

³² I have calculated this date through Kayapo oral history and by comparison with some bibliographic data (e. g. NIMUENDAJU, 1946).

³³ In the Mēkrāgnoti village of the Mēkrāgnoti post only one man speaks Portuguese.

³⁴ 'Spinning dance'. This lesser festival is only performed in the two northern Mēkrāgnoti villages. I also witnessed it once in Gorotire (1974).

³⁵ The names Mētūktire (black people) and Mē-krūre (little people), names of ancient Krā-yokār groups, were adopted by the Mēkrāgnoti to name the two men's houses in the period 1930–1940 (see VERSWIJVER, 1978).