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## The Historical and Linguistic Identity of the Remos

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### Abstract

This article explores all of the available historic, ethnographic, and linguistic evidence concerning interfluvial Panoans known as Remo, one of the most important ethnic categories in Ucayali basin historiography. A review of the historical references to Remos from the late 1600s to the present led to the hypothesis that the term *Remo* has been used to refer to different peoples at different times. A careful evaluation of the available Remo word lists correlated with recent linguistic research corroborates that these word lists must have come from at least three different Panoan languages. Languages of two modern indigenous groups that have been considered Remo descendants (Iskonawas and Nukinis) were also found to be distinct from the available Remo word lists. The article illustrates the ways in which colonial historiography, influenced by riverine Panoans' and mestizos' views of their interfluvial neighbors constructed the Remos as a bounded and continuous ethnic unit.

### Introduction

The Remos, currently believed to be extinct, were listed among the principal tribes of the Ucayali River and its affluents and were among the Panoan groups most commonly mentioned in the 18th and 19th century historical literature, yet very little is actually known about them. Also, since Brinton's (1891) *The American Race*, almost all classifications of the Panoan family have included a language called Remo, yet there has never been any agreement on its place in the family. Traditionally, it has been assumed by ethnographers and linguists that Remo (and variants of this term: Remu, Rhemu, Remoauca, Rheno, Rimo, Rimo, Rimbo, Ruma) referred to a single ethnic group speaking a single language (e.g., Tessmann 1930; Steward & Métraux 1948; Whiton et al. 1964; Loukotka 1968; Erikson 1994). However, upon drawing together all the historical, ethnographic and linguistic information available for groups denominated Remo, it became evident that the denomination Remo did not refer to a single ethnic or linguistic category.

The primary goal of this paper is to systematize and present the historical data available on groups called Remo, tracing the connections among them, and also between these Remo groups and the Iskonawas and Nukinis, who have been assumed to be Remo descendants. This is thus not an ethnohistory in the classical sense, in that we do not claim to present a continuous account of historical developments of a particular ethnic entity called Remo. Rather, it is an ethnohistorical analysis of the relations that gave rise to calling different people Remo, and we propose, that uses and transformations of the name illustrate the history of riverine, rather than interfluvial societies.<sup>1</sup>

## A Remo Ethno(nym) History

We divide the reports of groups denominated Remo into four main temporal-geographic clusters: 1) Remos on the Tamaya River in the 17<sup>th</sup> century; 2) Remos along the territory east of the Ucayali River, reported mostly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; 3) Remos in the Javari River headwaters area in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; and 4) modern isolated groups called Remo, at the historical Remo locations and at new locations further north. The four ovals in Figure 1 represent areas of the northern expansion of the use of the term Remo during these four periods.

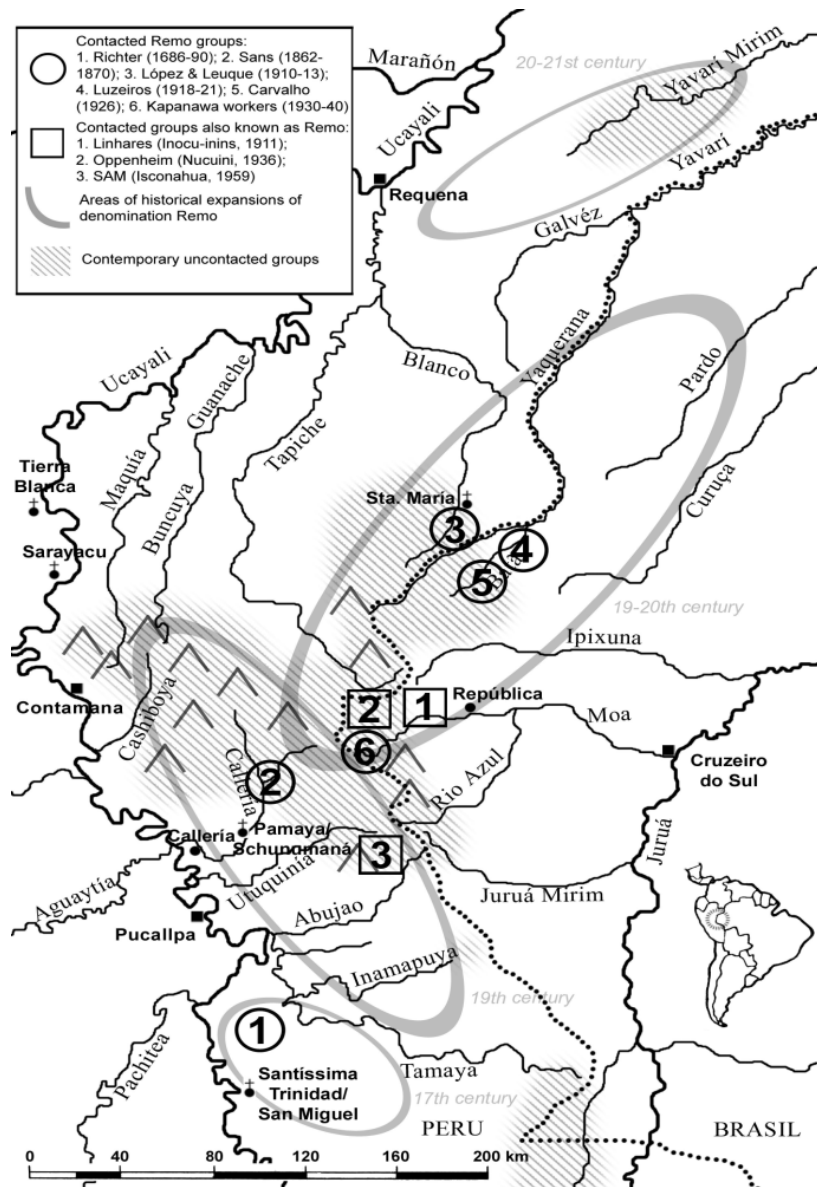


Figure 1. Map of the Remo Area

### The First Remos: Tamaya River, 1682-1690

The term Remo first appears in the written history in the late seventeenth century with the penetration of the upper Ucayali River by Jesuit missionaries.<sup>2</sup> In 1682, Shipibos from the Ucayali River reported to Father Lorenzo Lucero the presence of Remos on the upper Ucayali (Chantre 1901, p. 282). In 1686, Jesuit priest Heinrich Richter, who founded the mission village of *Santissima Trinidad de los Conivos*, encountered a village of the Tucarguanes (a faction of the Konibos) almost empty because they were away, raiding the neighboring Remos (Maroni 1988, p. 291). In 1690, Richter made unsuccessful efforts to reduce a

Remo group numbering 600 warriors<sup>3</sup> living south of the Imiria River, a left-bank tributary of the Tamaya River (see Figure 1.), upriver in reference to the Ucayali from the Amawakas, and downriver from the Konibos - closely enough to the latter that Remo drums could be heard in the Tucarguanes' village (Maroni 1988, p. 111, 296, 301, Grohs 1974, p. 74). Unfortunately, Richter's journals, which may have contained information on that earliest group called Remo, were lost (Myers 1990, p. 11). In 1800, Lorenzo Hervás, relying on Jesuit letters and Velasco, classified the *Rema* language as extinct (1800, p. 264), but we have not been able to identify any sources that mention the actual extinction of this group, and it does not seem that the information came from Velasco, who classified Remo as a Kampa language (1981 [1788-9], p.546).<sup>4</sup>

### Remos West of the Ucayali River (?), 1765

The denomination Remo disappeared almost completely from the available historical literature for one century. The only exception is a handful of references from 1765, during the Franciscans' restoration of their Pampa del Sacramento missions between 1760 and 1766. First, it was reported by Shipibo messengers that the Remos, the Kashibos, the Piros as well as Konibos were planning to attack the new Santo Domingo de Pisqui mission (letter written by Fray Josef Miguel de Salcedo dated 1765, published in Maúrtua 1906, pp. 316-7; Rodríguez 2005[1780], p. 499); later this was amended to say the Konibos and Remos wanted to go there to establish peaceful relations with the Franciscans (Rodríguez 2005[1780], pp. 501, 502, 521). Despite the Franciscans' desire to create a mission for the Remos (Rodríguez 2005[1780], pp. 502, 542), there is no mention of their coming into contact; the Rungato rebellion of 1766 would have thwarted any such plans, if indeed they were in progress.

The location of these Remos was not given in references or maps. The fact that the Konibos who ascended Aguaitía River to reach the Santa Barbara de Achani mission intervened on the part of the Remos and Kampas (Rodríguez 2005[1780], p. 521) suggests that the latter people must have been located farther away than the Konibos, possibly upriver from the mouth of the Aguaitía River. Although we would normally assume that Remo reference pointed to the eastern bank of the Ucayali, as in Richter's (and all the posterior sources), one detail challenges this supposition. In his monograph of the Franciscans' history in Peru, Father Fernando Rodríguez Tena twice says that Remo is a synonym for Carapacho (2005[1780], pp. 502, 521). The historical Carapacho/Garapacho name is often associated with the Kashibos, mostly based on geographical information and some indications in the sources, either as a possible synonym of Kashibo (Smyth and Lowe 1836, p. 203, Colini 1883b, p. 894, Frank 1994, pp. 141-2), or an ethnonym of a separate, but perhaps related (Panoan) group (e.g., Amich 1988, p. 333, Trujillo 1960, pp. 211, 219, 222; Steward, Julian & Métraux 1948, pp. 556, 564; Sagols 1901, pp. 302-304, 305; Lehnertz 1974, pp. 169-171). In either case, it refers to the territory between Palcazu and Pachitea Rivers in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, *west* of the Ucayali. Based on the Carapacho association it is than possible to speculate a location west of the Ucayali. Such a vague western usage would have most likely been a reference to a group distinct from the Remos living on the Tamaya River. Without access to original documents, we are unable to determine whether Rodríguez used local nomenclature or introduced the synonymy himself, as he is its sole source. In the end, we cannot be sure if this was an extension of the Carapacho name, designating people from the upper Huallaga River missions (where Frank 1994, p. 142 argues the term originated), to the eastern bank of the Ucayali, or an extension of the Remo name to the western bank.

### The First Northward Remo Expansion, 18th and 19th Centuries

When the denomination reappeared during the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, some references were to Remos at and near Sarayacu, the Franciscan missionaries' center of operations on the Ucayali, much further north from their previously reported locality. However, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Remos were reported again in the Tamaya River area, and also at many other localities, mostly between the Tamaya River and Sarayacu. Our interpretation is that during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, the denomination Remo was applied

indiscriminately by Ucayali residents to various little-known indigenous populations east of the Ucayali and north of the Tamaya, possibly as a result of interactions with the Konibo. Later, when documentation of the Indian groups of this area began, the denomination would have been well established among many groups in Peru east of the Ucayali, appearing as a single “tribe,” with few if any people at the time fully understanding the complex homophony that existed.

### New Locations of Remos East of the Ucayali River, 1790s-1850s

Franciscans who attempted to establish missions among Shetebos, Shipibos (or “Callisecas”) west of the Ucayali (Manoa/Cunshabatay and Aguaytía Rivers) during the 18<sup>th</sup> century did not mention the name Remo until the last restoration of the Franciscans’ Manoa missions, from 1790-91. During this period, Franciscan missionaries reported Remos living as captives of other Indians at Sarayacu (see next section), and also enumerated them among the many *parcialidades* (“factions”) or *naciones* (“nations”) living east of the Ucayali. More specifically, in 1792 Juan Dueñas reported Remos southeast of Sarayacu, and in 1794 Narciso Girbal y Barceló reported Remos on the Abujao and Callería Rivers and more generally in the Sierra del Divisor complex, which he called the *Cordillera de los Remos* (Izaguirre 1922-29, XIII, pp. 242, 304-309).

In the 1800s, the frequency of reports of Remos increased greatly. Many foreign travelers published accounts of their descent of the Ucayali-Amazon during this period, adding to the accounts of the Franciscan missionaries working in the area. It should be kept in mind, however, that much of the information the foreign travelers reported was given to them by Franciscans. Remos were reported in an area ranging from the Canchahuaya Hills to the Abujao River by Franciscan Paulo Alonso Carballo between 1814 and 1818 (Carballo 1908 [1818], 1952 [1814]; Carballo 1906 [1818]; Anonymous 1908 [1826], p. 262; Maw 1829, p. 469; Leceta [1837] in Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, p. 41). William Smyth, Frederic Lowe, and Pedro Beltrán who descended the Ucayali between 1834 and 1835, reported on the Remos as a group hostile to strangers, living south of the Sensis (located northeast of Sarayacu) (Smyth and Lowe 1836, pp. 230-31). Father Manuel Plaza and Father Juan Cimini reported the presence of Remos on the Callería River in 1841 (Plaza and Cimini 1907 [1841], p. 74), and father Cimini himself found mentions of Remos there in 1846 (Ortiz 1984-6, 1, p. 169). Laurent Saint Cricq (alias Paul Marcoy), a French artist and traveler who descended the Ucayali between 1846 and 1847, reported Remos between the Abujao and Huatpua Rivers (Marcoy 1862-7, XII, p. 206) where they were “hunted” by a Konibo raiding party (Marcoy 1862-7, X, p. 158). When French naturalist Francis de Castelnau passed by a right-hand tributary of the Ucayali called Cashiboya Stream in 1846, he was told by his Indian companions that the stream was inhabited by hostile and cannibalistic tribe that they called “Rimbos” (Castelnau 1851, p. 364). He assumed these were the same as the Remos, who missionaries have told him lived east of the Ucayali and spoke a language derived from that of the Panos (ibid. 377, 387). Shortly afterwards (1852-55), Remos were also mentioned by American painter George Catlin, although he did not specify the location of the Remo village portrayed in a drawing, beyond the general mention of “Yucayali” and “pampas” (Catlin 1959, p. 180).

Based on his 1853-54 journeys and later experiences on the Ucayali, Father Fernando Pallarés reported that Remos were said to occupy a territory from the *Cashibo-hiya* (Cashiboya) Hills to Ahuanchumia Stream, an affluent of the Tamaya River (Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, p. 202). Grandidier (1861, p. 127) located them on the Abujao River in 1858. During a journey on the Tamaya River in 1859, Father Vicente Calvo was told that Remo Indians were living on two right-bank affluents of the Tamaya – *Aguanchumia* and *Inunapuya* (Inamapuya) (Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, p. 241). Amich (1988, p. 334) reported that in 1859 on the shores of the Tamaya, Ucayali Indians had been raiding “Sacayas,” a name (along with the variant Sacuya) that reappears later in second-hand literature as a Remo subgroup (e.g., Rivet & Tastevin 1921, p. 471; Grubb 1927, p. 100; Métraux 1948, p. 660; Mason 1950, pp. 265-7). Bartolomeo Luciolli located Remos at the headwaters of the rivers Abujao, Callería and Cashiboya (Colini 1883b, p. 886). According to this Italian officer-turned-trader, who lived in Sarayacu between the 1850s and 1880s, the Konibos called the Remos “guani-baqui,” or “peach-palm offspring” (in modern Shipibo orthography: *huanin baque*). He also speculated that an older denomination of the Remos (Colini 1883a, p. 379,

1883b, p. 894) was *Picambí* – located between the Ucayali and Javari (or Jurua) rivers by Father Luigi Pozzi (Colini 1883a, p. 309)). Table 1. provides a synopsis of the reports of Remos presented so far.

Date	Source	Locality	km. N of Tamaya River
1682	Lucero	Upper Ucayali	?
1686-90	Richter	Tamaya River	0
1792	Dueñas	SE of Sarayacu	200
1794	Girbal	Abujao River,	60
		Callería River,	120
		Sierra del Divisor	60-200
1814-18	Carvallo	Canchahuaya Hills	180
		Abujao River	60
1837	Leceta	Canchahuaya Hills	180
		Abujao River	60
1830	Chaumatte	Canchahuaya Hills	180
1835	Smyth & Lowe	S of Sensis	170
1841	Plaza & Cimini	Callería River	120
1846	Castelnau	Abujao River	60
1846-47	Marcoy	Abujao River	60
		Huatpua River	0 <sup>a</sup>
1846	Cimini	Callería River	120
1852-55	Catlin	Ucayali plains	?
1854-55	Pallarés	Cashiboya Hills	160
		Tamaya River	0
1858	Grandidier	Abujao River	60
1859	Calvo	Callería River,	120
		Tamaya River	0
1883	Luciòli	Cashiboya River	160

**Table 1.** Locations where Remos were reported during the first northern expansion.

<sup>a</sup> We have not been able to find the “Huatpua” River other than in Marcoy’s map, where it is about 30 km *south* of the Tamaya River.

### Remos as Captives and Co-residents: Banks of the Ucayali, 1791-1928

Apart from the reported interfluvial habitat of the Remos, a common pattern found by travelers was that of Remos living on the shores of the Ucayali along with other groups. Some of those reports point to them being slaves, liberated captives, or their offspring and families, living among the Konibos, Shipibos, Shetebos or Panos. Dueñas reported Remo slaves living with Panos as early as in 1791 (Dueñas 1792, p. 181) and Girbal in 1792 reported Remos among the Piros near Sarayacu (Izaguirre 1922-29, VIII, p. 225). Other reports of Remos as captives include: Remos as the most numerous among the Sarayacu Panos’ captives in 1835 (Beltrán 1907, p. 60); Remos as captives of Shetebos on the lower Ucayali (Marcoy 1962-7, XII, pp. 206-7); and Remos and Amawakas mostly to be found as slaves on Ucayali (Galt 1877, p. 310).

Reports of Remos living together with other Panoans on the Ucayali shores, not necessarily as captives, include the following. Father Manuel Plaza found, in 1843, Remos living with Shipibo, Konibo and Amawaka families in *Santa Rita de Masisea*, at the mouth of the Pachitea River (Ortiz 1984-6, 1, p. 163). In 1851, American Navy explorer Lieutenant Lewis Herndon (1853, p. 202) visited a village composed of Remos and some Shipibos leading a riverine-type subsistence lifestyle on the *left* bank of the Ucayali, two day’s journey *upriver* from the town of Tierra Blanca. This is quite distant from all other Remo locations, so these Remos were probably displaced through slaving, or perhaps this an example of the indiscriminate use of the denomination. As late as 1928, leader of a Polish research expedition Mieczysław Lepecki (1931, pp. 53-55) was told that remnants of Pano and Remo Indians, who had in past occupied lands along the lower Ucayali, were

among the inhabitants of Monte Caramelo (on the Ucayali, two day's journey upriver from its confluence with the Marañón River).

### San Miguel de Cayarí Mission, 1859-1882

It is not until the 1860s that we find substantial information on any Remos based on direct contact. Between 1859-60, Franciscan Vincente Calvo founded *San Miguel de Cayarí* on the Callería River, possibly near or at the current location of the Shipibo village called Callería. The intention was to provide repose to travelers on the Ucayali and to protect the many natives called Remos who inhabited the upper Callería River (Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, p. 243) from Shipibo and Konibo slaving raids (Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, p. 242; Raimondi 1862, pp. 105-6, 119). Some Remos initially lived in this mission together with Shipibos, Konibos and Sarayacu Christians, but further details are lacking (Izaguirre 1922-29, IV, pp. 214-15; Amich 1988, pp.298, 308).

By 1862, father Ignacio Sans had encountered a group of Remos on the Piyuya Stream (left affluent of the upper Callería) where he baptized a few. He was told that further upriver lived another group called "Isis baquebu" (or "Hisisbaquebo") and others, assumed to be Remo subgroups. He had convinced some of these Indians to descend the river to live in a village called *Schunumaná*, halfway between Piyuya Stream and the Callería mission (Amich 1988, p. 418). In 1866 the prefect of Loreto, Benito Arana (1905[1867], p. 297) visited San Miguel and mentioned that Remos were populating a mission village on the Callaría River, two days upriver from San Miguel, possibly referring to *Schunumaná*. By 1868 five Hisisbaquebo had been living with Sans for over a year, and he was organizing an expedition to reduce the rest (Amich 1988, pp. 374-375). Results of his expedition are unknown, but by 1870, in a village named *Pamaya* there were more than 170 Remos gathered with Friar Manuel Vargas (Amich 1988, p. 336).

Very little is actually known about the Callería Remo. According to Pallarés, although themselves pacific, they had reached the brink of extinction as a result of violent encounters with Ucayali Indians. His report was written after the establishment of the Callería mission, and though the general information seems to be based on Carvallo's and Leceta's accounts, he does present some original descriptions that could only have come through direct contact with the Remos. For example, he says they had their nostril flares, nasal septa, lips, and chins perforated; wore silver pendants in the septum piercing, and in the lower lips inserted sticks that were replaced with silver adornments on festive occasions. Remo mothers tattooed their children's faces and arms. This account also suggests they practiced funerary endocannibalism (Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, p. 208).

In a paper first published in 1874, Francisco Sagols, a Franciscan monk who spent some time in the Ucayali missions, added the original observation that the Remos perforated their lips in childhood, and later adorned them with macaw feathers (Sagols 1901, p. 364). Judging by the paper's date, this information most probably also refers to the Callería mission's Remo.

Bartolomeo Luciòli provided some observations concerning the Remos. It is not clear where he had contact with them, but it seems likely that he referred to the Remos of the Callería River. Their distinctly elaborate ornamentation was similar to that of the "Mayorunas" of the Tapiche and Javari rivers. They wore spines in numerous lip perforations and inserted feathers in perforated nasal septa and along the whole length of the ears, some of which protruded towards the temples. Both sexes were tattooed on the face (especially the lips) in geometrical designs of horizontal, symmetrical lines meeting at an angle. Women wore tattoos in spiral designs on their shoulders, chest, and breasts (ibid. p. 534-35). Like other interfluvial groups, they wore no clothes (ibid., p. 537) but cotton threads on their forearms, wrists, knees and ankles, similarly to the Kashibos (ibid., p. 539). Pottery was made for cooking, and *chicha* was produced in hollowed tree trunks (ibid., p. 547). They used war clubs (Colini 1883a, p. 381, 1884, p. 542), bows and long bamboo arrows which were distinctly ornamented (Colini 1883a, p. 365, n. 1, 1884, p. 543).

Among visitors to the Ucayali who left mentions of Remos in the missions on the Callería River were Antonio Raimondi, who traveled in Loreto between 1859-62 (Raimondi 1862, pp. 103, 106, 116, 119); an anonymous steamship commander of the Hydrographic Commission of 1871 who wrote that the headwaters of the Callaría were

inhabited by missionaries and Remos (Matorela 2004, p. 19); American surgeon F. L. Galt, who reported that the remnants of the Remos were found around the Callería and Cashiboya missions (Galt 1877, p. 310; Steward and Métraux 1948, p. 565); B. Lucióli, (Colini 1883b, p. 883); and Olivier Ordinaire, a French explorer who traveled through the area around 1882 (Ordinaire 1988, p. 150).

This period was marked by the influx of the nationals in the area and the weakening of the Franciscans' thitherto undisputed authority in the territory. In 1863 they were obliged to move their center of operations from Sarayacu to Callería and Cashiboya. Shipibos and Konibos were at this point engaging in trade and work relations with the newcomers, and fresh demand for slaves made the Callería Shipibo eager to take advantage of Remo presence in the area. Pallarés mentioned a frustrated attempt of a raid on the Remos by the Konibos in 1864 (Amich 1988, p.419). In 1868 Father Calvo wrote to the Loreto prefect that due to slave-hunting, very few Remo were left of those that came to Callería mission, there were none on the Piyuya and Utuquinía Rivers, and only a few on the Abujao River, "where previously they were the most numerous" (Ortiz 1984-6, 1, p. 520). Between Sans' and Calvo's letters from 1868 and Galt's visit to the Ucayali in 1870, the Remos gathered in the *Pamaya* mission were raided by the Callaría Shipibos (Amich 1988, p. 336, Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, pp. 215, 244). This attack had ultimately frustrated Franciscan attempts at reducing groups known as Remo on the Callería. Those who managed to escape Shipibo raids were said to have retreated "deeper into the Piyuya" - or the Juruá-Ucayali divide - with remnants staying around Callería and Cashiboya Rivers.

### **Canchahuaya-Tamaya Zone after the Callería Mission, 1901-2007**

After failure of the Callería mission, direct contacts with Remos in the area extending from the Tamaya River to the Canchahuaya Hills ceased. Subsequent sources again compose merely of mentions of the name at general locations and are based mostly on information copied from earlier literature. Occasionally, they provide information gathered from locals or from undisclosed sources. Nevertheless, they show that the name was still associated with this area, now also extending a bit further east, to the Brazilian side of the border. The following seven references are those that seem to be based, at least partly, on locally-collected information (excluding innumerable sources that merely copied earlier works).

1) José Antonio Sotomayor, in his 1901 account of infidel Indian groups on the Ucayali, wrote that Remos inhabited the Abujao and Callería Rivers. His original contribution was that they were monogamous, cremated their dead relative's bones mixing the ashes with water, and were very skillful in sorcery against their enemies (Sotomayor 1901, p. 174). The last part is probably part of a local lore.

2) In 1902 Jorge M. von Hassel surveyed the *varaderos* (portages) in southeastern Peru, and located the Remos on the Tamaya River, calculating their number at 800 to 1000 (Hassel 1905a, 1905b). He claimed that they were remnants of a much larger group that had been reduced through wars and assimilation into neighboring groups such as the Amawakas, Kapanawas, Yaminawas, Yoras, and Konibos. The original information is that they lived in large houses inhabited by a couple of families, used clubs and bows, and that not far from them, in the divide between the Tamaya and Juruá River, lived a smaller, similar tribe, called Sacuyas.

3) Gérman Stiglich on a commissioned exploration by steamboat (1904) gathered information from the Ucayali River locals. Remos were then said to be living at the headwaters of tributaries of the Tamaya River and the headwaters of the Abujao and Callaría Rivers (Stiglich 1905[1904], pp. 297, 298, 303). That same year, he prepared a more general report on the rainforest region of Peru, combining his own information and analysis of sources on this area. The original contribution was that Remos lived along rivers, lakes, and in upland areas, that the Shipibos and Konibos pursued them to make them servants, that they tattooed their faces with copal, and that the Sacuyas were of the family of the Remos or Amawakas (Stiglich 1908[1904], p. 423).

4) French priest Constant Tastevin, who worked in the Juruá basin between about 1905 and 1926, mentioned Remos at the feet of the Contamana Hills, on the upper Paraná da Viuva or Rio do Moura and the upper Juruá Mirim, whose headwaters approximate those of the Abujao River (Tastevin 1920, p. 133; 1919, p. 146; Rivet & Tastevin 1921, p. 471).



- 4) This information is more precise than what could have been copied from the existing literature.
- 5) Between 1923-25, Günter Tessmann met a few Remos living in a village Shanaya near Contamana and copied their tattoos, without noting their geographical provenience (1930, pp. 346, 580-2).
- 6) In 1927, Kenneth Grubb, a protestant missionary gathered all the then available written sources, reporting Remo presence on the upper Javari and its tributaries Batã, Gálvez and Blanco, as well as on the right affluents of the Ucayali. He originally maintained the Manannawas were a Remo sub-tribe (Grubb 1927, p. 84).
- 7) As late as ca. 1948 César Díaz Castañeda maintained that the Tamaya zone was inhabited by the Remos (Ortiz 1984-6, 1, p. 460).

The Shipibo-Konibos regularly raided groups they denominated Remo or Amawaka at least until the 1950s. In 1961 Clifford Russell found an elderly Remo woman captured around 1900-10 among the Shipibos (Whiton et al. 1964, p. 109).<sup>5</sup> Evidence of Shipibo raids on Remos and Amawakas in the 1930s were found in genealogies of local Konibos (DeBoer 1986, p. 234). South American Mission personnel learned that there were cases of Indians being captured on the Inamapuya River (on the Tamaya) by Shipibos in the 1920's, 1940's, and there were also rumors that some people were captured on the Piyuya Stream (on the Callería) in the 1950s (Whiton et al. 1964, p. 88).

In addition, Remos were included in a list of tribes living along the Urubamba River (Estrella 1905[1871], p. 91), far south of all the other mentioned uses, but the information is quite vague. Also, Martinez (1912) listed *Remos* along with *Hamabuacas*, *Capanahuas* y *Hamahuas* as the savage, cannibalistic tribes living between Ucayali and Purús.

## The Second Northward Remo Expansion, 20th Century

Although the denomination continued to be connected with the Canchahuaya-Tamaya area, with the opening up of the new areas by rubber workers at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it simultaneously began to appear at new locations further north than any of its previous usages. As will show below, the word lists for three of the groups described for the Javari<sup>6</sup> temporal-geographic cluster are available, and they are clearly of three separate languages.

### Jaquirana River, 1897-1926

Although Augusto da Cunha Gomes, head of the Peruvian-Brazilian boundary commission of 1897, probably never came into direct contact with Remos ("Rhemus"), he was the first to report them in the Javari basin, specifically as inhabiting the area west of the Jaquirana and east of the Curuçá River, from the mouth of Gálvez River to the Batã River (also Paysandú), where they avoided contact with whites (Gomes 1898, p. 252). His information seems to be based on locals' descriptions, including that of a *Capanana* ["Kapanawa"]<sup>7</sup> woman. These Remos tattooed their bodies, especially the women; men perforated their lower lips, earlobes and nostril flares, ornamenting them with macaw and other birds' feathers; they did not practice anthropophagy (as the neighboring "Kapanawa") and married little girls with approval of the *Tuchana*, or 'chief' (ibid., p. 253-54).

Satchell (1903, p. 438) who ascended the Javari-Jaquirana in 1901, gave the same locations as Gomes for the Javari Indians, noting however that: "No trustworthy reports as to the numbers of the 'savages' can be obtained". It appeared that the Indians on the Brazilian bank were known as *Rhemus*, and those on Peruvian side as *Mayus* and *Capanaguas*. All had been driven away from the banks by the rubber workers.

Raimundo de Souza Luzeiro, a rubber boss living on the Upper Javari, in 1902 bought and raised a Remo boy captured by Peruvians. When the boy grew up, he returned to his people, and after some time brought 80 Remos to live in Luzeiro's rubber estate on the Batã River. In the 1970s J. Melatti and D. Montagner learned about this from Luzeiro's son (Melatti & Montagner 2005[1973], pp. 10-11). His sister related that there were some 300 Remo living with her family before the epidemic of 1918 (1921 according to the son) after which, decimated, they fled back to Peru (ibid., p. 11). She remembered that they

perforated their lips and noses and lived in a large rounded dwelling with two doors. Their dead were cremated and their ashes mixed with maize beverage, and all their property, crops and animals were destroyed or killed.

Brazilian medic for the joint boundary commission to the Javari River, João Braulino de Carvalho, visited the Batã River in 1926. He left a report on the “Remos” who called themselves *Nucuiy*. Reportedly, they had earlier lived in a large village on the Batã River, but seemed to have been reduced or to have dispersed into two settlements with unspecified locations, while other Remo families were living in the Jaquirana-Ipixuna divide (Carvalho 1931, p. 252). Their tattoos composed of circles around the mouth, and some designs on the arms, neck and face. Women’s tattoos were mostly applied on their chests. They were monogamous, used bows, and lived in longhouses divided into compartments for each nuclear family (ibid., p. 253).

Consistently with Luzeiro’s daughter’s account, Carvalho’s Remos also cremated their dead and shared the ashes between the relatives to be consumed mixed into a manioc beverage (ibid., p. 254). However, it remains unclear whether the last two references point to the same population. Some historical circumstances, general location and names of *patrones* recorded by López (1903-46, vol.2, 3) and Leuque (1911-15) echo those reported by the Luzeiros, while the Blanco River Remo linguistic data differ from those recorded by Carvalho.

### Santa María de los Remos (Blanco River), 1910-13

In 1910 Franciscan Agustín López, guided by local rubber tappers, found 70-100 people called Remos living in one communal house on the upper Blanco River, a right bank affluent of the Tapiche River (López 1903-46, vol 2,3, 1912a, p. 23, 1912b, pp. 89-90, also 1913b, p. 210). Remos had never been reported there before.<sup>8</sup> We maintain that Remo denomination reached this far north through generic application to little known groups by the Peruvian workers. The headwaters of the Blanco approximate the Jaquirana River, not far from the linguistically unrelated Remos of the Jaquirana River (see Figure 1) and the two (if not more) Remo groups may have been confused. As related by López, before he found them, these Indians had gone to live on the Jaquirana for some time to avoid rubber workers’ abuses on the Blanco. There, some were captured and taken to work on the *Cururá* (probably Curuçá) River, but managed to escape and returned to the Blanco decimated (1912b, pp.89-90, 1913b, p. 210). Editing the available sources, Izaguirre added that Remos had been reported to have always been at war with Kapanawas (Izaguirre 1922-29, XII, p. 431), a name also used for enemies of the Remos of the Jaquirana River (Gomes 1898, p. 252).

From his base in Requena (at the mouth of the Tapiche), López sent a French priest named Henri Philippe Leuque (a.k.a. Enrique Philips Leuque or Enrique Leuque Larunda) to this new mission called *Santa María de los Remos* (Salvador 1972) or *St María del Ancajacu* (Ruíz 1913, p. 135), located upriver from a rubber-gatherers’ village *Capanagua*. Before his arrival in 1911, Indians had divided into two groups around the *curacas* (‘chiefs’), Roque Luceiro and José Cuchirana (who left to the Jaquirana River), but they were to unite again to live with the missionary (López 1913a, p. 128; Ruíz 1913, p. 135; Izaguirre 1922-29, XII, p. 248). By 1913, the Remos were coming under increasing influence of antagonistic local rubber bosses and the missionaries were running out of options, to the point of risking their lives (Leuque 1911-15, López 1903-46, vol. 3, Salvador 1972, pp. 78-83). In December of 1913 Leuque was reportedly attacked by “various groups” of Indians thought to be instigated by the *patrones*, was hurt, and escaped at night (Salvador 1972, pp. 83-85; see also Ortiz 1984-6, 2, pp. 249-251).

While López lived with this group, he noted that the men removed all facial hair and perforated their earlobes, upper lips and nostrils. On festive occasions feathers or palm spines were inserted in the lip perforations. They made headdresses of leaves and macaw feathers and wore shell pendants in their nose septa, shell ear ornaments, as well as necklaces, wristbands and ankle-bands made of shells, monkey teeth or woven from cotton. Both sexes tattooed faces and bodies, especially the women (López 1913a, also in Izaguirre 1922-29, XII, pp. 244-46).

According to Tessmann (informed by Leuque himself), men also tattooed penises and while hunting or cultivating tied them in the upwards position to a belt. Women tied a

gourd that covered genitals. Their house was built on an oval plan and all slept in hammocks. There was communication between houses by means of drums (Tessmann 1930, p. 581). Part of the corpse was first consumed by the closest relatives, and the ashes were saved during a month of mourning, after which they were consumed mixed with maize beverage during the funerary feast (Tessmann 1930, pp. 581-2) by all the relatives and friends who danced to the beat of the *dundúri* or *manguare* (hollowed tree trunk drums) (Izaguirre 1922-29, XII, pp. 245-47).

We have not found any subsequent mentions of these people at this location and the fate of the Blanco Remos is unknown.<sup>9</sup>

### Môa River, 1930s

In the 1930s some Kapanawas from the Tapiche and Buncuya Rivers were hunting for hides and tapping rubber on the Môa River with a group of unclothed Indians that kept away from non-Indians. The Kapanawas called them “Remo” or “Rimo” and stayed there for one year (some apparently up to 10 years). This is documented in testimonies and word lists gathered by SIL missionaries in the 1970s from three of these Kapanawas (Loos 1973-74, Montag 1972; see also Loos 1976 and Ribeiro and Wise 1978, pp. 168-169). The only other information possibly referring to these people is a citation and illustration under the entry *tsitsa* ‘drawing, tattoo’ in a Kapanawa-Spanish dictionary, where the Remos are said to wear tattoos from their mouth to ears that make them look like jaguars (Loos and Loos 2003, p. 373). Modern Kapanawa oral histories (Krokoszynski field data 2011-13) mention people referred to as Remo(-auca), both in the headwaters of the Tapiche (connected with the Môa) and its various affluents, in diverse relations with the ancestors, including shared origins/language, visits and warfare.

Tessmann (1930, p. 580) noted that people known as Remos were living not only on the Môa and Ipixuna River, but also on the Tapiche and the Javari headwaters.

### Modern Isolated Groups Called Remo and the Third Northward Expansion

It is probable that of the large native population that has been identified as Remo, some groups were extinguished by the heavy slave-hunting in the area. It is also not unlikely that remnants of some Remo groups ended up contributing to neighboring, better-known Panoan formations (e.g., Shipibo-Konibo, Kapanawa, Amawaka, Marubo, etc.). Others may still remain uncontacted.

While the existence of multiple isolated groups in the Javari basin and the Juruá headwaters has been documented for many years (e.g., Wallace 2003, Melatti 1981, Zarzar 2000), research done in the last few years shows that the territory of Sierra del Divisor may also be occupied by unknown indigenous populations (Aguirre & Villasante 2003; Aquise 2007; Arbaiza et al. 1995; Brabec & Pérez 2006; Matorela 2004; Montagner 2002; Krogh 2006; Krokoszynski et al. 2007; Ricardo & Ricardo 2006; Vriesendorp et al. 2006; see also Correia 2005; Oliveira 1987 and Nogueira 1991).<sup>10</sup>

It is possible that some of these groups are composed of the descendants of groups once called Remos, and the name is still used in reference to them by some of the native and *mestizo* population today. It has been documented in connection with purported uncontacted groups in three general areas:

- 1) The Upper Tapiche and Blanco Rivers. Residents of the Tapiche report signs of uncontacted Indians in headwaters of these rivers and its affluents (Aguirre & Villasante 2003; Aquise 2007, Krokoszynski field data 2012). In many cases, Remo name variants are summoned in this area.
- 2) The Upper Buncuya River. Inhabitants of the Buncuya River report signs of unknown indigenous peoples at the headwaters and call them Remos or Remoaucas (Krokoszynski et al. 2007).
- 3) The Gálvez and Javari Mirim Rivers. *Mestizo* residents of towns along the lower Ucayali use the term Remo or Remoauca when they talk about uncontacted groups to the east (Anonymous 1988; Allen 1994; Matlock 2002; Krogh 2006). The second author of the present paper notes that the denomination Remo/Remoauca is absent in Matses

traditional oral history<sup>11</sup>, but through influence of local *mestizos* some younger Matses have recently begun to use the label for an uncontacted group that was in the Upper Gálvez 20 years ago, and others speculate that the Arawakan Mayú, whom the Matses raided around 1900 (Fleck 2007), were Remos, motivated by the name of a stream tributary of the upper Gálvez called Remoyacu by non-Indians.

The Tapiche, Blanco, and Buncuya Rivers are all historical Remo locations, and the use of the term in these areas to designate uncontacted peoples is expected. Of particular interest are the reports of Remo(auca)s on the Javari Mirim, which represents a further expansion, some 600 kilometers north of the first recorded Remo usage on the Tamaya River of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### Modern Groups Identified as Descendants of Remos

In addition to the groups exclusively denominated Remo, two modern ones, namely the Iskonawas and the Nukinis, are often assumed to be their descendants. While linguistically distinct from the three Remo groups for which word lists are available, they have shared many cultural characteristics common in this general area, and due to their geographical and social position, they have often been identified as Remos. It is possible that ancestors of the Iskonawas and the Nukinis were called Remos by outsiders and that they composed some groups called Remos in the historical literature, but we will never be sure.

### The Iskonawas of the Utuquinía and Callería Rivers

In 1959 the 20-odd Iskobakebo or Iskonawa Indians came into contact with South American Mission (SAM) personnel at the headwaters of Utuquinía River (see Fig 1.). As this area was historically associated with the name Remo, it was only logical that they were assumed to be descendants of the southern Remo group(s) from the 19<sup>th</sup> century described above.

Indian groups or co-resident subgroups called by variants of Iskonawa ('oropendola people') were sporadically noted by other authors in different locations. For example, in 1905, Scharff had contact with "Iscunahua" Indians on Rio de las Piedras, a tributary of the Madre de Dios River (Granadino 1916, pp. 349, 356), the Envira River Kashinawa had relations with the "Isconahua" between 1880-90 (Montag 1998, Déléage 2005, p. 28), and in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the "Isku-naua" were documented among the various -nawa groups jointly known as "Katukina" in the vicinity of Gregorio and Tarauacá rivers in Brazil (Tastevin 1925, p. 415; 1926 [1924], p. 51; 1928, Coutinho 2003, p. 29). According to Carid (2007, p. 23), the "Xanénawa" (Shanenawa or Katukina from the Envira River) had been named "Iskunawa" before the wars with Yawanawas from Gregorio River, and the latter recount the creation of "Iskunawa nation" in their myths (Carid 1999; Calavia 2001; Carid 2007, p. 357). More recently, Paula (2004, p. 33) reported that some Yawanawas consider themselves to be *Iskunáwas*. A "Yawanawa-Iskonawa" word list collected by Tastevin (1924b.) turned out to be almost identical to the Yawanawa and Shanenawa dialects of Yaminawa, and not particularly similar to Iskonawa (of the Utuquina River). Elderly Kashinawa recalled friendly contacts with "Iskunahua" people at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century between Juruá and Purús Rivers (Montag 2006, p. 18). Apart from that, the Yora (a.k.a. Parkenawa, Nawa) from the Serjali River (the Urubamba River basin) identify the "Iscodahua" (phonemically Iskonawa) among their lineages (Lord 1996 Déléage 2005, p. 36), and there are "Iskonáwavo" sections in three different lineages in the Marubo matrilinear system, who additionally speak of yet another extinct Iskonawa group/lineage (Ruedas 2001). "Iscobu" were mentioned among Shetebo "clans" (Tessmann 1928, p. 8). In a Kapanawa myth, an Hinobo man lives with people called "Hisconahuabo" (Schooland 1976, pp.84-112,171-196). While theories of migration from these locations to the Utuquinía River could be argued as more or less plausible, in the end there is no evidence of connections beyond the shared denomination.

In turn, histories told by Utuquinía/Callería Iskonawas (Whiton et al. 1964, Matorela 2004, Brabec & Pérez 2006, Krokoszyński field data 2007), as well as their close linguistic affiliation with the Poyanawas and Nukinis, suggest that in earlier times they lived in Brazil, possibly in the area of the Môa or Juruá Mirim Rivers.

The Iskonawas were not familiar with term Remo before contact. The first outside visitors (Kensinger 1961, Malkin 1962, Momsen 1964, Whiton et al. 1964) identified the Utuquinía Iskonawas as (the last survivors of the) Remos, primarily on the geographic argument.<sup>12</sup> Other authors doubt this identification (e.g., Braun 1975). Loos (1999) did not equate the Iskonawas and the Môa Remos linguistically, and likewise we have found Iskonawa to be distinct from all three Remo languages for which we have data. However, considering that the historical territory of the Iskonawas remains a matter of speculation, we cannot rule out the possibility that ancestors of the Iskonawas composed another group historically called Remo. Interestingly, the name *Isis baquebu* (or *Hisisbaquebo*) recorded by Sans for the Callería Remos echoes with a name recalled by the Iskonawa as one of associated groups.

The Iskonawas were culturally similar to the other Remos. They lived in typical Panoan longhouses (*malocas*), had their nostril flares, ears and nose flares perforated, and wore oropendola feathers, palm spine whiskers and shell pendants in them. Their ancestors were said to have applied tattoos around the lips and on the cheeks. They cremated the dead, but did not practice anthropophagy. They hunted with bows and arrows, and on festive occasions used drums made of hollowed tree trunks (for more detailed ethnographic information, see Malkin 1962; Whitton et al. 1964; Momsen 1964; Arbaiza et al. 1995; Matorela 2004; Brabec & Pérez 2006).

### The Nukinis of the Môa River

Another group that has been linked in the ethnographical and linguistic literature with the Remos are the Nukinis of the Môa River, in Brazil (e.g., Loukotka 1968, p. 170; Mendonça 1991, p. 272; Erikson 1994).

In 1911 Serviço de Proteção ao Índio (SPI) inspector Máximo Linhares found a group of 80 Indians called “Inocu-inins” living in a rubber estate (*seringal*) called Gibraltar, located on the upper Môa River, in Brazil (Linhares 1913 Correia 2005b and Montagner 2002). Tastevin reported that in the area between the upper Môa and Singarú/Sungarú<sup>13</sup>Rivers remnants of the “Nukuinis,” also known as “Tsitsaya-nawa” (“tattooed people”), were roaming in utmost misery after having been deprived of their fields with the influx of rubber workers on the Môa (Tastevin 1919, pp. 146, 149; 1920, p. 133; 1924a, p. 425). In another publication, Rivet and Tastevin (1921, p. 469) identified this group with Linhares’ Inukuini, based presumably on their similar denominations and geographic proximity.<sup>14</sup>

In 1920 Tastevin interviewed a Brazilian rubber worker who between 1902 and 1906 had been working with the “Nukuini Indians” on the upper Môa River. Their communal house was then set up downstream from Gibraltar. According to the man, they identified themselves as “Abakabu” [possibly *Awabakebo*] and were enemies of the “Kapanauas” who spoke a language similar to Poyanawa but different from the “Nukuini”. Tastevin’s manuscript contains sketches of reconstructed facial and body tattoos. They are similar, though not the same as those of “Nucuini” by Oppenheim (Figure 2). The manuscript mentions some common Amazonian traits: the *couvade*; burial next to the *maloca* under a shelter, where a fire was lighted; nudity of the women; early marriage of girls; feasts with dancing and consumption of alcoholic drink and tobacco; cakes made from the heart of *Attalea butyracea* palm trees.

In 1936 Victor Oppenheim found 10 or 15 families called “Nucuinis” in Brazil near the border with Peru, living along the sources of Ramon Stream, a left-bank tributary of the Môa River (Oppenheim 1936a, 1971, p. 167). These were the survivors of an epidemic suffered on Paraná da República (a.k.a., Novo Recreio River, a right tributary of the Môa River). They wore tattoos and were able to communicate with Poyanawas and Kashinawas. Some of their “factions” avoided contact with whites and practiced funerary anthropophagy (Oppenheim 1971, p. 167).

It is not certain whether all the people denominated Nukini/Nucuini in the area belong to the same population. The fact that the location where these groups were reported is consistently the Môa River makes it likely that all or many of these came to compose modern Nukini.

Little more was written on the Nukinis for several decades until FUNAI (the Brazilian bureau of Indian affairs) workers and Brazilian anthropologists and linguists found and

documented a small group on the M $\hat{o}$ a River speaking a now obsolescent language (e.g., FUNAI 1981; Montagner 1977; Aguiar 2004a, 2004b; Okidoi 2004).

None of the early authors reports that the term Remo is or has been used by locals to refer to the Nukinis, or that these are the same as the Remos (note however that their perspective was always Brazilian). In fact, in their catalog of Indian tribes of the Purus and Juru $\acute{a}$  area, Rivet and Tastevin (1921, pp. 469, 471) list “Nukuini, Inukuini” and “Remo” in separate entries, and assign them geographically separate locations. The recent connection between the Nukini and the Remos seems to be based on Carvalho’s (1931, p. 252) information that the Remos of the Jaquirana River called themselves “Nucuiny”. Oppenheim met tattooed Indians on the Tapiche who autoidentified as “Nucuini” but were called Rhemus by the local population, and had come from the Jaquirana River (1936a). However, he suspected that they were distinct from the Ramon River “Nucuini”, because these latter told him of their enemies known as “the Rhemu” (1971, p. 168).

The connection between the Remos of the Jaquirana River and the modern Nukinis of the M $\hat{o}$ a River, would then be that of sharing an **autodenomination**. This is not surprising considering their linguistic proximity, and that other Panoan categories of languages also share autodenominations (e.g., *matses*, *(h)uni* (*kuin*), and *yora*, all of which can also be used to mean ‘people’). Just as the Nukinis shared an autodenomination with the Remos of the Jaquirana River, they shared a geographic location with the Remos of the M $\hat{o}$ a River. It would have been natural for Peruvians to refer to the Nukinis as Remos. In fact, Montag who visited Tapiche River (1972) was told that a Brazilian man who owned Rep $\acute{u}$ blica, a rubber estate on the M $\hat{o}$ a River, worked with the “Remos” -evidently referring to the Nukinis inhabited this location. First author gathered (2011-2013) oral histories on the Tapiche River which identify Bolota (the Nukini *patr $\acute{o}$ n*) as the boss of the “Remos”.

Thus, there are enough connections to cause the type of situation that could have led the name Remo to be used by outsiders to refer to the ancestors of Nukinis in preceding centuries, although there was no published, direct evidence. Their identification with Remo in literature is therefore an example of a textual construction.

### Connections Among the Historical Reports: “How Many Remos Were There?”

We consider here the possible connections among the many reports of Remos presented above. As we will argue below, linguistic evidence shows that there were three distinct groups called Remo in the Javari River headwaters area in the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But what of the earlier reports of Remos to the south? What relation did these have to each other and to the Javari headwaters groups? Let us first consider the possible hypotheses regarding the relations among the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Remos:

- 1) Reports of Remos prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century all refer to a single ethnic group that...
  - a) migrated northward.
  - b) expanded their territory northward.
  - c) was always present at these locations, but factions to the north of the Tamaya River area were first discovered only in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century and/or known by different names in earlier times.
- 2) Remo was a superordinate term that delineated several closely-related ethnic groups/languages (comparable to the term Chama = Shipibo, Konibo and Shetebo).
- 3) As with the 20<sup>th</sup> century Javari Remo groups, the earlier reports represent multiple groups that are no more closely related to each other than to other Panoan groups in the area.

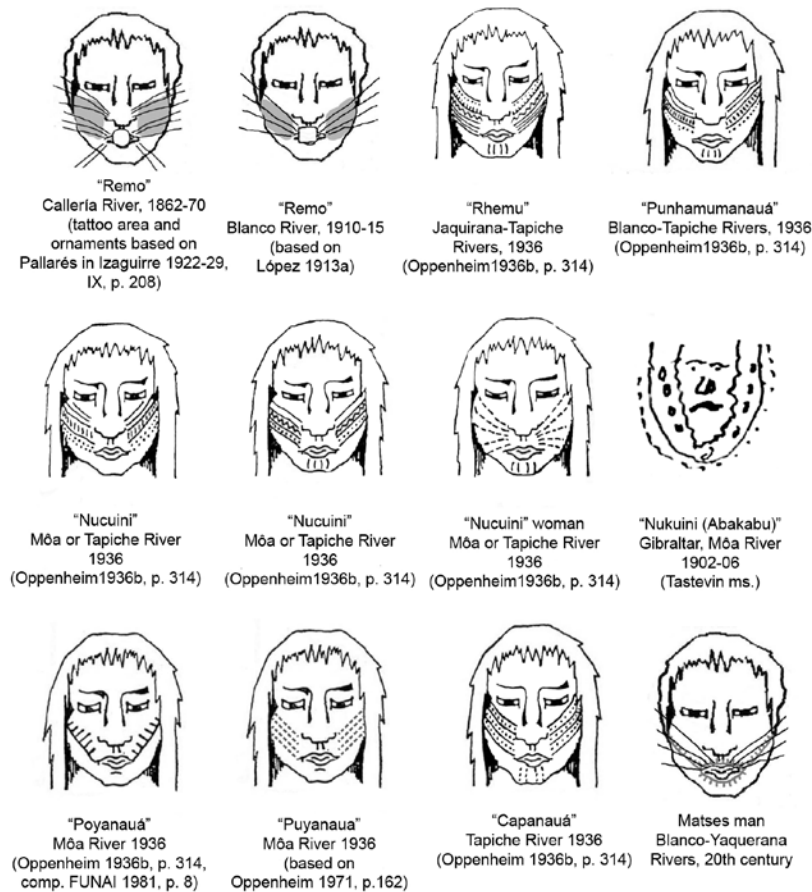
Hypothesis 1a (e.g., Ribeiro and Wise 1978, p. 168) can be rejected offhand, because references to Remos on the Tamaya and other southerly locations continued throughout 19<sup>th</sup> century and later. Expansion of an ethnic group (1b) is not a credible interpretation as this would have involved a population increase, and all indications are that since they were first contacted, the Remos (and most other inland groups) have suffered drastic population *decreases*, due to slaving and epidemics.

Thus, we are left with only 1c, 2, and 3 as viable hypotheses. However, all these involve expansion of the denomination Remo, and not movement of people. We will

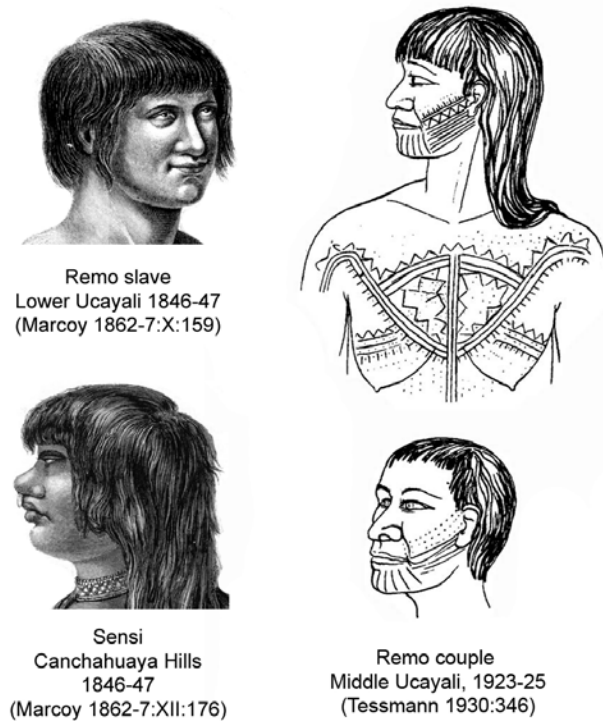
probably never know exactly what relation existed among these pre-20<sup>th</sup> century groups. Furthermore, we cannot know which 20<sup>th</sup>-century Javari area group(s) was/were related to any of the earlier southern groups, or even if there was any relation at all. Searching for other clues, we continue by looking closer at authors' judgments of similarity, shared cultural features, and relations to other groups in the area.

### Tattoos and Facial Piercings

From the 1830s until the 1930s, almost all descriptions of the appearance of Remos mentioned that they had facial (and often also corporal) tattoos. Many of them also described Remos as having facial piercings. Those features do suggest a cultural link between the pre-20<sup>th</sup> century and the Javari headwaters area Remos. However, we cannot make a strong statement about such relations considering that: i) the three linguistically documented Remo groups wore tattoos but were linguistically unrelated; ii) tattooing and facial piercing is not exclusive to groups called Remo or to the Panoan groups<sup>15</sup> (Figure 2), and seems to be characteristic of a much larger area; and iii) material culture is readily borrowed among neighboring genetically unrelated groups and subject to change over generations.



**Figure 2.** Comparison of Remo tattoos and facial ornaments with those of other Panoans.



**Figure 3.** Remo and Sensi portraits.

### Relations to Other Groups in the Area

Two other features that the Remos shared are their interfluvial habitat and the consistent raiding upon them by Ucayali riverine Indians and, later, by rubber extractors. These features are not unrelated. It seems that in historical times, the interfluvial tropical forest areas were occupied by small mobile societies, vulnerable to attacks by larger groups of the Ucayali River, better equipped and organized thanks to the habitat which favors communication and maintenance of exchange networks (further supported by the Jesuit and Franciscan missionary infrastructures). In more recent times, an interfluvial habitat kept such groups away from the public eye, making it easier for riverine people to persecute them unreproached. These raids must have had the effect of reducing the Remo groups, requiring them to hide deeper in the forest (perhaps until today), join up with other groups (perhaps with the ancestors of other neighboring groups), join the non-Indian population, or otherwise disappear. This position was, however little distinctive of the Remo. It was shared by interfluvial groups that at different times and places bore exonyms such as Kapanawa, Sensi, Amawaka, Kashibo, Yaminawa, Impetineri or Mashco.

### Authors' Judgments of Linguistic and Ethnic Similarities

Material culture is readily borrowed across neighboring groups, and social situation is variable. The process whereby shared linguistic features deriving from a common origin are blurred by borrowings takes many more generations than the borrowing of cultural features. Comparison of languages is a much better indicator of what we might call "long-term relatedness" than cultural features. Thus, while based on shared cultural features one could tentatively assume that the term Remo referred to a cohesive category, the linguistic evidence suggests that such a category would not be based on genetic relatedness.

Richter noted that the language of the Remos was similar to that of the Konibos, making this earliest and most southerly reference clearly to a Panoan group.<sup>16</sup> Other reports of linguistic affiliation and mutual intelligibility to Remo groups for which we have no linguistic data are listed in Table 2.



Year	Affiliation information given
1691	Remo very similar to Konibo
1740	Remos, Shipibos, Shetebos, Kashibos Yaobos, Manamanabos and Uniwepas are of the “Konibo nation”
1819	Remo little different from Sensi
1819	Remo little different from Sensi
1835	Remo little different from Sensi
1846	Remo, Sensi, Konibo, Shipibo, Kapanawa, Kashibo, Amawaka, Pitsobo and Yawabo derived from Pano
1846-7	Remos, Amawakas and Chakayas speak the language of the Konibos, Shipibos and Shetebos
1854-5	Remo derived from Pano; Kapanawa derived from Remo
1871	Pano is basis for Remo, Konibo, Shipibo and Shetebo
1877	Shipibo almost same and mutually intelligible with Remo, Pano, and Konibo
1883	Konibo, Remo, Kashibo, Amahuaca derived from Pano
1901	Remo similar to Sensi
1902	Remo similar to Amawaka
1906	Shipibo can be used to speak with Remos, Konibos, Shetebos, Panos and Amawakas

**Table 2.** Reports of affiliation and mutual intelligibility of the Remo language(s) spoken between the Tamaya River and Sarayacu, before 1907.

Here we note the following: 1) All reports indicate that these Remos were Panoan;<sup>17</sup> 2) most associate them with the languages of the Chama subgroup of the Nawa group, i.e., Shipibo, Konibo, Kapanawa, Shetebo, and Pano (see Fleck 2013 for this classification); and 3) very frequently the Remo language is said to be similar to Sensi. Stiglich (1905[1904], p. 302) suggested that the Remos were in nothing different from the Kapanawas and Shipibos, but by far the most common comparative evaluation was that the Remos were similar to the Sensis culturally (Leceta in Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, p. 41; Maw 1829, p. 469; Smyth and Lowe 1836, p. 231; Beltrán 1907, p. 60; Pallarés in Izaguirre 1922-29, IX, p. 212). In light of the multiple accounts of linguistic and cultural similarities with Sensi, it is worth noting the enigmatic character of the Sensi language. It can be tentatively classified as a Chama language, consistent with all historical reports (e.g., Marcoy 1862-7, X, p. 185; Mason 1948, p. 263).<sup>18</sup> This would allow us to reconcile almost all the historical reports of the affiliation of these southern Remos, that is, they would have spoken a language in the Chama subgroup. Considering that none of the three more recent (and northerly) Remo languages for which we have data are in the Chama group, the conclusion would be that at least some of the southerly Remos spoke a fourth distinct Panoan language.

Finally, the Remos were reported as similar to “Amawaka” and “Sakuya” (Hassel 1905b, p. 50; Stiglich 1908[1904], p. 423; Grubb 1927, p. 100). Although it is not possible to say that these Amawaka spoke a language known by this name (e.g. Dole 1998, Hyde 1980), it is possible, because of their geographical position, that all these people belonged to a substrate from which groups such as Kashinawa, Yaminawa and Amawaka that later emerged from this territory and thus that they spoke language of the same group. The southernmost Remo (Hassel etc...) would therefore likely speak a fifth language, belonging to the Headwaters subgroup.

The information presented in this section provides support for hypothesis 1c or 2, though of course neither of these would be viable if we extended them to include the Javari area groups.

### Lexical Comparisons

Three useful sources of linguistic data for groups denominated Remo are available, each collected at a different locality (Table 3, Figure 1).<sup>19</sup>

Collector	Publication year	Collection year	Collection locality
Leuque	1927	1907-15	Blanco River (Tapiche R.)
Carvalho	1929/1931	1926	San Pablo & Batã R. (Jaquirana R.)
Loos & Loos	1973-4 (2 lists)	1973-4/1930s	Môa River (Juruá R.)

	Language name	Lexical items <sup>2</sup>
Remo of the Blanco River	Remo	179 words and phrases 153
Remo of the Jaquirana River	Rhemu/Remu	109 words 109
Remo of the Môa River	Rîmo/Remo	151 words and phrases 116

<sup>a</sup> These figures include all roots in the data, including those extractable from phrases, and subtracting any repeated items.

**Table 3.** Existing sources with original linguistic material for groups called Remo.

Languages compared <sup>a</sup>	<u>Swadesh list comparisons</u>			<u>All possible comparisons</u>		
	Clear <sup>b</sup> matches	All <sup>c</sup> matches	Roots compared	Clear matches	All matches	Roots compared
R. Jaquirana - R. Môa	44%	56%	9	46%	54%	26
R. Jaquirana - R. Blanco	33%	33%	6	38%	38%	13
R. Môa - R. Blanco	25%	40%	20	29%	43%	35
R. Jaquirana - Iskonawa	57%	67%	27	61%	70%	99
R. Môa - Iskonawa	48%	48%	42	43%	47%	104
R. Blanco - Iskonawa	39%	45%	44	34%	41%	126
R. Jaquirana - Nukini	60%	68%	25	61%	71%	82
R. Môa - Nukini	52%	52%	25	47%	54%	57
R. Blanco- Nukini	40%	60%	25	49%	60%	57
Iskonawa- Nukini	72%		79	70%		178
R. Jaquirana - Poyanawa	54%	61%	28	59%	70%	81
R. Môa - Poyanawa	43%	45%	40	42%	49%	78
R. Blanco - Poyanawa	32%	47%	44	42%	49%	77
R. Jaquirana - Amawaka	50%	57%	28	49%	56%	89
R. Môa - Amawaka	65%	70%	40	57%	67%	106
R. Blanco - Amawaka	43%	45%	49	35%	37%	123
R. Jaquirana - Shipibo <sup>d</sup>	48%	52%	25	44%	55%	104
R. Môa - Shipibo	53%	53%	45	43%	49%	115
R. Blanco - Shipibo	29%	38%	48	24%	35%	152
Iskonawa- Nukini	71%		77	70%		176
Poyanawa- Iskonawa	76%		119	72%		234
Poyanawa- Nukini	70%		81	66%		181

**Table 4.** Results of Lexical Comparisons

<sup>a</sup> All Shipibo data and Kapanawa Swadesh list items were collected by the second author. The rest of the Kapanawa data are from Loos and Loos (2003). An Iskonawa list was collected by the first author, and combined with data from Russell (1960), Kensinger (1961), Loos and Loos (1971). Nukini data are from FUNAI (1981) Aguiar (2004a, 2004b) and Okidoi (2004). Amawaka data are from d'Ans (1972), d'Ans and Van den Eynde (1972) and Hyde (1980). Poyanawa data are from Carvalho (1931) and Paula (1992).

<sup>b</sup> "Clear matches" are those where there are two lexical items are identical semantically and phonologically (allowing for authors' different orthographies and possible mistranscription of sounds not in their native language)

<sup>c</sup> ‘All matches’ includes clear matches plus cases where the two lexical items compared were not identical, but similar enough that they could probably differ due to gross transcription errors or a misunderstanding with respect to the meaning of the term.

<sup>d</sup> Comparisons with Kapanawa were almost identical to comparisons with Shipibo.

Table 4 illustrates some of the results of our lexical comparisons. Before discussing these results, several facts should be taken into consideration:

- 1) All three sources are from approximately the same time period (Loos' data originally comes from the 1930s, as described below), so differences in the lexicons cannot be attributed to lexical replacement and phonological change over time.
- 2) While the lists all contain more than 100 lexical items (Table 3), there is actually relatively little overlap in the semantic content of the lists (as can be seen in the last column of the first three rows of Table 4), limiting the ability to reliably judge lexical similarity.
- 3) It is generally accepted that speech varieties sharing 80% or more of their lexicons are dialects of the same language.
- 4) We can expect a fair number of misunderstandings and poor transcriptions, considering that the lists were collected by non-linguists (except Loos, but his Kapanawa informants likely learned some words incorrectly) and by people who had not had much exposure to the language (except perhaps Leuque). Such errors almost always lead to an underestimate of the similarity between two languages. To account for this, the paired percentages in columns 2 and 3 of Table 4 are meant to represent a range, with the expectation that the actual percentage of shared lexical items should fall somewhere in between these figures.

The first thing to note in Table 4 is that the languages labeled Remo do not share many lexical items at all: even considering all the partial/questionable matches, no pair of languages labeled Remo share more than about half of their vocabulary (first three rows of Table 4). Despite the low number of comparisons, and even if we did not compensate enough for misunderstandings, we would still not expect list of the same language to be so different.

After comparing the Remo lists with each other, we compared them to all other Panoan languages for which data is available. The fact that the Remo languages resemble other Panoan languages more than they resemble each other provides an additional strong argument for their being distinct languages:

- 1) Remo of the Jaquirana River resembles Poyanawa, Iskonawa, and Nukini enough to be readily placed in the same subgroup with these, while the other Remo languages are quite different from languages in this subgroup.
- 2) Remo of the M<sup>ô</sup>a River resembles Amawaka more than any other Panoan language, and though it is not strikingly similar to Yaminawa or Kashinawa, it can be tentatively placed in the Headwaters subgroup.<sup>20</sup>
- 3) Remo of the Blanco River is the most divergent of the Remo languages. It is readily placed in the Nawa group of the Mainline branch of the Panoan family, but it is distinct enough from the languages in the existing Nawa subgroups to justify placing it in its own additional Nawa subgroup.

See Fleck (2013) for the placement of the Remo languages in his Panoan classification. In summary, while certainly similar enough to be recognized as belonging to the same family, the three Remo languages do not resemble each other enough to warrant their classification into the same subgroup of the Panoan family, and it is completely impossible that the lists were collected from speakers of the same language, or of even divergent dialects of the same language.

As the Iskonawa and the Nukini have been asserted to be the same as or descendants of the Remos, we have also conducted careful comparisons of the Remo lists with these currently obsolescent languages. Iskonawa is documented well enough to allow a fairly reliable comparison. Fairly lengthy lists are available, collected by Russell (1960), Kensinger (1961), Loos and Loos (1971), and Krokoszyński (2007). Nukini, on the other hand, is obsolescent and poorly documented, but there is enough material to give us some indication, if imprecise, of its similarity to the Remo languages and to Iskonawa (Tastevin n.d.; FUNAI 1981; Aguiar 2004a, 2004b; Okidoi 2004).<sup>21</sup> As mentioned above, Iskonawa, Nukini, and Remo of the Jaquirana River resemble each other enough to be placed in the

same subgroup of the Nawa branch, but they are clearly three separate languages (Table 4).

Thus, we have decisive linguistic evidence that there existed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century at least three distinct groups called Remo, sharing little more than their denomination and a general geographical area. This casts doubt on the assumption that reports of Remos from the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries designated a single group or even a cohesive linguistic category.

### Conclusion: The Remo People and the Remo Phenomenon

The Remo phenomenon eludes unified categories. First, it is clear from this analysis that *the name has been applied to different populations* - some of which we know little about, others we know nothing about. The name Remo is thus not a useful category in ethnohistory of the interfluvia. As far as we know, the different and diverse Remo had never composed a society and there is nothing to indicate that they formed even a fuzzy ethnic group, or had come to form a political “tribe” in contact with either increasingly tribalized Shipibo-Konibo or mestizos. They cannot illustrate a new Panoan ethnohistory that emphasizes incorporation of alterity and mestizaje. However, diversity of linguistic and cultural traits and identities of “Remos” revealed in this analysis does allow a glimpse into the complexity hidden under exonyms of traditional ethnohistory. In turn, histories of better known fragments of the interfluvial known as modern groups (Marubo, Matses, Kapanawa, Amahuaca etc.) demonstrate historical dynamics of the area that we are still struggling to understand (e.g. Santos-Granero & Barclay 1994).

Secondly, *there were different people that used the name with diverse meanings*. Simplifying, the principle vectors of the Remo construction could be conjectured as: 1). “Indigenous”, where a modern concept of ethnic group was most likely foreign, while the interfluvia were a source of captives and potential kin (e.g., proto-Shipibo-Konibo); 2). “Peruvian”, in which little was known about the social and ethnic reality, but there was a need or habit of categorizing people into larger categories of “nations” or “tribes” (the first missionaries, subsequent incomers to the area and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Shipibo and Konibo who dealt with them); 3). “Textual”, where little was known about ethnic and social reality of both the naming and the named, but information from different levels was assembled to unwillingly create an entirely new one, that of the Remo “group” and history. At the face value, Remo thus appears to be a multi-levelled phantom, an enormous working misunderstanding living its own life in separation from the reality to which it purportedly related. In other words, it can be seen as one of the chimeras populating the vast historical continents of Americas as a result of uncritical approach to the sources (Boccaro 2002, comp. Villar et al. 2009).

But more productively, the phenomenon’s history should be seen as illustrating the much larger social processes and historical transformations taking place on the Ucayali. The initial shift from heterogeneity in the initial riverine perspectives of the interfluvia to the apparent homogeneity of 19<sup>th</sup> century use of the Remo name is perhaps most suggestive. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it refers to a specific population living on the Tamaya River, and exists among many other identities of both the river and the interfluvia. It reappears a century later far to the north, referring to one of many other social categories in the Canchahuaya Hills. Here, over a few decades, mentions of other groups east of the Ucayali between the Tamaya River and Sarayacu disappear from documents (e.g., the Manannawas, Chakayas, Yawabos, Pitsobos, Soboibos, and Awanawas), presumably being substituted by the vast-reaching Remo denomination. It can be noted that since the last restoration of the Manoa missions (1791) the proto-Shipibo-Konibo were again building up peaceful interactions with each other. They were creating and transforming an indigenous/missionary riverine cultural horizon on the Ucayali, based on a new network of exchange and information opened up by the missionary and later national structures. This “tribalization” of riverine population must have contributed to the growing social and cultural distance between the interfluvia and the rivers, and in the process, the riverine people were gradually minimizing their own heterogeneity and developing more general identities within this new “tribal zone” (Ferguson & Whitehead 1992). Concurrently, identities projected on the interfluvial populations were becoming less specific. These transformations of the denomination may have been a result of developing new

categorizing modes, indicative of intersections between the indigenous social categories and the “nations” conjured by the missionaries. We could say that their co-presence, interaction and interlocking understandings of the terms and its referents, or the “contact zone” (Pratt 1992), created a mutually comprehensible world with new systems of meanings and exchange, or the “middle grounds” (White 1991) of the Ucayali.

Similarly, the late 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> century extensions most obviously illustrate the penetration of new areas by Peruvian population during the rubber boom. But they are also indicative of the creation and popularization of the Ucayali habitat formed on the former indigenous/missionary “middle grounds”. The composed, mestizo version of the denomination – “Remo-auca” – is most expressive of this process. An equally telling, more recent example of extension and transformation is provided by the contemporary Matsigenka’s borrowing of the Remo name.

It is clear that the main vectors of the Remo construction have transformed and intercrossed. In similar fashion, the name must have been displaced and reused over generations and locations, resulting with a great territorial extension ranging over some 600 km from the Tamaya River to the Javari Mirim River. But rather than elucidating the ethnohistory of interfluvial populations or the people called Remo, the phenomenon indicates the complex history of creation and extension of the modern Ucayali riverine *mestizo* society and culture.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>This article is the result of an intersection between the work on ethnohistory and ethnonymy in the Sierra del Divisor by Ł. Krokoszynski (2006-7, 2008) and the comparative and historical Panoan linguistics by D. Fleck (2013).

<sup>2</sup>We deduce that the term Remo originated as a Shipibo/Konibo word that Jesuits at this location/time learned from them, namely “Remo - Nación de ese nombre” (Marqués 1931[1800], p. 184; Steinen 1904[1810-12, 1877], pp. 67,112). The word probably originally had a different meaning, possibly cognate with the Iskonawa word *rumë* or Mayoruna *dëmuşb*, both meaning ‘nose flare whisker.’ More recently, it has been claimed that the term Remo originates from the Spanish word for (canoe) paddle, either in reference to the shape of the motive of the Remos’ facial tattoos (e.g., Carvalho 1931), or to the slaves’ fate as rowers (DeBoer 1986, p. 239). Tessmann must have assumed Remo was a Spanish loan when he replaced it with the Shipibo word for paddle *Wuinte* on a map at the sources of Utuquinia (1928, p. 197). However, these etymologies are probably imaginative attempts at associating the denomination with the Spanish word.

<sup>3</sup>Taking into account women, children and old men, the total population would be about 3000, as calculated by Steward and Métraux (1948, p. 565).

<sup>4</sup>Shipibo-Konibo inhabitant of contemporary Lake Imiria told the first author (2012) that the name is occasionally still used in oral histories of the Lake and in reference to a few families thought to be of this descent.

<sup>5</sup>She did not understand Iskonawa.

<sup>6</sup>Javari is the modern Brazilian Portuguese spelling, and Yavari is the Spanish spelling. The upper course of the Javari is called Yaquerana in Spanish, and Jaquirana or Alto Javari (Upper Javari) in Portuguese.

<sup>7</sup>Gomes (1898, p. 252) located this group on the left bank of the Jaquirana. Their identification with modern Kapanawas is unknown, though not impossible.

<sup>8</sup>López explored the Blanco River as far as Capanahua Stream in 1904, where he interacted with the local rubber tappers, but did not mention any groups called Remo in his diary (López 1905[1904]).

<sup>9</sup>Lamb describes a meeting of Manuel Cordova with a group of “Inucuini” at the Remo Stream of the Gálvez River. Some of them were reportedly the same people who were working with Padre Enrique on the Blanco and are subsequently referred to as Remo (1985, pp. 49-51). The account fails to provide data which transcend close reading of written sources and therefore it seems to us rather a literary product than factual story. For a review that questions the veracity of Lamb’s previous book, see Carneiro (1980).

<sup>10</sup>Solicitations for territorial reserves for isolated peoples on this area (“Tapiche-Yaquerana”, “Maquíá-Callería”) prepared by AIDSESEP are pending, while the area is categorized as a reserved zone “Sierra del Divisor”. In Brazil, it is contained within the Serra do Divisor National Reserve.

<sup>11</sup>According to Fields (1963), the Matses captured Remos, and Kneeland (1994, p. 36) also mentions Remo captives among the Matses. However, these missionaries' information can be traced back to an interview with a non-Indian escapee interviewed by Fields, who would have been familiar with the term Remo, and associated it with the Matses term "Dëmuşhbo" through phonological analogy. This is obvious from the escapee's description of the "Remo" in Fields (1963, pp. 22-23), which matches precisely Fleck's information on the Dëmuşhbo. In fact, the term Dëmuşhbo was spelt Rëmoşbo in another section of Fields (1963, p. 16).

<sup>12</sup>Also, the local Shipibos report that they initially alternatively called them "Rëmubu" (Krokoszyński field notes).

<sup>13</sup>According to Branco (1922, pp. 16, 23) the Súngaru and Breguesso are alternative names for Rio Azul, right tributary of the Mõa.

<sup>14</sup>The meaning of the term is a mystery that will probably never be resolved. Linhares' (1913, Rivet and Tastevin 1921, p. 469) etymology of the term is 'poisonous and odorous jaguar,' but this is most likely an error. Tastevin and Rivet (1921, p. 469) speculated that *inukuini* and *nukuini* might be corruptions of *huni kuin*, but this also seems a bit of a stretch. Carvalho (1931, p. 253) defined Nukuini as 'good people.' It is worth noting that the extinct Kulina of São Paulo de Olivença had the term *nukuny* defined in Latin as 'homo' (human/man), though their autodenomination was never recorded (Martius 1867, II, p. 243).

<sup>15</sup>Virtually identical ornamentations to those of the Remos were found in the 1940s by Oppenheim among the Arawakan "Mashko" Indians on the upper Madre de Dios River (Oppenheim 1958, pp. 202-3). Marcoy produced a portrait of a Remo man with no tattoos or facial ornaments (1962-7, X, p. 159), and also portraits of tattooed Antis (= Campas), Chontaquiros (= Piros), Konibos and Shipibos and Impetiniris with facial piercings (e.g., Marcoy 1962-7, IX, p. 211, X, pp. 139, 152, 164-5, 187).

<sup>16</sup>Richter would have arrived at this knowledge either second-hand from Konibos that were familiar with these Remos' language, or first-hand, if Remos were among the Konibos' many slaves from other tribes (Maroni 1988, p. 286).

<sup>17</sup>An isolated reference to Remos for this period comes from Juan de Velasco (1981[1770], p. 546), who asserted them (and the Amawakas) to be a branch of the Campas (without specifying any location). However, Velasco never visited the Americas, but his work is based on verbal reports of Jesuits expelled from the Spanish colonies, and he is known to have made many ludicrous assertions about the affinity of Amazonian groups.

<sup>18</sup>See Fleck forthcoming and Krokoszyński unpublished for a full discussion of the Sensi language and ethnohistory.

<sup>19</sup>Julio Melatti collected a short list of 9 Remo words from a woman who had been in contact with people called Remos in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on the Batã River (same location as Remo of the Jaquirana River). Montagner and Melatti (2005 [1973], p. 11) state that it is similar to Marubo. The list was kindly made available to us by Professor Melatti. It corresponds well with Remo of the Jaquirana River, not well with Remo of the Mõa River, and there are not enough matches with Remo of the Blanco River to make a judgment. The list also matches well many other Nawa languages, including Marubo and Shipibo/Konibo/Kapanawa. While he did not state it explicitly, Figuerêdo (1939, p. 204-5) obviously copied 20 words from Carvalho's (1929/1931) Remo of the Jaquirana River list (and also ethnographical notes). Richard Montag (1972) collected two Remo word lists on the Tapiche River, one from one of the Kapanawas who spent some time living with the Remos and the other from a half-Remo half-Kapanawa woman, but these lists appear to be unavailable.

<sup>20</sup>Based on geography, we had predicted that Remo of the Mõa would be similar to Poyanawa, Nukini, and Iskonawa, but it clearly is quite different from these.

<sup>21</sup>Also, Aguiar (1994, p. 198) cites a FUNAI (1973) report as containing a Nukini word list, though this may be the same as FUNAI (1981).

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