11-30-2023

Two multilingual regions in southwestern Amazonia

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Recommended Citation

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Até ao presente se não fez mais entrada alguma por aquella parte do Corumbiara, por ser precisa tropa de grande força para conquistar a multidão de gentios que habitão aquelle sertão.

(Fonseca 1874 [1749], 407)[1]

Eu não tenho língua, não, tá? Eu não tenho idioma, não. Minha mãe é Makurap, eu falo idioma da minha mãe. Eu falo a língua do meu pai, que é Aruá. Eu entendo a língua da minha mulher, que é Djeoromitxí. Eu entendo um pouco de Tuparí. Falo um pouco de Castelhano, um pouco de Português, e assim eu vou indo. Eu não tenho idioma nenhum. [...] Porque a gente... nos é assim, se nos fala a língua do outro, mais, mais, mais a gente quer aprender mais. E outro quando aprende a língua da gente, também ele quer aprender mais profundo; é assim. A língua mais falado, mais fácil de falar é Makurap. Jabutí fala, Tuparí fala, o Arikapú, todo fala a língua Makurap.

(Odete Aruá, Baia da Coca, pers. com., T.I. Rio Guaporé, July 12, 2022)[2]

Introduction

The southwestern Amazon region, as roughly corresponding to the area outlined by the Guaporé, Mamoré, Beni, Madre de Dios, and Ji-Paraná rivers (all tributaries of the Madeira River), is a region of impressive genealogical linguistic diversity, counting up to ten linguistic isolates[3] and seven language families among its more than fifty different languages. From this valley of tongues also come some of the earliest attestations of plant domestication for food, such as peanut, peach palm, and manioc (e.g., Clement et al. 2016), as well as archeological evidence for human occupation that dates back at least 10,000 years (e.g. Zimpel and Pugliese, 2016). Although the region is vast, there are hardly any serious natural barriers, and its Indigenous populations used to belong to several different ethnographic areas.

Although certain striking grammatical and lexical similarities between the different languages can be attributed to areal diffusion, the region does not represent a single, clearly definable linguistic area (Crevels and van der Voort 2008; Muysken et al. 2015). However, although areal linguistic phenomena will be discussed in one of the subsections of this article, its primary focus is on the identification of Indigenous multilingual regions. In small-scale egalitarian multilingual societies, different languages coexist in a stable fashion over generations, and people tend to speak or understand more than one language, with people's choice of language at any one time depending on the interactional situation at hand and being codetermined by aspects of social identity. This is different from the (post)colonial kind of transitory multilingualism in which minoritized languages are dominated by prestigious languages until they are no longer spoken. Following Lüpke's (2016) definition, small-scale multilingualism

> is meant [...] to designate balanced multilingualism practiced in meaningful geographical spaces sustaining dense interaction and exchange at their interior. Small-scale multilingualism is attested mainly in areas not or relatively recently exposed to Western settlements and Western ideas of nation states and standard language ideologies. (Lüpke 2016, 41).

It is likely that some subregions of the southwestern Amazon contain traces of precolonial traditional small-scale multilingualism. Unfortunately, Western cultural, demographic, and

1. "Up to the present, no further entry has been made through that part of the Corumbiara, as troops of great force are needed to conquer the multitude of gentiles who inhabit that hinterland."

2. "I don't have a language at all, you see. I have no language at all. My mother is Makurap, I speak the language of my mother. I speak the language of my father, who is Aruá. I understand the language of my wife, who is Djeoromitxí. I understand a little Tuparí. I speak a little Spanish, a little Portuguese, and so forth. I don't have any language at all. [...] It's because we, we're like this: if we speak the language of others, even more and more, we want to learn more. And when the other one learns our language, he also wants to learn more, that's how. The language that is spoken most, and is easiest to speak, is Makurap. The Jabutí speak it, Tuparí speak it, the Arikapú, they all speak the Makurap language."

3. A linguistic isolate is a language that is not known

economic interference have thoroughly altered the original situation, about which we know very little. In this article, I will summarize the evidence for small-scale multilingualism in the southwestern Amazon in an attempt to reconstruct a picture of two specific multilingual regions, and sketch how the remainders of traditional multilingualism have codetermined the current situation in southern Rondônia, Brazil.[4] This article also aims to expand on the section about southwestern Amazonia in Lüpke et al. (2020, 21-23) by providing additional details.

The northern side of the Guaporé valley

One of the headwaters of the Madeira River is the Guaporé, or Iténez, River. It represents part of what is nowadays the national border that separates the Bolivian Beni department from the Brazilian state of Rondônia. As mentioned in the introduction, the southwestern Amazon region, which is here defined as the region that comprises the Guaporé and Mamoré river basins, and which is about the size of Germany, holds immense genealogical linguistic diversity and several original ethnographic areas. As argued by Crevels and van der Voort (2008), it probably represents a linguistic area, with clusters of languages and features in certain subregions. One of those regions is located on the right, or northern, side of the Guaporé River, in present-day Brazil.

Whereas European exploration in what is now the Bolivian Amazon began as early as the sixteenth century, leading to permanent contact with Indigenous peoples from the seventeenth century onward, first contacts on the northern side of the upper Guaporé probably occurred in the wake of an eighteenth-century goldrush.[5] The short-lived Spanish Jesuit settlements further downriver involved Indians from both sides, and the same possibly also holds true for the Portuguese forts Bragança and Príncipe da Beira, which were strategically placed to protect the colonial border, and which relied on an Indigenous workforce (Meireles 1989).

Most of the references to Indigenous groups on the northern side in the early documents make it very difficult to identify them by their names. One can only speculate about names such as Curicharas, Amios, Mabiús, Lambis, Kutrias, Ababás, Membarés, Guazaités,[6,7] and others (see Ferreira 2008; Fonseca 1874), which have not been heard since. Very few names from this epoch are still known today, such as Cabixi, which refers to a tributary river as well as to different Indigenous groups.[8] The name Mequens is also encountered in mid-eighteenth-century sources and refers both to one of the tributaries of the Guaporé River and to the Mekens people, who probably represented the Mekens subgroups Mampiapé or Guarategayat. The "Mekens" (henceforth Sakurabiat)[9] and other peoples were involved in regular contact with the Portuguese and their Spanish rivals for some time, until the latter two groups withdrew in

map 1. Part of southeastern Rondônia, clipped from Rondon and Mattos (1952).

to be genealogically related to any other language and hence cannot be classified into a larger language family. An isolate can therefore be considered as a single-language family. A common example is the Basque language of Europe. Isolates are the topic of an edited volume by Lyle Campbell (2018).

4. This article is based on the literature available to me, as well as on my own linguistic and documentary fieldwork in Indigenous communities in southern Rondônia (description of the Kwaza language, 1995-2000; description and genealogical classification of the Arikapú language, 2001-2004; areal linguistics of the Guaporé region, 2005-2010; documentation of Aikanã and Kwaza language and culture, 2012-2020; current descriptive and documentary work on Aikanã and Kwaza).

5. The whereabouts of the legendary Urucumacuan goldfields are nowadays unknown, but they were supposed to be located somewhere in the southern part of the border region between the states of Rondônia and Mato Grosso. For a history of the attempts to locate the Urucumacuan goldfields, see Pinto (2012).

6. Ramirez (2010, 44) speculates that it was possibly the Kwaza who were mentioned in 1749 on the Corumbiara River as Guazaités by Fonseca (1874, 407). In present-day Aikanã, the language of their neighbors, *Kwaza-ete* would mean "to/at Kwaza." Nevertheless, Ramirez' hypothesis is impossible to verify.

7. All linguistic forms in this article are drawn from my own fieldwork, except where indicated otherwise. Transcriptions are phonemic or follow practical orthographies. Translations are mine.

8. See Price (1983) for a discussion of this confus-

order to fight for their respective independences and the region lost its strategic importance. Despite these periods of intensive contacts with Europeans, almost no documentation of ethnographic or linguistic relevance was produced of the Indigenous peoples on the right bank of the Guaporé River. There can be no doubt that the Portuguese presence came with epidemic diseases that caused demographic decline. However, in spite of their likely disruptive consequences, these eighteenth-century contacts with the Europeans are not remembered by the Indigenous peoples of the region today.

Permanent regular contact was established only at the end of the nineteenth century, with the onset of the rubber trade. The implication of this is that little over a century ago, many Indigenous peoples of Rondônia had not yet faced the effects of Western (Brazilian) encroachment.

The first reliable ethnographic and linguistic data from the Brazilian side of the Guaporé valley are from Nordenskiöld (1915), Rondon (1916, and other works), and Roquette-Pinto (1917), who visited the multilingual region of the Apediá and Corumbiara headwaters; Fawcett (1915), who visited the multilingual Rio Branco and Colorado valleys; and Haseman (1912), who visited the Wanyam (Chapacura) on the São Miguel River. A solid overview of the Chapacura language family and the history of its documentation is provided by Birchall et al. (2016). Here, I will discuss only the two multilingual regions.

The Rio Branco-Colorado multilingual region

The Rio Branco and Colorado river basins have been inhabited since time immemorial by different Indigenous peoples speaking different languages. These peoples shared many cultural traits, maintained regular contact, intermarried, and spoke one another's languages. However, none of these features are apparent in the documents produced by Fawcett (1915), a British coronel who in 1914 was one of the first Westerners to enter the Colorado and Rio Branco basins and write about them. Fawcett apparently went north along the Rio Colorado towards the headwaters of the Rio Branco, where he met a friendly group of "Mashubi," who can be identified as Arikapú,[10] and an unidentifiable hostile group of "Maricoshi." Fawcett's material gives only a very limited picture of the Rio Branco-Colorado region.

It was not until twenty years later that solid and detailed ethnographic information on the region was collected by the German ethnographer Emil Heinrich Snethlage. Contracted by the Ethnographic Museum of Berlin, Snethlage carried out an expedition with local teams in almost the entire Guaporé valley from 1933 to 1935, during which he contacted and visited some thirteen Indigenous peoples along tributary rivers on both sides of the Guaporé. In addition to acquiring objects of material culture for the museum's collection, Snethlage carried out archeological excavations and documented the Indigenous peoples' cultures and languages through photographs, silent film, sound recordings on wax cylinders, and in a field research diary of over a thousand densely written pages.[11] Due to his early death in 1939, he published only few works, notably his popular scientific account (1937) and a survey of the region's musical traditions (1939), and remained relatively unknown. Published finally in 2016, and subsequently translated and published in Portuguese in 2021, Snethlage's field diary full of scientific and personal observations has become accessible to all, including, most importantly, the Indigenous descendants of the people he met and documented.[12]

From early March to late August 1934, Snethlage traveled in the Rio Mequens, Rio Branco (previously also called São Simão), and Rio Colorado valleys, experiences that cover over 400 pages of his field diary. As Snethlage notes, on both sides of the Guaporé, several rubber collection and trading posts (*barracão*, in Portuguese) had been established. On the Rio Mequens, he first went left up the Rio Colorado until he reached the rubber post of Pernambuco, where he encountered a large community consisting mainly of Chiquitano people from

ing name, which, depending on the epoch and the source, can refer to Parecis (Arawak), Nambikwara, Wanyam (Chapacura), and other groups in different parts of the southwestern Amazon.
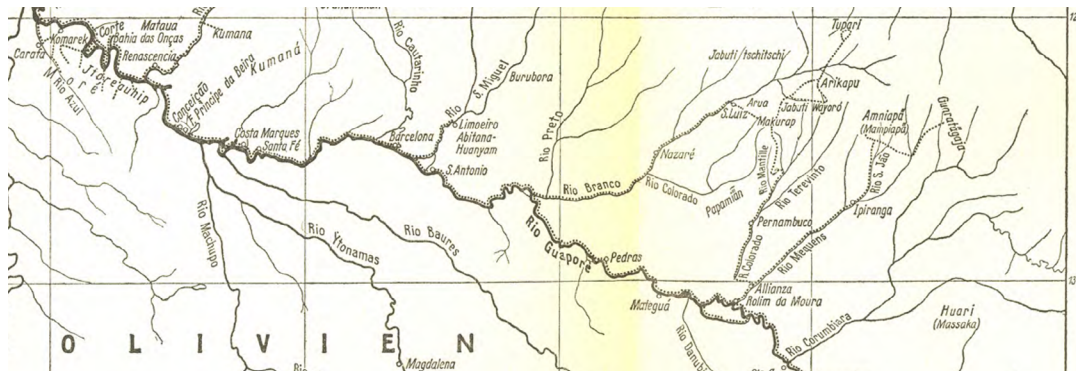
9. Instead of "Mekens," the autodenomination of the Sakurabiat subgroup is nowadays used as a generic ethnonym for what is left of the original system of subgroups who speak the same language (Galucio, 2021 [2003]).

10. The name "Mashubi" is found exclusively in Colonel Fawcett's manuscripts. Neither the people of the region nor the ethnographer Snethlage (2016), who traveled extensively in the region for over a year in the 1930s, knew this name. On the basis of Fawcett's word list of about 100 items, Caspar (1955) concluded that the so-called "Mashubi" must have been Arikapú. This conclusion was corroborated by new evidence presented in van der Voort (2012).

11. For the remarkable odyssey of Snethlage's legacy throughout the second World War, the exile of Snethlage's family, and in recent times, see Snethlage (2002) and Mere (2013).

12. Both publications are the impressive feat of Snethlage's son Rotger, his grandson Alhard, and the Brazilian photographer and journalist Gleice Mere. The monumental Portuguese translation includes a number of Snethlage's articles that were previously available only in German.

Bolivia working in the extraction of rubber, ipecac, and Brazil nut. Thereafter, he went further upriver, where he visited Makurap villages for two weeks before returning to the mouth of the river. After two weeks of archeological excavations on the lower Rio Mequens, he canoed up to its headwaters, where he visited the Sakurabiat groups of the Amniapé/Mampiapé[13] and Guarategayat for a few weeks. Then he went back down again to the Guaporé River, from where he entered the mouth of the Rio Branco, following it to the rubber post of São Luís, where especially Aruá and Makurap people worked as debt slaves[14] in return for Western products such as metal tools, sugar, and cachaça liquor. From there, he headed over land to the headwaters of the Rio Branco and the Rio Colorado, where he visited Makurap, Djeoromitxí, Wayoro, Arikapú, and Tuparí people. Map 2 locates the Indigenous groups visited by Snethlage, showing his traveling routes as dotted lines.

13. The Sakurabiat don't recognize the name Amniapé but do identify the Mampiapé as a subgroup, whose name is analyzable as *mapi-ape*, "arrow tip" (Galucio, in Snethlage, 2021, vol. II, 513).

14. See Mezacasa (2021) for Makurap and Aruá oral histories of the *barracão* system.

map 2. Part of southeastern Rondônia, taken from Snethlage (1937).

In 1948, fourteen years after Snethlage, the Swiss ethnographer Franz Caspar visited the Rio Branco region and lived with the Tuparí for roughly half a year. In 1955, he returned to the Tuparí for another five months. In the time between his travels, he wrote a popular scientific account (1952) and his unpublished doctoral thesis (1953), which approaches the region between the Branco and Machado rivers as a multiethnic ethnographic area and is based on published sources, Snethlage's manuscript diary, and his own observations in the field. His published monograph (1975), an in-depth ethnographic study of the Tuparí people based on his personal fieldwork, includes many citations from the manuscript diary of Snethlage, to whom the monograph is dedicated. A few months before Caspar, the Yugoslavian journalist Tibor Sekelj also visited the Rio Branco region for some months, meeting several groups. He published a popular account of his experiences (1950) and produced a long manuscript wordlist in the Makurap, Tuparí, Arikapú, Djeoromitxí, and Aruá languages (Brijnen and Adelaar 2010). Caspar met Sekelj on the latter's way back from the Tuparí and cites his work with reservation. Some of Sekelj's statements about the Tuparí were apparently not based on observation but on conjecture and were falsified by Caspar (1975, 83-84, 282).

In contrast to Snethlage, who in the course of a year visited practically all the groups of the wider region, Caspar focused on one single group for about the same length of time. As a result, Snethlage's expedition allowed for a relatively quick survey in which similarities and differences between the groups easily became apparent, facilitating the distinction of areal cultural features. Caspar, on the other hand, soon learned the Tuparí language and had the opportunity to carefully interview people about their interethnic relationships and their history. In addition, he was able to visit the Tuparí's closest neighbors and take extensive linguistic and ethnographic fieldnotes. After his first fieldwork period, Caspar had access to information from literature that appeared after Snethlage, such as Hanke (1950), Loukotka (1942), Rondon and Faria (1948), Sekelj (1950), and several works by Lévi-Strauss, Métraux, Nimuendajú,

and others. This enabled him to get a more systematic overview of the cultural and linguistic relationships in the wider region of the Branco, Colorado, Mequens, Corumbiara, and Apediá rivers. Many of the headwaters of these rivers converge under different names on the Parecis Plateau, which is a higher region with less dense vegetation frequented by various groups.

The Apediá-Corumbiara multilingual region

The Corumbiara River is a tributary to the Guaporé, upriver from the mouth of the Mequens. The Apediá River, also often called the Pimenta Bueno River, is an upper arm of the Ji-Paraná River, also known as the Rio Machado, which runs into the Madeira River below Porto Velho. In 1914, the Swedish ethnographer Erland Nordenskiöld, his wife Olga, and a few Chiquitano guides crossed the Guaporé River from Bolivia in search of an uncontacted and allegedly anthropophagous group in the Corumbiara basin. After clambering through untrodden swamp forest and crossing the Corumbiara River, they hit upon hunting trails and finally, after having traveled for ninety kilometers, walked into the small settlement of an Indigenous group Nordenskiöld referred to as Huari.[15]
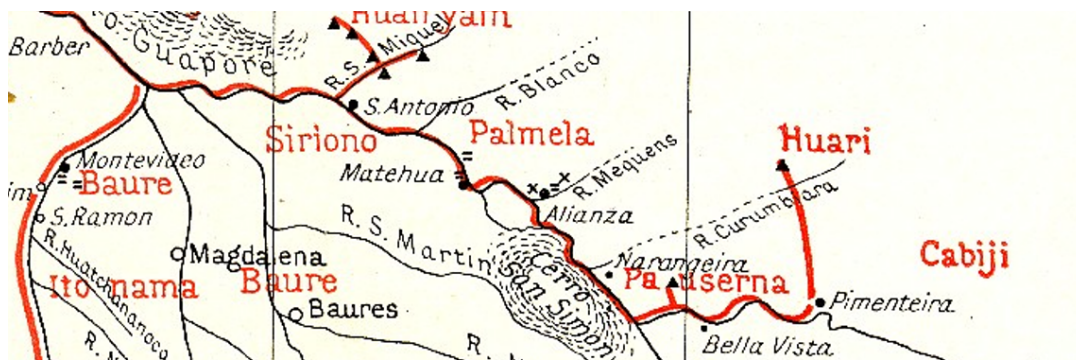
map 3. Part of southeastern Rondônia, taken from Nordenskiöld (1915).

Nordenskiöld spent a few days of the month of May in the settlement, taking many ethnographic notes with drawings of material objects and photographs. He also noted down a word list, of which a selection of sixty-nine words are included in his popular scientific book (1915) about his travels in Bolivia and Brazil in 1913-1914. With the exception of one or two doubtful entries, all the words are Aikanã. The book, which contains two chapters on the so-called Huari, represents the first ethnolinguistic documentation of the Aikanã people.

Returning from the Aikanã at the end of May, Nordenskiöld encountered Fawcett, who was then on his way towards the Rio Branco, and at the end of the year Nordenskiöld ran into him again in Cochabamba. From what Fawcett told him, Nordenskiöld (1915, 577) got the impression that there were significant cultural similarities between the "Huari" and the "Mashubi" (i.e., the Arikapú, see note 10), whereas he considered "Huari" culture to be very different from that of the Pauserna (1915, 388). Nordenskiöld's observations about the "Huari" (henceforth Aikanã) became standard reference in the anthropological literature of the first half of the twentieth century. For example, Snethlage draws many parallels with the cultures of the Rio Branco and Mequens groups in his own work, considering their culture identical with that of the Aikanã and the Kanoé.[16]

Other sources that report on the first-contact period in the Apediá-Corumbiara region are much more superficial and much less detailed. The first observations from the Apediá valley came from the military officer Cândido Rondon, who, in the early years of the twentieth century, led several expeditions in the western Amazon region with the aim of establishing

15. This name does not refer to the Wari', a Chapacuran-speaking group in western Rondônia. Nordenskiöld learned the name *Huari* from the Pauserna (or Warázu/Guarasugwé, Tupi-Guarani), and, as pointed out by Ramirez et al. (2017, 5), it represents the Warázu word *wári*, "Indian." The name is not recognized by the Aikanã and is only found in Nordenskiöld (1915) and in Hanke (1956), who claims that her Aikanã consultants at the Ricardo Franco Indigenous post used it as an autonym. Note that the Chapacuran Wari' also frequented the Ricardo Franco post and some of them intermarried with Aikanã people, which could perhaps explain Hanke's claim as having been based on a confusion.

16. Snethlage (2016, 618) did not know the ethnonym Aikanã, and he did not visit the Corumbiara-Apediá region, but he was familiar with Nordenskiöld's book and talked with people who knew the region. He also met an Aikanã woman who told him she was from the Massaká people, whom he identified as Huari (i.e., Aikanã) on the basis of Nordenskiöld's word list. Massaká, the name of an Aikanã leader, is still in use today by the descendants of his group.

telegraph lines. The longest line was built between 1907 and 1915, 1,600 kilometers through uncharted forest from Cuiabá to Santo Antônio do Rio Madeira (just outside Porto Velho). The expeditions also had scientific goals and therefore included biologists, geologists, ethnologists, and astronomers as well as photographers and physicians, and it resulted in a vast collection of publications and documents. Rondon, who founded the *Serviço de Proteção aos Índios* (S.P.I.)[17] in 1910 and was himself of partial Indigenous descent, had a great interest in science and in the Indigenous peoples the expeditions encountered and documented on the way (see, e.g. Rohter 2019; Siqueira et al. 2016).

One of Rondon's reconnaissance teams reached the Apediá valley in 1909 but did not report on any encounter with native peoples. After having established peaceful contact with Nambikwara groups in 1910, Rondon's team in 1913 established contact with peoples of the Apediá valley. They were received by the friendly Kepkiriwat people, whose leader Putequai described the region and its inhabitants to Rondon, mentioning the local river names and the names of the neighboring peoples. For different reasons, several of the ethnic names mentioned are not recognized anymore today. Some of the groups, including the very Kepkiriwat, have become extinct since. Some of the names might refer to existing peoples, but identification is difficult because those names may have been used exclusively by the Kepkiriwat, or they may have referred to clans or subgroups of peoples of the region. Some of the groups, however, can be identified from Rondon's early reports (Rondon 1916, 1946; Anonymous 1916), such as the Coaiá (Kwaza), Charamein (Salamãi), or Uapurutá (Aikanã, subgroup Wiikuruta).[18] According to these early sources, the Coaiá were apparently much feared by the Kepkiriwat, whereas the Charamein and Uapurutá were considered by Rondon as subgroups of the Kepkiriwat.
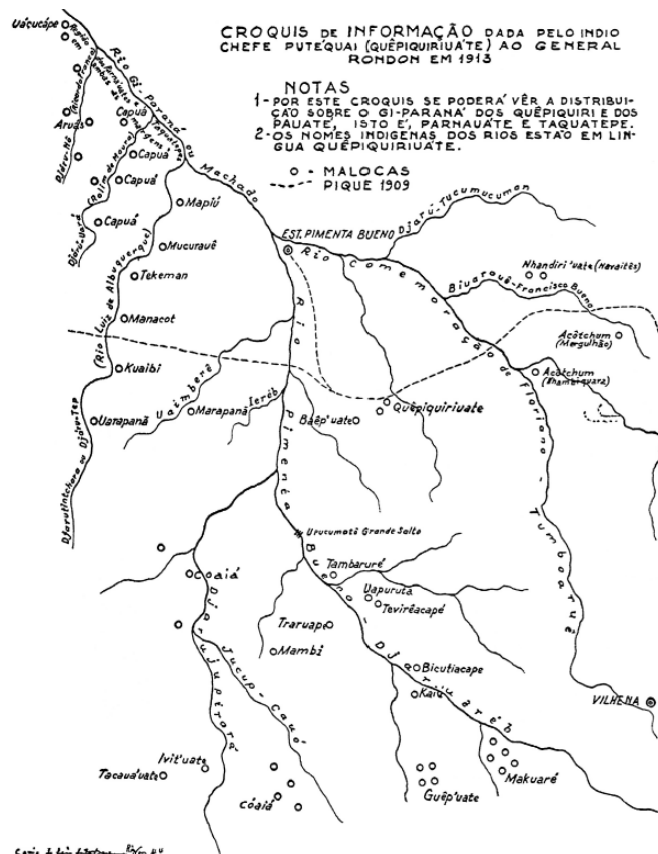
map 4. The Apediá (Pimenta Bueno) and Comemoração rivers, from Rondon and Faria (1948).

Tipití: Journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America | 2023 | vol. 19 | issue 2
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The location of the Coaiá and Uapurutá on the 1913 map from Rondon's visit (Rondon and Faria, 1948) has been confirmed by later information both found in documents and learned from present-day speakers of the respective Kwaza and Aikanã languages. About the identification of some of the names on the map one can only speculate. For example, the name "Mambi" may represent a regional *Wanderwort* (*mãbi*, *mapip*, etc.) meaning "bow"/"arrow" in several unrelated languages, and may have referred to a group with which relations were not friendly. Alternatively, it could refer to the Mampiapé, a subgroup of the Sakurabiat (see note 13). Another group called "Acôtchum," with "Nhambiquara" written below it between brackets, is located to the east of the Kepkiriwat on the map. This name is a variant of a regionally widespread word (*akũtyũ*, *akuntsun*, etc.) with which several peoples of the Apediá-Corumbiara region until the present day refer either to the Nambikwara or to non-allied peoples in general.[19] The other names may never be connected to an existing or extinct Indigenous people. However, since it has become possible to identify some of the groups, the sparse early observations from the Apediá valley by the Comissão Rondon paint a picture of high linguistic diversity and interethnic relationships of both a friendly and a hostile nature.

The establishment of rubber enterprises (*seringais*, in Portuguese) in the Apediá-Corumbiara region probably began around 1915 with Américo Casara at Barranco Alto on the Corumbiara River (Albert 1964; Dequech 1943). Such rubber enterprises were stimulated by government concessions irrespective of any Indigenous peoples that already lived there. Indigenous groups were drawn to the rubber trading posts by the usual Western products like metal tools, metal pans, sugar, etc. Often, the men were recruited as debt slaves for the rubber groves. Harvesting and smoking the latex was usually men's work, while the extraction of other forest products such as Brazil nut, ipecac, and mahogany and the maintenance of plantations were done both by men and women. Women were furthermore involved as unpaid house maids and mistresses. After 1926, a trail was opened between the Guarajú tributary of the Corumbiara River and the Cascata 15 de Novembro falls on the Apediá River, from where produce could be sent downriver to the telegraph station Pimenta Bueno. In spite of the multiethnic concentrations of Aikanã, Kanoé, Sakurabiat, and other groups around the *seringais*, almost no ethnographic or linguistic information came forth from the Corumbiara valley during this period. The first documentation of the isolate Kanoé language is a word list from 1928 by Nimuendajú (1955), who interviewed a speaker of "Kapišanã'" in Belém.[20]

When the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss and his Brazilian colleague Luiz de Castro Faria came through the region in 1938, they went up the Apediá River to its confluence with the tributary Rio do Ouro. By this time, contact with the Western rubber tappers had introduced exogenous diseases such as influenza, measles, and smallpox, which were especially lethal for the Indigenous peoples. These epidemics decimated and uprooted many Indigenous peoples, and survivors from different groups would often pull together, establishing new multiethnic communities. The community visited by Lévi-Strauss and Faria's team included speakers of Salamãi and Kwaza. Faria's (2001) word list of Salamãi and Lévi-Strauss' (1995) word list of Kwaza probably represent the first-ever documents of these two languages.

A few years later, now General Rondon ordered an expedition to be undertaken in search of the legendary Urucumacuan goldfields (see note 5). On the basis of an earlier report (Moritz, 1916), Rondon thought that they must be located at the headwaters of the Apediá River. An endeavor of the National Mineral Department, the expedition was led by the mineralogist Victor Dequech (1943, 1988-1993). It set up its base at Cascata 15 de Novembro, in the heart of Aikanã territory. The team had been provided with modern equipment, and between 1941 and 1943 explored the entire Corumbiara and Apediá valleys, prospecting the riverbanks for gold and other minerals. In 1942, the S.P.I., too, organized an expedition, led by Estanislau Zack (1943) and aiming to evaluate the social and economic situation of the region's Indigenous peoples. The two expeditions shared infrastructure and collaborated in

19. It gave rise to the ethnonym Akuntsú for the neighbors of the Kanoé, who referred to them by this word. Both groups were contacted in 1995 at the Omeré River, where they still live. It is apparently not known what the autonym of those Akuntsú is, if they have one. The word was known even in the Rio Branco region, where the Tuparí referred to a "pygmean" group in the remote east by the name Wakotsōn (Caspar, 1975: 10).

20. This man, Lúcio Tatí, was from the Guarajú River.

various ways. No substantial quantities of gold were encountered,[21] but the joint expeditions met and visited the Indigenous groups of the Apediá and Corumbiara valleys and documented aspects of their cultures and languages. One of the settlements the S.P.I. team visited on the Apediá River included Aikanã, Kanoé, Kwazá, and Salamãi speakers and may have been the same settlement that had also been visited by Lévi-Strauss. At the headwaters of the Corumbiara, the expeditions predominantly met Kanoé and Sakurabiat speakers. As appears from Zack (1943), Spanish rather than Portuguese may have functioned as a lingua franca on the Apediá because of the presence of many Bolivian and Peruvian rubber tappers. Elsewhere, on the Mequens River, Portuguese was reported to be understood by almost everyone.

The Marico cultural complex

The first ethnographers who traveled on the Brazilian side of the Guaporé River and visited the Indigenous peoples there noticed significant cultural similarities between the peoples of the Rio Branco-Colorado and Apediá-Corumbiara regions. In his chapter about the peoples of the right bank of the Guaporé River in the *Handbook of South American Indians*, Lévi-Strauss (1948) distinguishes two subareas on the basis of cultural correspondences: the region west of the Rio Branco, occupied by Chapacuran-speaking peoples, and the Rio Branco, Mequens, and Corumbiara river basins to the east, where languages belonging to different families were spoken. More recently, ethnohistorian Denise Maldi (1991) redefined a part of Lévi-Strauss' eastern area on the basis of earlier written sources and her own fieldwork. Focusing on the Rio Branco, she reviews in considerable detail the history of its documentation and the characteristics of what she calls the Marico cultural complex. Among the defining cultural traits she mentions are:

- seminomadic swidden agriculture combined with hunting and gathering;
- relatively small egalitarian societies;
- territorial subgroups that often bear animal names;
- territorial subgroups that could form alliances with others across linguistic borders;
- the shamanic use of a hallucinogenic snuff based on the seeds of the angico tree (*Anadenanthera* sp.);
- certain shared specific mythical elements, such as the emergence of the first humans from a hole covered by a stone, and the creation of the world by two demiurge brothers;
- a material culture characterized (among other things) by the *marico*, a crocheted carrying net made of the fibers of specific palm tree leaves (usually tucumã) after which the Marico cultural complex is named;
- a local fermented alcoholic brew called chicha, a drink mainly based on maize, yam, manioc, or fruits such as bananas, which are mashed, fermented, and sifted.

The peoples who according to Maldi (1991) form part of the Marico cultural complex are the Aruá, Makurap, Wayoro, Tuparí, Arikapú, Djeoromitxí, and Sakurabiat, and she describes their relationships and histories in considerable detail. Even though the languages spoken by these peoples are very different (with some belonging to entirely different language families than others), their defining cultural traits are shared. Maldi does not seem to include any of the peoples of the Apediá basin in the Marico cultural complex, but she notes that the Sakurabiat maintained relations with the Aikanã of the Tanaru tributary. Maldi's identification of the Marico cultural complex is consistent with Snethlage's observations about the cultural similarities among peoples of the Rio Branco, Colorado, and Mequens region. However, most of the defining traits of the Marico complex are clearly shared by the Aikanã, Kanoé, and Kwaza as well.[22] The Salamãi may not have been part of the Marico complex.[23] Yet neither Maldi nor Snethlage visited the peoples of the Apediá and Corumbiara regions, although

21. Rejecting Moritz' (1916) sensationalist claims, Victor Dequech in his final report (1943: 33) emphasizes that the region holds no gold or diamonds of any significance and shows no vestiges of previous gold mining anywhere. He concludes that the "goldfields of Urucumacuan are located neither on the Apediá River, nor on the Corumbiara River" ("... as minas de Urucumacuan não estão situadas nem no rio Apediá, nem no rio Corumbiára.").

22. It is not clear whether their clans bore animal names. The Aikanã refer to some neighboring peoples by animal names, such as the Kanoé *eriìène* ("bats") and the Sakurabiat groups of the *dapurèène* ("sloths") and *erueràene* ("foxes").

23. One of the last elderly speakers of the language said that the Salamãi did not have the *marico*, and that she learned how to make it from the Aikanã.

Maldi met some Aikanã and Kanoé at the Rio Guaporé Indigenous post in the west (see the section on Diaspora).

It should be noted that the cultural traits listed above are not exclusive;[24] it is the accumulation of such traits that suggests the groups of this region form a "cultural complex." Nevertheless, some aspects of the notions of the "cultural trait" and "cultural area" (or "cultural complex") have been justly criticized. As Melatti (2020) points out, one of the problems embedded in the notion of a "cultural area" is the assumption that intercultural contacts should lead to the diffusion of traits and thus to cultural homogeneization, which disregards the possibility that ethnic groups may strive to maintain differences, refusing to adopt cultural traits from their neighbors and protecting their separate identities, without, however, rejecting symbiotic alliance.[25] Furthermore, the delimitation of "cultural areas" depends in considerable measure on the choices made by the ethnographer in identifying shared cultural traits, for which reason Melatti proposes to speak of "ethnographic" rather than "cultural" areas.

Apart from the sources cited in the present article, the ethnohistory of the region and early interethnic contacts and relationships have been relatively scantily documented, and traditional ways of life have changed dramatically during the past century. Yet it is still possible to find people who either remember the olden times or acquired relevant knowledge from their parents and grandparents. More ethnohistorical research can and should be done, especially in the field.

Languages of southeast Rondônia

The Indigenous languages mentioned in the previous sections are highly diverse, not just with regard to their number, but also, and especially, with respect to their respective genealogies. The twenty-or-so known Indigenous languages of the southeastern region of Rondônia belong to different language families and include three linguistic isolates. Table 1 lists the different languages that can be distinguished in the region, along with their genealogical classifications and speaker and population numbers[26] Long-extinct languages of which we have concrete linguistic evidence thanks to earlier sources are listed, too. Some alternative names are frequently encountered in earlier sources. In some cases, there are additional—sometimes many—alternative names that represent clan names or proper names, which are not given here. There are furthermore at least two groups in the region that are living in voluntary isolation, but since we have no information about their languages, they are not listed in the table. The traditional locations of the groups are roughly indicated by the main river basins (their current locations will be discussed in the final section). Note how half of the languages listed have less than a handful of speakers, and some of the known languages are extinct. It is practically impossible to verify how many languages have become extinct before the twentieth century, since—as mentioned earlier—many names encountered in early sources and on maps cannot be related to any identifiable ethnic or linguistic group, and since whole Indigenous peoples may have perished due to exogenous diseases.

LAN-GUAGE	ALTER-NATIVE	FAMILY	SUBFAM-ILY	SPEAK-ERS	POPU-LATION	BASIN	CUL-TURE
Warázu	Pauserna	Tupi	Tupi-Gua-rani	2 (+2)	10 (+40?)	Guaporé	?
Salamãi	Mondé	Tupi	Mondé	2	10?	Apediá	?
Kepkiri-wat		Tupi	Tuparí	extinct		Melgaço	?

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LAN-GUAGE	ALTER-NATIVE	FAMILY	SUBFA-MILY	SPEA-KERS	POPU-LATION	BASIN	CUL-TURE
Aruá		Tupi	Mondé	5	94	Rio Branco	Marico
Akuntsú		Tupi	Tuparí	4	3	Corumbi-ara	Marico
Sakura-biat	Mekens	Tupi	Tuparí	16	134	Mequens	Marico
Wayoro	Ajuru	Tupi	Tuparí	1	337	Colorado	Marico
Makurap		Tupi	Tuparí	55	579	Rio Branco	Marico
Tuparí		Tupi	Tuparí	400	650	Rio Branco	Marico
Pu-ruborá		Tupi		1	242	São Miguel	?
Arikapú	Mashubi	Macro-Jê	Jabutí	1	37	Rio Branco	Marico
Djeoro-mitxí	Jabutí	Macro-Jê	Jabutí	42	187	Rio Branco	Marico
Aikanã	Huari	isolate		250	400	Apediá	Marico
Kanoé	Kapisha-na	isolate		3	310	Corum-biara	Marico
Kwaza	Coaiá	isolate		27	47	Apediá	Marico
Latundê	Lakondê	Nambik-wara	Northern	19	28	Apediá	Nam-bik-wara
Sabanê		Nam-bikwara		0 (+3?)	15? (+40?)	Apediá	Nam-bik-wara
Wanyam	Mi-guelenho	Chapa-cura		0?	267	São Miguel	Chapa-cura
Palmela		Karib		extinct		Guaporé	?
Chiqui-tano		Macro-Jê		disap-peared		Guaporé	Moxos

table 1. Linguistic diversity of southeastern Rondônia.

Some specific comments on the language table are in order:[27]

The speaker and population numbers of Warázu in parentheses concern Bolivia. The presence of two Warázu (also Guarasugwé) speakers in Brazil was revealed by Ramirez et al. (2017).

Very little is known of the dormant Salamãi language, which has no fluent speakers anymore, and of the extinct Kepkiriwat language. The scraps of documentation that remain of these languages have mainly allowed for the identification of their family membership (e.g. Hanke 1950; Rondon and Faria 1948).

The Aruá language represents a highly endangered dialect that is mutually intelligible with those of the Cinta Larga, Gavião, and Zoró peoples in the border region between Rondônia and Mato Grosso (Moore 2005), almost all of whose entire joint population of 3,500 speak the language.

27. Much linguistic research on the languages listed here has been initiated during the past twenty-five years. The following paragraphs include references to recent descriptive and comparative work. For additional bibliographic information, see the Glottolog website (Hammarström et al., 2022), and for downloadable sources, especially older linguistic and ethnographic work and unpublished theses, see the Etnolingüística website (Ribeiro and Nicolai, 2023).

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The Mekens are nowadays known by the original clan name Sakurabiat (see note 9), but in the literature they appear under other (clan) names, such as Amniapé, Mampiapé, Guaategayat, Koaratira, and Siokweriat. Another name encountered in the literature is Kapishana or Kabishana. The name Ki-Apor (and variations on it) only occurs in Dequech (1942), Zack (1943), and sources drawing on those. Zack refers to them as "Ki-Apür or Capichanã." There is an additional group called Kampé on the Rio Branco who also used to speak the Sakurabiat language. A description of the language is found in Galucio (2001).

The Akuntsú were probably not known by science until 1995, when they officially entered into peaceful contact with FUNAI after the majority had been massacred by ranchers in the 1980s. A description of the language is given by Aragon (2014).

Recent linguistic work on the other Tuparí languages was done, among others, by Braga (2005) for Makurap; Alves (2004), Singerman (2018), and Isidoro (2020) for Tuparí; and Nogueira (2019) for Wayoro. The Apitxum wordlist in Snethlage (2021, I, 599-600) represents a dialect of Wayoro, as confirmed by speakers.

The Puruborá language used to be considered as a single-language subfamily of the Tupi family. Galucio and Gabas (2002) present evidence for the existence of a Puruborá-Ramarama subfamily of Tupi, with the Karo language as the last representative of the Ramarama branch. A sketch of Puruborá appears in Galucio (2005), and a dictionary was compiled by Galucio et al. (2013).

The earliest documentation of the Arikapú language is Fawcett's Mashubi wordlist from 1914 (Rivet, 1953; Caspar, 1955). The name Mashubi could be an original clan name, but it is not mentioned in any other primary source (e.g. Snethlage 2016) and is not recognized by any Indigenous group (van der Voort 2012). A brief sketch of the language appears in Ribeiro and van der Voort (2010). Dictionaries of the language were compiled by R. Ribeiro (2008) and Arikapú et al. (2010).

As was already noted by Nimuendajú (2000), the Jabutí languages are related to the Jê family of central Brazil. The time depth necessary to explain the differences between Arikapú and Djeoromitxí implies that they have been present in the Guaporé region for many centuries (up to eighteen, according to the widely discredited glottochronological method) (Ribeiro and van der Voort 2010, 545). A descriptive sketch of Djeoromitxí is provided by Pires (1992), and there is a dictionary by M. Ribeiro (2008).

The Aikanã are also known by different names, predominantly Masaká and Kassupá, which are proper names, as well as Tubarão and Mundé, which derive from Salamãi proper names.[28] The name Huari is not recognized by anyone (see note 15). Descriptive linguistic studies have been done by Vasconcelos (2004), van der Voort (2013), and van der Voort and Birchall (2023). A dictionary was published by da Silva et al. (2014).

The Kanoé are referred to in some sources (e.g. Nimuendajú 1955) by the alternative name "Kapishana" (in various spellings). This alternative name is not recognized by the people (Bacelar, 2004), and can also refer to a Tupi group (Loukotka 1963), in particular the Sakurabiat. The Kanoé isolate language is in various sources equivocally referred to as a Tupian or Nambikwaran language. The language had almost disappeared by 1995, when four monolingual speakers in voluntary isolation were contacted (along with the Akuntsú) by FUNAI. Descriptive studies of Kanoé were carried out by Bacelar (2004) and Bacelar and van der Voort (2023).

Apart from some early mentions (e.g. Rondon 1916), the Kwaza have been almost absent from the literature.[29] Almost nothing was known about their language, until seven speakers emerged in the 1980s (Adelaar 1991). Descriptive linguistic work was published by van der Voort (2004, 2023).

The Latundê were officially only contacted in 1977. Soon after that, they suffered a dramatic mortality rate, due (as usual) to diseases introduced by careless outsiders, as well as

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the incompetence of local FUNAI staff in those days (Reesink, 2010). The alternative name "Lakondê" belongs to a different Indigenous people speaking the same language. A description is found in the dictionary by Telles (2002).

The speaker and population numbers of Sabanê in parentheses concern Mato Grosso. There are no speakers of Sabanê in Rondônia. A description of the language appears in Araujo (2004).

There are no known speakers left of the Wanyam language, which also appears under the name Miguelenho (Birchall et al. 2016). In the first half of the twentieth century, the language was apparently spoken by distinct groups, referred to by Snethlage (2016) as Abitana (i.e., Wanyam) and Uomo (i.e. Miguelenho). Ribeiro (1998) provides an extensive word list, collected from the last known speaker.

The Palmela language belonged to the Karib family and was spoken by a group who may have immigrated from Bolivia during the start of the rubber boom in the mid-nineteenth century. Their language and their ceramics point to an ultimate origin in the Guianas (Becker-Donner 1956; see also Fonseca 1881).

The Chiquitano language was spoken in Rondônia on the Colorado River by people working on the *seringal* Pernambuco (Snethlage 2016), but has disappeared from there since. Chiquitano has many speakers in Bolivia, and linguists such as Galeote (1996, 2014) are working on its contemporary description.

The two groups living in voluntary isolation not listed are represented by the single isolated man known as the late *Homem do Buraco* ("Man of the Hole"), who lived at the headwaters of the Tanaru and Verde tributaries of the respective Apediá and Corumbiara rivers (Franco, 2019),[30] and the isolated group of the Massaco Indigenous reserve, which probably is identical with the Papamiän mentioned by Snethlage (1937, 2016).[31] These groups avoid contact and defend their territories against intruders (Algayer et al. 2022). For modern popular accounts of the isolated man of the Tanaru and Verde headwaters and the recently contacted Kanoé and Akuntsú on the Omeré River, see Holtwijk (2006) and Reel (2010). There may still be other isolated groups in the region.

Areal linguistic phenomena

A linguistic area, also known as a *Sprachbund*, is a geographical region where several distinct languages have been in contact for a period that is long enough (centuries) for the transfer (borrowing) of structural linguistic features across genealogical linguistic boundaries to have taken place. As a result, languages from different families may share grammatical traits that are otherwise not present in languages outside of the region, even though those may belong to the same families. A prototypical example is the Balkan region in Europe. As mentioned in the introduction, the languages of the Guaporé-Mamoré region also show areal linguistic phenomena, although the picture is vague. I briefly discuss this phenomenon here as evidence of the long-standing intensive contacts between the peoples of the two multilingual regions.

As indicated in Table 1, the Marico cultural complex is not limited to the Tupi and Macro-Jê speaking groups of the Branco, Colorado, and Mequens rivers, but also includes groups of the Apediá and Corumbiara rivers, where at least one Tupi language and three isolate languages are spoken. The linguistic evidence nevertheless seems to reflect the fact that contacts within certain areas have been more intense than within certain other areas.

Unless languages in the region belong to the same family, their vocabularies are completely different and do not show much lexical borrowing. Nevertheless, some specific lexical traces of linguistic contact are encountered in the whole southeastern region of Rondônia, such as the very word for *marico*, and even beyond, such as the word for maize, which is also encountered in the Bolivian language Itonama (Mily Crevels, pers. comm.), as is shown in Table 2.

30. Since 1996, the FUNAI's *Frente de Proteção Etnoambiental Guaporé*, led by Altair Algayer (2022), managed to guarantee the territory and safety of this single isolated man, who systematically rejected all attempts to contact him. His people were apparently massacred in the 1980s-90s. It is not known which language(s) he spoke. On the 23rd of August of 2022, the man was found dead in his hammock, adorned with parrot feathers. He must have passed away sometime in early July 2022.

31. See Villa (2022) for a detailed account of what is known about the Massaco isolated group, the history of their reserve, and the important work of FUNAI to protect them.

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		"MARICO"[32]	"MAIZE"[33]
Aikanã	ISOLATE	*düi*	*haki*
Kanoé	ISOLATE	*ɨki*	*atiti*
Kwaza	ISOLATE	*xui*	*atxitxi*
Itonama	ISOLATE		*atxi*
Arikapú	MACRO-JÊ	*txu*	*txitxi*
Djeoromitxí	MACRO-JÊ	*du*	*txitxi*
Aruá	TUPÍ	*itxi*	*maʼek*
Akuntsú	TUPÍ	*etɨ*	*atiti*
Makurap	TUPÍ	*ɛtxɨ*	*atiti*
Sakurabiat	TUPÍ	*etɨ*	*atsitsi*
Tuparí	TUPÍ	*eɨ*	*atíti:*
Wayoro	TUPÍ	*endɨ*	*atiti:*
Puruborá	TUPÍ		*xia*

table 2. Words for "*marico*"[32] and "maize"[33] in southeastern Rondônia.

Other lexical traces are concentrated in either of the two subregions of Rio Branco-Colorado and Apediá-Corumbiara, between which the Mequens valley seems to form a transition zone. However, the general picture is not consistent. Table 3 gives a selection of words encountered in languages throughout the Marico cultural complex. Thorough systematic comparison of the vocabularies of the languages of the region may reveal a clearer or different pattern.

The origin of some of the forms in Table 3 can be explained, such as those for "assai," which represent a general Tupi word, obviously borrowed into Kwaza and Arikapú. The origin of the other words is difficult to establish. Some forms in Bolivian isolate languages slightly resemble the forms for "banana" shown here, such as Itonama *upatʃa* (Crevels, pers. comm.), Movima *pere* (Haude 2006), and Mosetén *chhi-pe're* (Sakel 2004).

	AIK	KWA	KAN	SAK	AKU	WAY	MAK	TUP	ARI	DJE
heron	*hãwākãʾi*	*ãwākã*	*avākā*	*awākā*						
dark-winged trumpeter		*arat-sabi*	*aratapɨ*	*aratapɨ*	*aratapi*					
moon		*hakuri*		*pakori*		*pakurɪ*	*uri*	*koe-pa*	*kupa*	*kupa*
wood-pecker	*turu-mare*	*mouru*	*turu-mare*		*bawro*	*mãũrõ*			*pãwrũ*	*mĩoro*
stingray		*tsaka-rũ*	*tsākãwnũ*	*sarap*			*txaw*		*txaw*	*txãw*
chicha ladle		*duma-ru*	*tomero*				*tumbɛru*		*təm-birə*	*tɛmĩ*
to crochet	*we*	*owɨ*	*owe(ne)*						*txiwɨ*	*rowə*

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32. The similarity between the different forms for *marico* may be a stretch in some cases. Nikulin and Carvalho (2022) reconstruct from it proto-Tupi **eju*.

33. Nordenskiöld (1915: 372) lists *atiti* for the Aikanã word as used by the group on the Corumbiara River. He also lists an alternative form, *mupóy*, which refers to a specific type of soft maize (*mupii*). The Itonama form is from Mily Crevels (pers. comm.), and the Puruborá form is from Galucio (2005).

	AIK	KWA	KAN	SAK	AKU	WAY	MAK	TUP	ARI	DJE
bow/arrow	*pa'i*	*mãbi*	*mapi*	*mampi*	*mambi*				*mbu*	*kubi*
banana	*dipara*	*apara*		*apara*	*apara*			*apa-ra*		
chicha			*txɛro*	*tiero*	*tiero*	*tüɛru*			*txuɛrə*	
assai		*wiri'u*		*kwiri*	*kwiri*	*gwirɪː*	*wiritxa*	*wit'i*	*wiri*	

table 3. Some shared words in southeastern Rondônia.[34]

The word for "chicha" may also have a wider distribution, as indicated by forms such as Otuke (extinct Macro-Jê) *txoro* (Créqui-Montfort and Rivet 1912; also noted by Becker-Donner 1955) and Yurakare (isolate) *xarru* (van Gijn 2006).

With regard to grammatical structures, there are traits with a wide geographical distribution, crossing several genealogical-linguistic boundaries, such as evidential markers, directionals, inclusive/exclusive distinction, verbal number, and prefixing, which led Crevels and van der Voort (2008) to formulate the hypothesis that the Guaporé and Mamoré valleys constitute a linguistic area. The Guaporé-Mamoré area is far from homogeneous, however, and several traits are only found in certain vague subregions. For example, whereas the area as a whole is relatively poor in classifier systems, the systems of those languages that have them are in some respects strikingly similar, both structurally and as regards the bound grammatical morphemes involved. Especially the systems of isolate languages from the Apediá-Corumbiara region and the Nambikwaran languages show similarities (van der Voort 2018). For instance, in both Kwaza and the northern Nambikwaran languages Lakondê/Latundê and Mamaindê, classifiers have a nominalizing faculty, as shown by the following contrasted phrases. In Kwaza, adjectival semantic content is expressed by a nominalized descriptive verb juxtaposed with the head noun it modifies. Example (1)[35] shows this attributive construction involving a standard nominalizer. When the nominalizer is replaced by the proper specific classifier as in (2), the head noun can be omitted without loss of meaning. In Lakondê, too, classifiers are used for attributive nominalization and the head noun is normally omitted, as in (3).

(1) *axɨ*   *arwa-hĩ*   (Kwaza)
    house   new-NMLZ
    "new house"

(2) *arwa-xɨ*   (Kwaza)
    new-CLF:house
    "new house"

(3) *'lạʔ-ni-'te*   (Lakondê, Telles 2002, 200)
    new-CLF:hemispheric-REF
    "new house"

These examples show that, even though the isolate Kwaza and Nambikwaran Lakondê are totally unrelated languages with very different lexicons, phonologies, and grammars, this relatively rare structural property is shared. This is probably not due to sheer coincidence, because the languages also share relevant grammatical forms. Although borrowing of bound morphology tends to be quite rare when compared to lexical borrowing in general, the very

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forms of some classifiers have spread throughout the region. Table 4 contains a small selection of classifiers that are similar across unrelated languages.

	KWAZA	KANOÉ	AIKANÃ	ARIKAPÚ	NAMBIKWARA
bark	-kalo				-kalo, -kaloh
bone	-xu		-zu		-su³
liquid	-mũ	-mũ	-mũ		
porridge	-mẽ			-mrɛ̃	
powder, mass	-nũ	-nũ	-nũ	nũ	-nũx³, -nũ, -inun
round	-tɛ	-tæ	-zãw		
thorn, needle	-nĩ			-nĩ	

table 4. Some bound classifiers in southeastern Rondônia.

Traits like these suggest that long-term contacts have also resulted in certain structural similarities across language families that are symptomatic for areal linguistic diffusion.

I am not aware of any clear traits of structural convergence that have the Rio Branco-Colorado region stand out as a linguistic subarea in the Guaporé-Mamoré linguistic area. Further comparative study of the Tupi languages and dialects of that region is one of the requirements for trying to separate genealogically inherited linguistic traits from contact-induced traits.

Small-scale multilingualism

The shared lexical and grammatical traits indicate linguistic contacts and, combined with evidence for intense social and cultural contacts, point to traditional small-scale multilingualism (Lüpke et al. 2020), and possibly also language shift, probably over the course of many centuries. Unfortunately, most of the languages are now critically endangered, and a large part of the original population has been uprooted and displaced by the effects of Western colonization. In order to try to understand the original sociolinguistic contexts of the Apediá-Corumbiara and Rio Branco-Colorado multilingual regions, we have to glean information mainly from oral accounts by elderly people and some sparse observations in published accounts.

In both regions, we have reports of people speaking the languages of their neighbors in addition to their own native language. Especially elderly people tend to have knowledge of more than one Indigenous language of the region. My elderly consultants for Kwaza also speak Aikanã and Portuguese, and my main consultant for Arikapú also speaks Djeoromitxí, Makurap, and Portuguese and understands some Tuparí, Aruá, and Wayoro. To give another example, the elderly Kanoé man Munuzinho, who interpreted for FUNAI and the recently contacted Kanoé of Omeré, was also brought to the isolated man at Tanaru (the "Man of the Hole") and tried to speak to him from a safe distance in all the languages he knew—Aikanã, Kanoé, Kwaza, Salamãi, and perhaps others.[36] Furthermore, in both the Apediá-Corumbiara and Rio Branco-Colorado regions, elderly people mentioned that in traditional times multilingualism existed, and there were always people who could function as interpreters when necessary.

References to multilingualism in the existing literature mainly concern the Rio Branco-Colorado region. Franz Caspar observed that Tuparí men tried to learn their neighbors' languages (Tuparí women tended to be monolingual):

> Since olden times, the Tuparí men had tried to learn the languages of the neighboring tribes... Previously, this concerned especially *Kuairú* [?], *Aume* [dialect of Wayoro?], and *Aruá*. Of my informants, *Waitó*, for example, spoke fluent *Makuráp, Wayurú, Arikapú*, and could also understand some *Aruá* and *Jabutí* [Djeoromitxí], accor-

36. The isolated man, however, would not speak, and continued rejecting any attempts at contact until his death.

37. "Seit jeher hatten die Tuparí-Männer jedoch versucht, die Sprachen der benachbarten Stämme, soweit man mit ihnen verkehrte, zu lernen. Dies betraf früher besonders das *Kuairú, Aume* und *Aruá*. Von meinen Gewährsleuten sprach beispielsweise *Waitó* fließend *Makuráp, Wayurú, Arikapú* und verstand auch mehr oder weniger *Aruá* und *Jabutí*, entsprechend dem Verkehr, den er mit den Nachbarstämmen pflegte. Der Nachbarhäuptling *Kuarumé* hatte mehr mit den *Jabutí* verkehrt und beherrschte deren Sprache."

ding to the level of interaction that he maintained with the neighboring tribes. The neighboring chief *Kuarumé* had had more contact with the *Jabutí* and spoke their language. (Caspar 1975, 223)[37]

Caspar continues to state that the Makurap language functioned as a lingua franca during the early days of rubber exploitation:

> In general, however, *Makuráp* occupied the primary position, because the language of this once powerful tribe prevailed among the Barracão-Indians of "São Luís," and in the entire *Rio Branco* and *Colorado* region played the role of a "*lingua franca*," or contact language, which even some latex collectors from outside learned, especially those who lived together with Indian women. (Caspar 1975, 223)[38]

Snethlage already observed that Makurap functioned as a "contact language" (2016, 705), and further that "[t]he Tupoid tribe of the **Makurap** culturally dominates all its neighbors in the Rio Branco or S. Simão region" (1935, 7).[39] The *seringais* may have had a homogenizing effect on the relations between the different Indigenous peoples, and it is possible that this thrust Makurap into the role of lingua franca—that is, for a while, until Portuguese really took hold. Table 5 illustrates the lexical influence Makurap had on the Jabutí languages.

	MAKURAP	ARIKAPÚ	DJEOROMITXÍ
duck	*payu*	*patxui*	*paru*
liquid	*i*	*i*	*i*
lizard	*txaku*	*txau*	*hau*
macaw	*pɛra*	*pɛra*	*pirɛ*
margay	*warirey*	*wariri*	*warurey*
porcupine	*mũnĩ*	*mũnĩ*	*nõni*
sloth	*(w)awnda*	*awana*	*waudə*
tucumã	*urukunɛ*	*urukunãy*	*ururu*
turtle	*biaku*	*miaku*	*bziɛku*
Westerner	*ɛrɛ*	*ɛrɛ*	*ɛrɛ*

table 5. Some Makurap loanwords in the Jabutí languages.

Nevertheless, the Makurap must have played an important cultural role already before the arrival of the Westerners. This is expressed, for example, by both material and artistic aspects of musical traditions of the Rio Branco-Colorado region, impressively described by Snethlage (1939). He repeatedly mentions the Makurap origin of instruments, as confirmed by his Aruá and Tuparí consultants. Anísio Aruá, one of the few remaining speakers of the Aruá language and also one of the last players of traditional music in the region, emphasized in 2017 that the instruments and most of the music he knows originate from the culture of his Makurap wife (whose language he also speaks in addition to Portuguese). And the word for "chicha stirring ladle" we saw in Table 3 is particularly interesting, since it relates to shared aspects of culture. In Arikapú, the words for "chicha ladle" and "electric eel" are homophonous: *təmbirə*. This is not the case in Makurap, where the equivalent words are *tumberu*, "chicha ladle," and *doku*, "electric eel." However, there is a Makurap song in which the electric eel occurs as a metaphor for the chicha ladle, which passes around, touching people: "There goes the electric eel, giving shock." It is a reference to the fermented chicha that passes around during festivities, making people drunk.

Although this has hardly been documented, it is likely that the intense interethnic contacts and relationships led to the consolidation and maintenance of traditional small-scale multilingualism in the region for a very long time. Nowadays, however, people from the younger

38. "Im allgemeinen aber stand das *Makuráp* an erster Stelle, denn die Sprache dieses ehemals mächtigen Stammes herrschte unter den Barracao-Indianern von „São Luis" vor und spielte im ganzen Gebiet des *Rio Branco* und *Colorado* die Rolle einer '*lingua franca*' oder Verkehrssprache, welche selbst einzelne auswärtige Gummisammler lernten, insbesondere solche, die mit Indianerfrauen zusammenlebten."

39. "Der tupoide Stamm der **Makurap** beherrscht kulturell alle seine Nachbarn im Gebiet des Rio Branco oder S. Simão."

generations tend to be bilingual at the most, speaking only one Indigenous language (if at all) in addition to Portuguese.

Contact between the two multilingual regions

The headwaters of the Corumbiara, such as the Omeré and Verde, and those of the Apediá, such as the Tanaru and São Pedro tributaries, almost touch each other, and converge, together with the headwaters of the Rio Branco, Colorado, and Mequens, upon the aforementioned Parecis Plateau. This circumstance facilitated interethnic contact between groups living in different river basins, as also observed by Maldi (1991, 239-40). In fact, many of the rivers are not easily navigable and did not represent important routes for travel. Rather, people would cross the land between the different headwaters in order to visit each other, organize chicha-drenched festivities and sports contests (headball!), trade, and find marriage partners. Such visits over relatively long distances can explain certain cultural and linguistic similarities between the two multilingual regions.

As is clear from Snethlage (1939), Nordenskiöld (1915), and the remaining traditional musicians, the musical cultures of the Apediá-Corumbiara, the Mequens, and the Rio Branco-Colorado regions show many similarities. As an example, compare the following images of the four-hole sacred flute of the Sakurabiat and the Tuparí taken in 1934 with those of the Aikanã sacred flute (called *purikii*) taken in 1914 and a hundred years later in 2014, respectively. It is true that this type of flute is not at all uncommon in South America, as Snethlage (1939, 32) points out. However, the whole set of different musical instruments he describes for the Rio Branco-Colorado region, including clarinets, whistles, horns, panpipes, and others, is also shared by the Apediá-Corumbiara region.

Abb. 97. Viergriffige Längsflöte der Guaratägaja. ¹/₁₀ nat. Gr.

image 1. Guarategayat (Sakurabiat) *ǎmiku kǎwa* flute (Snethlage 1939, 33).

Abb. 94. Viergriffige Längsflöte der Tupari. ¹/₁₀ nat. Gr.

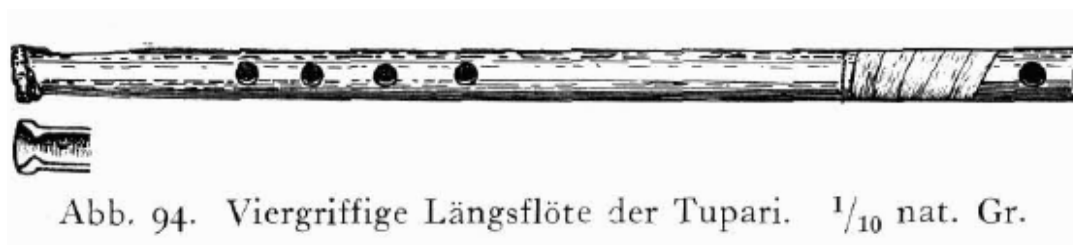**image 2.** Tuparí *abtǎk āt a / ab kǎ ba* flute (Snethlage 1939, 32).
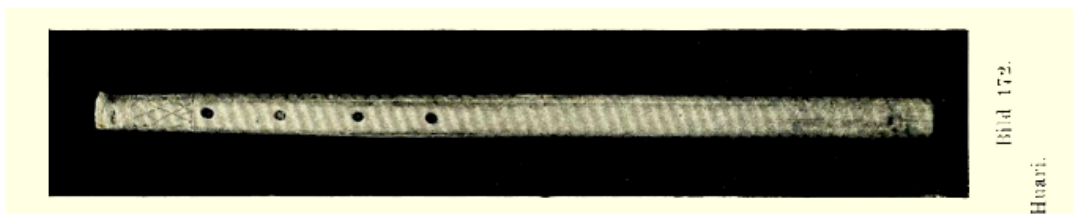
image 3. Huari (Aikanã) *purikii* flute (Nordenskiöld 1915, 386).

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image 4. Aikanã *purikɨi* flute and *kɨretapa* horn (photo Hein van der Voort 2014).

The maintenance of long-distance relationships is also indicated by specific linguistic evidence. The fact that a word for "chicha ladle" (though not for "electric eel") similar to that in Makurap and Arikapú also occurs in the Kanoé and Kwaza languages points to shared festivities. Another interesting lexical item that confirms shared traits of mythology is the name of the mythological creator, who in Kwaza is called *Arikwãyũ*, in Sakurabiat *Arikwayõ*, and in Tuparí *Arkoanyó*.

Diaspora

In the early 1930s, the S.P.I. created the Posto Indígena de Atração[40] (P.I.A.) Ricardo Franco, which later became the Terra Indígena[41] (T.I.) Rio Guaporé, on the western border with Bolivia near the confluence of the Guaporé and Mamoré rivers. The intention was to "settle" local Indigenous groups and have them work on the agricultural plantations as a model project for their "civilization" (Leão 1986; Soares-Pinto 2012). On the other side of Rondônia, following the advice of Estanislau Zack (1943), the S.P.I. leader of the Urucumacuan expedition mentioned earlier, the short-lived P.I.A. Pedro de Toledo was established on the Apediá River at Cascata. It functioned from 1945 to 1947, when it was deactivated partly due to abuse scandals involving personnel of the local *seringais* and some S.P.I. employees, and partly due to difficulties in access and supply for the S.P.I. (Leonel 2010 [1985]). As a solution, S.P.I. personnel organized the compulsory transfer of Indigenous people from the Apediá-Corumbiara, Mequens, and Rio Branco-Colorado[42] regions to the P.I.A. Ricardo Franco hundreds of kilometers to the west. These transfers, which displaced parts of several different Indigenous groups and subgroups, benefitted not only S.P.I. logistics and provided an unpaid workforce, but also aided the rubber concession holders by leaving the original Indigenous territories much more tightly in their hands. Scores of Indigenous people were sent downriver in canoes to a region they did not know and a place that was not equipped to receive them, where they went hungry, contracted diseases, and were enslaved and prostituted. Many refused to leave their homes or fled along the way and tried to return by themselves in order to reunite with those who had remained.

Three decades later, in the 1970s, many people from the Rio Branco-Colorado region moved to the P.I.A. Ricardo Franco, fleeing from slavery conditions on the *seringais* that continued to be tolerated by the authorities, including FUNAI. The P.I.A. Ricardo Franco had now become an area of refuge.

40. "Indigenous attraction post."

41. "Indigenous land."

42. As early as the late 1930s, Makurap, Tuparí, Aruá, Djeoromitxí, and Wari' people were reported to be living on the Ricardo Franco post (Vasconcelos, 1939: 21).

Multilingual settings in southern Rondônia today

In the 1960s, Rondônia was definitively opened up for Western colonization through the building of the BR-364 highway diagonally across its eastern parts, roughly following the route of Rondon's telegraph line.[43] After the dissolution of the *seringais* at the end of the decade, the lands were given or sold to outsiders, irrespective of any remaining Indigenous populations, which in turn were—and still are—sometimes massacred by the gunmen of large landowners. From the 1970s onward, the FUNAI, which had replaced the S.P.I. in 1967, started to act on the rights of Indigenous groups to their lands and demarcated several Indigenous reserves in the Guaporé area. Table 6 lists the Indigenous reserves of southern Rondônia, the majority of which are inhabited by the original Indigenous peoples of the respective regions (river valleys).[44] The big exception is the ethnic composition of the T.I. Rio Guaporé at the bottom of the list.

TERRA INDÍGENA	VALLEY	PEOPLE
Tubarão-Latundê	Apediá	Aikanã, Kwaza, Latundê, Sabanê, Salamãi
Kwazá do Rio São Pedro	Apediá	Aikanã, Kwaza (also Aikanã-Kwaza)
Tanaru	Apediá	Isolado do Tanaru
Rio Omerê	Corumbiara	Akuntsú, Kanoé
Rio Mequéns	Mequens	Sakurabiat
Massaco/Reserva Biológica	Massaco	Isolados do Massaco
Rio Branco	Rio Branco	Arikapú, Aruá, Djeoromitxí, Kampé, Kanoé, Makurap, Tuparí, Wayoro
Rio Guaporé	Guaporé	Aikanã, Arikapú, Aruá, Djeoromitxí, Kanoé, Kuyubí, Makurap, Tuparí, Wari', Wayoro, (Sakurabiat), (Salamãi)

table 6. Indigenous reserves in southern Rondônia.

The colonization of Rondônia led to the dispossession and decimation of many Indigenous groups. With the help of FUNAI, most of those that have remained managed to secure at least some (sometimes less fertile) parts of their original territories in the form of multiethnic Indigenous reserves recognized by law. As a result of the previous S.P.I. displacement policies, almost all Indigenous peoples of the Apediá-Corumbiara and Rio Branco-Colorado regions have group members and family members at the T.I. Guaporé on the other side of Rondônia. For some reason, the Kwaza managed to avoid the S.P.I.-driven diaspora, even though they were immediate neighbors of the other Apediá groups, also frequented the *barracões*, and interacted with the S.P.I.[45] Map 5 shows the Indigenous reserves where the groups from the original multilingual regions in southeastern Rondônia now live.

Most of the Indigenous reserves in southeastern Rondônia continue to be multilingual. However, the cultural, economic, and linguistic pressure from outside is enormous. The elderly may still speak more than one Indigenous language, whereas the younger generations sometimes speak only Portuguese, which has become the lingua franca everywhere. The T.I. Guaporé is in one of the remotest parts of Rondônia, far from urban areas, and in spite of its history of uprooted Indigenous peoples, some of its languages managed to survive there better than elsewhere.[46] The majority of the speakers of Djeoromitxí and Makurap live in the T.I. Guaporé, as well as the handful of remaining speakers of Arikapú, Aruá, and Wayoro, whereas these languages are practically extinct in the Rio Branco-Colorado region.

43. The BR-364, until 1973 called BR-29, runs from Cuiabá, capital of Mato Grosso, to the city of Rio Branco, capital of Acre. Work on the 700-km stretch through Rondônia, from Vilhena to Porto Velho, started in 1960 and was finished by the end of the decade. The road was paved in 1985. The destructive impact of the highway on the Indigenous lands and peoples has been detailed in Leonel (1992), among others.

44. In addition, there are three proposed Indigenous reserves in southwestern Rondônia that are currently in the process of "identification" by FUNAI: Miguelenho, Puruborá, and Rio Cautário. I excluded them from this table because they are located in the Chapacura ethnographic area, outside of the two multilingual regions discussed in this article.

45. The Latundê were never involved in these interactions, since their existence became known only in 1975, and the Sabanê lived much further to the east.

46. Especially Djeoromitxí and Makurap in the settlement of Baia das Onças, although they, too, are now quickly losing terrain.

map 5. Indigenous reserves of southeastern Rondônia, taken from a map in van der Voort (2004).

On the other hand, almost all of the Tuparí, most of whom speak the language, live in the T.I. Rio Branco. The Aikanã, Kanoé, Salamãi, and Sakurabiat languages have all disappeared from the T.I. Guaporé. There are no members of the Sakurabiat people at the reserve anymore. Many Aikanã (under the name of Kassupá) and Salamãi people moved away from there to Porto Velho in the 1960s, where they now have a very small reserve but have lost their original languages. The majority of the speakers of Aikanã live in the Apediá region, together with the Kwaza and Latundê. There are still speakers of Sakurabiat in the T.I. Rio Mequéns. Of the two last elderly speakers of Salamãi, one lives in Porto Velho and the other in the T.I. Tubarão-Latundê. The Kanoé language is spoken by only three people in the T.I. Omeré, whereas the majority of Kanoé people live in the T.I. Guaporé.

Conclusions

Multilingualism is not only characteristic of modern metropolitan settings in our globalized world. In his multidisciplinary survey of language diversity and endangerment, Evans (2010) makes a plausible case for the original state of human societies being multilingual (see also Evans 2018). According to Lüpke et al. (2020, 4), multilingualism on a small scale used to be the norm in precolonial societies, which, rather than imagined as loosely coexisting homogeneously monolingual groups, should be regarded as internally heterogenous multilingual societies.

The status of the Rio Branco-Colorado region as a traditional small-scale multilingual region is evident from the works by Emil Heinrich Snethlage and Franz Caspar. Such rich contemporary sources were not produced for the Apediá-Corumbiara region, which represents a gap in our knowledge about southeastern Rondônia. The present article has aimed to fill in some parts of this gap by looking at the few sources that exist in combination with the personal accounts of Indigenous consultants.

There are some differences between the two multilingual regions, most obviously in the makeup of their respective languages. Moreover, there does not seem to have been an Indigenous lingua franca in the Apediá-Corumbiara region, possibly because the relationships between the groups of that region were less intense.

There is also the question of where the Rio Mequens belongs. Can it be said to be part of the Rio Branco-Colorado region rather than of the Apediá-Corumbiara region, or the other way around? There are arguments for both affiliations, and Maldi (1991, 266), who includes its peoples in the Marico cultural complex, considers it as culturally intermediate. Even though the Mequens valley is not a multilingual region, its peoples maintained regular contacts with peoples from both the Rio Branco-Colorado and the Apediá-Corumbiara regions. This is why I consider the Mequens valley as a transition zone between both multilingual regions, rather than as part of either one in particular. Closer evaluation of the existing sources may cast

more light upon this question. Unfortunately, there are hardly any elderly Sakurabiat people left who remember their destroyed culture and history.

The situation in southeastern Rondônia confirms the idea that the normal state of human societies is multilingual. However, the specific kind of multilingualism in southeastern Rondônia is very difficult to assess because of the upheaval caused by Western colonization since the start of the twentieth century. As a whole, it appears to be different from that in the northwestern Amazon with its traditions of linguistic exogamy, grammatical convergence, and lexical purism, as described in, e.g., Aikhenvald (2002) and Epps and Stenzel (2013), or from the Upper Xingu region with its monolingual ideology within villages combined with intervillage ritual multilingualism, as sketched in Seki (2011) and Lüpke et al. (2020).

As Epps (2020) points out, southeastern Rondônia also bears similarities with the other multilingual regions of the Amazon, both in its multilingualism and in the possible socio-cultural causes of its linguistic diversity. Along with the intense intercultural contacts that have fostered this multilingualism, people in southeastern Rondônia may have taken pride in dominating multiple languages, and may certainly have enjoyed learning each other's languages, as emanates from Mr. Odete Aruá's statement quoted at the beginning of this article. The region's language diversity has apparently been traditionally cultivated.

This article is just a first sketch. It is likely that more thorough and systematic research will complete and refine the picture painted here. This kind of research is still possible with the help of the memory of multilingual elderly people and reports on multilingualism written in the past, and it is hoped that the recently published two-volume translation into Portuguese of Emil Heinrich Snethlage's work (2021) will stimulate such research.

All languages of the region are endangered, and more than half of them have less than a handful of speakers remaining. And not only languages are disappearing: the cultural and ecological knowledge they harbor and convey are in danger of getting lost along with them. However, in spite of the disruption and diaspora of the Indigenous societies of southeastern Rondônia, their members try to hold on to their cultures and languages. As long as their territories are respected, there is a chance they will succeed.

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