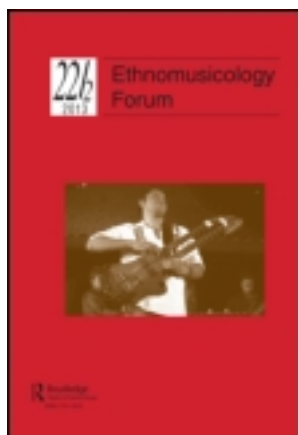


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Flutes, Songs and Dreams: Cycles of Creation and Musical Performance among the Wauja of the Upper Xingu (Brazil)

Acácio Tadeu de Camargo Piedade

The Wauja of the Upper Xingu say that their musical ritual is simultaneously of and for the spirits. I will address some factors of their cosmology and shamanism, and then investigate men's kawoká rituals and women's songs performed in iamurikumã rituals. I consider these two rituals to be integral parts of a single set, the kawoká–iamurikumã symbolic–ritual complex, in which there is a deep correlation between men, women and spirits: the latter transmit their musical creations to humans through dreams. Only the male master of the kawoká flutes and the female mistress of the iamurikumã songs are capable of memorising and reproducing this musical material. During ritual performance, the women transform the music of the flutes into iamurikumã songs and vice versa. Through ritual performance, the musical creation of the spirits is returned to them in a humanised and transformed form.

Keywords: Wauja Indians; Upper Xingu; Amerindian Societies; Sacred Flutes; Ritual; Cosmology

Introduction

This paper will discuss some aspects of the ritual life of the Wauja Indians of the Upper Xingu region, Central Brazil. My main focus is on two rituals, the men's *kawoká* sacred flute ritual and the women's *iamurikumã* ritual, for they are two sides of a single cultural set, the *kawoká–iamurikumã* symbolic–ritual complex. This complex enacts deep correlations between men, women and spirits. My musicological

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study of the sacred flute ritual among the Wauja, which they call *kawoká* (Piedade 2004), was strongly guided by the Indians who played the flute and revealed quite a distinctive musical system that is concentrated in the dimension of the musical motifs that function in it as basic units of meaning.¹ I can affirm that these small structural units, the motifs, constitute the macro-structural epicentre of the ritual, and at the same time the primordial cell at the micro-structural level of the music: they function as a base element during the ritual and are manifest in the domain of temporal brevity, given that they involve sound units of short duration. Through the analysis of this repertoire, precise techniques of repetition and variation of motifs can be observed, notable mental operations that constitute the core of a musical thought, which is certainly a cornerstone of the cosmology. These motifs are recognised and appreciated by the Wauja, given that they are attentively listened to, memorised and reworked also by the women who are mistresses of the *iamurikumã* music and often produce the songs that are sung during this ritual using the same motifs. Likewise, the masters of the flute know and listen attentively to the *iamurikumã* songs. In fact, *kawoká* and *iamurikumã* are part of the *kawoká-iamurikumã* complex, in which a dual cycle of musical creation and appreciation is established.

The universe of the *kawoká* flutes corresponds to what is known in ethnological literature as ‘the sacred flute complex’, a set of ritual and cosmological phenomena that is quite widely distributed in the lowlands of South America and other regions, such as Melanesia, which can be verified in comparative studies between these two regions (Gregor and Tuzin 2001). The ritual discussed in this article is therefore a local occurrence of this complex. My research about Tukano music from the north-western Amazon shows that the ritual known as *jurupari* also belongs to this genre (Piedade 1997).

Three characteristics of the sacred flute complex can be highlighted: the existence of aerophones played exclusively by men; the existence of the origin myth of these instruments, which establishes that they were originally the property of women and were stolen by the men; and finally, the visual interdiction to women, who are prohibited from seeing the instruments and/or the musicians in action. In my research about the *jurupari* rituals among the Tukano (Piedade 1997), I found that this visual interdiction is accompanied by an audio obligation; that is, although they are not allowed to see the instruments and/or the musicians in action, the women must not distance themselves from the source of the sound. In fact, the women must remain in the Tukano village and hear the music, because they are the ritual audience, along with the spirits. This finding is largely true for the case of the Upper Xingu, and for other locations (Journet 2011).

It is important to note that in the ethnological literature the sacred flutes are not always flutes from an organological perspective, as for example the *jurupari* trumpets in north-western Amazonia. In the same way, the term ‘sacred’ is inadequate and

¹Musical motif here means the elementary melodic–rhythmic units, mostly very brief. Although it is rather clear that the Wauja do recognise them, it seems to me that there is no native term for it.

fairly questionable, but nevertheless I will use the designation ‘sacred flutes’ given that it has become an accepted or conventional expression in the ethnological literature.² This being said, I begin with a brief description of the Xinguano ritual system, followed by a discussion of Wauja cosmology and shamanism, after which I will briefly describe and comment upon the *kawoká* flute and the *iamurikumã* rituals.

The Xinguano Ritual System and Sacred Flutes

The socio-political system of Upper Xingu, which has unique characteristics for the Amazonian region, regulates the life of the different Xinguano peoples and is particularly manifest in intertribal interactions such as rituals, exchange ceremonies, marriages, kinship relations and shamanic practices. The artistic and aesthetic dimension is essential in this system, as can be recognised in large rituals such as the *kwarup*, the *yawari* and the *iamurikumã*, where the system is expressed in the articulation of cultural differences (Menezes Bastos 1995; Menget 1993). These rituals integrate and fortify the local societies, causing the alliances to circulate and ritually absorbing the alterities (Franchetto 2001: 149). Pillars of the social system, the Xinguano rituals configure a type of *lingua franca* for the region (Menezes Bastos 1999) and place music at the centre of the social system, because they are essentially musical rituals (Basso 1985: 243–61). The sacred flute and the *iamurikumã* rituals are also inscribed in this context.

All of the Xinguano groups have sacred flutes, which always have an important position in their cosmologies (they are called *kawoká* by the Wauja and Mehináku, *yaku’i* by the Kamayurá and *kagutu* by the Kuikúro and Kalapalo). It can be affirmed that the cosmological centrality of the sacred flutes finds a spatial expression in the architecture of the Xinguano villages, because at the centre of the courtyards of these circular villages is a structure where the flutes must be stored: the so-called ‘flute house’ or ‘men’s house’. The Wauja and the Mehináku call it the *kuwakuho*, the Kamayurá call it the *tappy* and the Kalapalo call it the *kwakúto*. The men’s house is more than a house, it is a social institution, a type of club to which all the adult men of the village belong. This type of institution is present in various cultures around the world and is normally related to certain practices such as male initiation, the production of warriors, the revelation of secrets exclusive to men and relations with supernatural entities: I call this the ‘society of the men’s house’. In these societies, the men’s house reinforces ties of fraternity and solidarity among the men and the opposition of gender, given that women are excluded from this community. The existence of this social institution, and therefore of a society of the men’s house, is revealed by an exclusive physical space for men; for example, a building like the Xinguano men’s house that houses male meetings and activities. Note, however, that not every society with a men’s house restricts this space exclusively to men, as is the case of the Tukano *maloca*, where women can

²For example, the idea of ‘sacred’ instruments presupposes the existence of ‘not-sacred’ or ‘profane’ ones, and in the case of Xinguano musical instruments one may argue that all of them are in some sense sacred.

circulate freely. On the other hand, the Tukano have sacred *jurupari* flutes that are stored in secret places, buried under the waters of small streams (Hugh-Jones 1979; Piedade 1999). This points to the fact that the men's house and the flute house are not exactly the same thing. I have argued that the complex of the sacred flutes is a variant of the institution of the men's house that is particularly marked by the existence of the characteristics mentioned above: aerophones exclusive to men, an origin myth in which the flutes at first pertained to women and a visual prohibition/audio obligation (Piedade 2004). Thus, a society with sacred flutes may not have a specific building for men (as is the case of the Tukano *maloca*, which is not an exclusive space for men), or, on the contrary, a society with the physical structure of the house for men may not have sacred flutes (the case of the Bororo and of the Kísédjê described by Seeger in this volume).

Various ethnographies of the Upper Xingu have provided information about the precarious situation of the Xinguano houses of flutes, which at times seem abandoned, and for this reason the instruments are sometimes stored in other locations, always clandestinely and under the guard of their owners. Nevertheless, instead of considering this phenomenon to be the result of disuse or cultural decadence, I prefer to look at this fact as a profound characteristic of this institution; that the material fragility of the Xinguano men's house is derived from a cosmological condition. In Gregor's view, the extensive proximity between mother and son in this society has long-lasting psychological consequences; for this reason boys must undergo intense puberty rituals that serve to 'pull them out' of the feminine world (Gregor 1985). The author believes that this liberation, in reality, is never completed because adult men suffer from an incomplete identification with the masculine role. According to this perspective, the men's house would be a type of palliative institution, which dramatises the differences and reinforces the masculine identity. In addition to this idea, von den Steinen (1940 [1894], 1942 [1886]) observed the material precariousness of these buildings at the end of the nineteenth century, which suggests that this fragile condition is systemic.

The Wauja men's house is therefore the flute house, although not of all the flutes. In fact, the Wauja have various aerophones: the *watana* double flute, the *iapojatekana* pan flute, the clarinets *talapi* and *tankwara*, the *laptawana* trumpet, the *matapu* bullroarer, the *mutukutã* globular gourd flute and the *kawoká*, *kuluta* and *kawokátã* flutes.³ The latter three constitute the sacred flute complex: the *kawoká* flute is the principal one, the heart of the flute system; the *kuluta* flutes are shorter and lighter replicas, but easier to play; and the *kawokátã* flute ('small *kawoká*') is a miniature of the *kawoká* flute, the size of an alto/treble recorder⁴ and used for learning the *kawoká* repertoire and in certain shamanic rituals (Coelho 1988). The family of sacred aerophones also includes the *matapu* bullroarer, used in the *pequi* festival, the *mutukutã*, and an idiophone that is now rare: the trocano *pulupulu*.⁵ The *kawoká* flutes are therefore usually stored inside

³For a detailed description of the Wauja instruments, see Mello (1999).

⁴An internal duct flute from the recorder family, the alto recorder measures circa 13 inches long.

⁵For a description of the kinship relations in the family of the Kamayurá sacred instruments, see Menezes Bastos (1999: 32).

the flute house and when they are played, whether inside this house or in the patio of the village, all women enter their houses and close the doors, to respect the visual prohibition. If a woman sees the instruments, she will be punished by collective rape.⁶

The ritual of the flutes can be inter-tribal or intra-tribal. In the first case, as part of the Xinguano ceremony, it includes a large number of participants from other local groups who are invited by a host group and there is a rigorous etiquette to be respected. In the case of the intra-tribal ritual, the number of participants in the ritual is much more restricted and, at least in the case of the Wauja, is related to the process of curing a sick person, as is the case of many other internal rituals that are related to the spirits. Like the *apapaatai* festivals, which involve curing and maintenance of health, the sacred flute ritual can be seen as a payment of tributes in the Wauja cosmic economy (Piedade 2004).⁷ The health of the Wauja is subject to dual taxation: the fees for the *pajés* (who are generally called ‘shamans’) are high, the costs of organising the ritual are added to them and there is still the ritual itself as payment of taxes to the *apapaatai*. But there is no other option for an ill person; he must meet these costs, given that the results are very effective and necessary, not only for him but for the entire community. With the correct payment of the cosmic fees, the predator is transformed into a protector, an allied *apapaatai* who safeguards his former captive from other dangerous *apapaatai* who are always around the Wauja. If the disease is a form of captivity, the cure is a reversal: the captured captures his persecutor. In short, the rituals of the *kawoká-iamurikumā* complex are a type of aesthetic payment whose currency is the beauty created by the *apapaatai* that is being returned to its creator. Better to understand these points, it is necessary to take a brief incursion into Wauja cosmology.

Cosmology

According to Wauja cosmogony, what is now the visible world, this platform of material phenomena where humans, animals and plants live, was at first the world of the *ierupoho* people. The Wauja were poor proto-humans who lived in the darkness of a termite nest, without fire or water, and for this reason cooked their fish in the warmth of their armpits and drank their own urine. One day, the demiurge *kamo* (‘sun’) came and brought light and thus the Wauja left this dwelling and began to live like humans. Meanwhile, the *ierupoho*, who could not be exposed to light, escaped to the forest and to the deep waters. They were transformed into *apapaatai* spirits, and made masks to hide from the light. As the *apapaatai* live in a world of exile, they were forced to give up their condition as *ierupoho*, so their character is associated

⁶Although this punishment is largely known in the ethnography of the region, there are very few evidences of actual occurrences of this kind of rape. One documented case, which took place in 1950, is described in Galvão (1996: 343).

⁷The *Apapaatai* Festival is a mask ritual in which masked dancers, representing several *apapaatai* spirits, enter the village and dance in its central area; see Mello (2005) and Barcelos Neto (2004).

with revenge and they are feared for their capacity to create diseases among the Wauja.

The *apapaatai* called *kawoká*, considered the most powerful and dangerous, was the only one who, instead of creating his mask, created a flute and took refuge in it, so it can be said that the sacred flute is the mask of the *kawoká* and his music is his epiphany. Fausto (2011) suggested that these sacred flutes are equivalent to the masks used in other Xinguano festivals, faces that give animals and spirits the capacity to communicate. In fact, a comparison of flutes and masks in this respect reveals a parallel between music and iconography in the Amerindian cosmologies as was noted by Lévi-Strauss (1981) and brings echoes of the question of the inscription of memory for peoples without writing (Fausto and Severi forthcoming). This theme, memory, is an essential issue in this article, in terms of understanding the shamanic dimension of the masters of the music, which I will consider next.

The Wauja cosmos is inhabited by the *apapaatai*, invisible entities that perform a crucial role in the life of humans. All of the Xinguano groups have this category of spirits; for example, among the Kamayurá, where Menezes Bastos (1999) translates *mama'ê*, the Kamayurá word for *apapaatai* as 'that inexhaustible of extreme essence'. The definition expresses the sense of excess, extreme, similar to Franchetto's (1996) description of the *itséke* spirits among the Carib-speaking Kuikúro. Endowed, therefore, with this existential excess, in principle essentially dangerous and evil, the *apapaatai* also exhibit various beneficial and reliable characteristics in their relations with the humans, when they are tamed through ritual, thus coming to act as protectors of the formerly ill against other dangerous *apapaatai*.

The world of the *apapaatai*, the place of exile from this visible world of the humans, is not far: according to the shamanic discourse, the *apapaatai* only appear not to be immediately present in this world but in fact their world is right here—their village is close although it is invisible. It is interesting to note that the question of being able to see is deeply important in the Wauja cosmology, both in respect of the invisibility of the *apapaatai* and in the visual prohibition of the sacred flutes (Piedade 2004).

The *apapaatai* masks are not only images or symbols of their creators, they are existential extensions (Piedade 2004); that is, living copies of the spirit that become active in the ritual situation. In the case of the *kawoká* flute mask, music is the strongest mark of their immediate presence: the Wauja flautists say that the flute music is the speech of *kawoká*, so when the flutes are blown, it is his spirit that is given voice. Therefore, it can be said in semiotic terms that the flute music is an index of the spirit's immediate presence.

The centrality of the sacred flutes in the Xinguano socio-cultural system is not only expressed in the spatial arrangement of the village and the cosmology, but also in the mythology: an *aunaki* ('story') tells that the sacred flutes originally belonged to the women and that they were stolen from them by the men through an attack made with the scary sound of the *matapu* bullroarer. In the Xinguano realm, this myth, besides its congruence with the three characteristics of the sacred flute complex,

reveals that gender relations are an essential dimension of the *kawoká-iamurikumã* complex.⁸ The sphere of romantic relations and sex is extremely important, notably in the *iamurikumã*, the ritual of women. I agree with Mello (1999, 2005, 2011) that these two rituals form a complex, constituting two sides of the same coin, so they should be studied together. The work of Mello and my own observations of the *iamurikumã* ritual, which I am planning to carry out in future fieldwork with the Wauja, will certainly shed additional light on this network of rituals. The musical connections between these two rituals were initially studied by Mello (1999, 2005, 2011) and, among the Kuikúro, by Montagnani (2011).⁹ In sum, the dimension of sexuality and romantic relations is of extreme importance for the Wauja, determining the entire dynamic of ritual and social life. The universe of the sacred flutes, which is omnipresent in the Upper Xingu, engages the dangerous world of the spirits with the Xinguano socio-cultural system, gender relations and ritual practices.

The music of the sacred flutes is very much appreciated by the Xinguano people in general, including the women who compose the ritual's audience, together with the *apapaatai*. In the *iamurikumã* ritual the women sing songs that they say are the same as the music of the flutes. The analysis shows that in fact there are important musical and symbolic cross-references between these two rituals, and that there is a grammar that goes beyond music, a fact that appears to be found throughout the Upper Xingu (Franchetto and Montagnani 2011; Fausto, Franchetto and Montagnani 2011; Mello 2005). To continue this analysis, it is necessary to comment on aspects of Wauja shamanism.

Shamanism

One of the fundamental distinctions of Wauja shamanism is that it includes three classes of specialisation of the *pajé*: *iatamá*, *iakapá* and *pukaiiekeho*. The *iatamá* is the smoker *pajé*, he who can conduct shamanic curing sessions using song, prayer and smoke. No one can choose to be an *iatamá* but becomes a *pajé* by action of an *apapaatai* who approaches the person through disease or dream: the spirits 'make' the *iatamá* (*apapaatai otumawiu*, 'apapaatai-worked'); that is, a spirit conducted the construction of a person who is chosen by it to be *iatamá*. The *pajé pukaiiekeho* is an *iatamá* who learns the songs of the *pukai*, an important and grave ritual of collective shamanism. In this ritual, the *pukaiiekeho* conducts the entire action and is accompanied by a group, the smoker *pajés iatamá*. Meanwhile, the *pajé iakapá* is basically an *iatamá* who revealed a special capacity and who chose to go deeper into the shamanic arts, and only after the entire difficult learning period became a clairvoyant *pajé*, who can see the spirit world (see below).

Thus, only one type of highly specialised *pajé* can enter a trance and see the world of the *apapaatai*: the *pajé iakapá*, who is clairvoyant, can clearly see the cosmos as it

⁸Gender relations are particularly important in Amazonian and Melanesian societies, as shown by Gregor and Tuzin (2001).

⁹In addition, the seminal book by Basso (1985) must be mentioned in this context.

is. According to the Wauja ontology, the world of the *apapaatai* is imminent, it is present here and now, 'their village is very close by', as the Wauja say, pointing alongside, despite the fact that humans cannot see it. This co-presence in space-time, however, does not exclude the original condition of exile in which the *apapaatai* are found. This apparent contradiction is certainly based on the question of visibility, given that the entire structure of the world developed from the appearance of light that allows seeing things. Not being able to see the *apapaatai* and not being able to see the flutes are gestures with a common background. The Wauja concept of 'seeing' (*unupa*) implies being co-present to the being that is open and revealed by sight. *Unupa* implies not only receiving the image or looking at it but also allows being in the world together with what is seen. When something cannot be seen, the co-presence is inhibited by non-vision; what is not seen is not open, although it is there. It is like saying, 'If I do not see what is there, I am not there' or 'If I cannot see what is there, what is there is not together with me, it does not belong to the world that surrounds me'. This cosmological approach to the question of visibility also has important ethical consequences, suggested by the human condition relative to the *apapaatai* according to the Wauja: they frequently say *apapaatai unupapai aitsu*, 'The *apapaatai* are watching us'. This expression reveals the cosmic inequality, an uncomfortable position of the Wauja to be constantly seen (and to have their thoughts heard) by the spirits constituting a foundation for all their ethical and political behaviour (Piedade 2004).

The intra-tribal version of the ritual of the sacred flutes is related to the issues of cure and the maintenance of health.¹⁰ It all begins when an individual becomes sick. This process of becoming sick is simultaneously ethical and aesthetic. As shown by Mello (2005), in order to be well (*awojopai*) it is important to think well and do good things, which is beautiful and brings beauty. However, the *apapaatai* can hear the thoughts of the Wauja, which brings another dimension to this process. The Wauja discourse describes a conception of the audible world in which human thoughts have sound, an audio reality imperceptible for humans but not for the *apapaatai*: thoughts can be heard by the spirits. This capacity can be understood as an advantage, a mechanism at the service of cosmic control, a way for the spirits to exercise vigilance over humans concerning social and moral rules. This reveals another aspect of the inequality in the Wauja cosmology: only the *apapaatai* can see both themselves and the world of the humans, and in addition they can hear the Wauja's thoughts.

If, on the one hand, the *apapaatai* are harmful and dangerous avengers and can be seen as the watchers of discipline, as controllers of Wauja behaviour, on the other hand they have various qualities considered beneficial and worth trusting. If the ritual is pleasing and provides food to these spirits, they become allied to the formerly ill and protect them against the dangerous actions of other *apapaatai*. The problem for the Wauja is that when one thinks what one should not think, this is understood as

¹⁰Both rituals have intra-tribal and inter-tribal versions, which differ in many points. The material presented here is taken from the analysis of intra-tribal rituals.

desiring what cannot be obtained and the spirits are capable of hearing these thoughts and taking advantage of the gap that this can cause in the person's ethical-aesthetic integrity. They take advantage of a lack of harmony that breaks the protection of the good and beautiful thinking and introduce an object of bewitchment directly within the body of this individual. This object is a miniature of the spirit, an existential extension of the *apapaatai* remaining encrusted within the individual, causing a disease. If not cured, the person can die and her soul will belong to the spirit.

The diagnosis of the *pajé iakapá* is made through a tobacco-induced trance that allows him to see the world of the *apapaatai* and to reveal which spirit or set of spirits is responsible for the disease in question. After this verification, the *pajé iakapá* begins the curing process through the removal of the miniature of the *apapaatai* encrusted in the body of the diseased person. This is done through ritual singing and smoking tobacco. There is an interesting remission with the audible world: according to Beaudet (1997), in shamanic songs, tobacco smoke also has the function of making the sound visible, of presenting the materiality of the blown sound (see also Menezes Bastos and Piedade 1999).

The next phase of the treatment is the ritual itself, for which the Wauja make the masks of the respective spirits that cause the disease in question. If this is *kawoká*, flutes will be made instead of masks; the master of the flutes will make a new trio of flutes to be presented to the patient in treatment. When these new instruments are ready, there is a ritual performance in which they are played and are officially delivered to their owner. Thus, each person ill of *kawoká* becomes a *kawokawekeho* ('owner of *kawoká*'), and has under his responsibility a trio of instruments.¹¹ He must care for them and it is his obligation to participate in all of the *kawoká* flute rituals for the rest of his life. When he dies, the trio of instruments will be burned.

As outlined at the beginning of this article, there is a strict relationship between the *kawoká* flutes and the *iamurikumã* songs, in such a way that these two rituals constitute a single symbolic complex with two sides: the *kawoká-iamurikumã* complex. A description of this complex is essential for understanding the musical cycles, so I will now describe the *iamurikumã* ritual.

Iamurikumã

The *iamurikumã* ritual, as practised by the Wauja women, is understood as one of the sides of a musical-ritual complex that involves humans and *apapaatai* spirits, with its other face being the world of the *kawoká* flutes.¹² The music, through its formalisation and the interplay around meanings and proportions, is considered the central element of this ritual, constituting the ideal form of expression of emotions.

¹¹For more about the concept of owners, quite common in the Amazon, see Fausto (2008).

¹²This ritual is practised by all of the Xinguano groups, but I will only comment here on the Wauja intra-tribal version as analysed by Mello (2005), which I was also able to attend.

It can be said that the *iamurikumã* ritual revises the myth of the transformation of Wauja women into powerful and dangerous spirits called *iamurikumã*. In the narrative, the women are tricked by the men who, instead of returning from a fishing trip with fish, decide to make masks and kill all the women. Subsequently, the women decide to eat certain fruits that make them crazy, and begin to sing and dance at the centre of the village, which normally only the men do.¹³ The women paint themselves like men and sing as they leave the village through a hole in the earth, taking a trajectory to the other side of the sky, to the village of the dead, where they establish the village of the *iamurikumã*.

During the entire ritual, the women take the centre of the village and in one group sing the songs of the *iamurikumã* in unison. There are two principal musical repertoires. First, songs that make direct references to the origin myth of the *iamurikumã*, constituting the sub-repertoire entitled *iamurikumã*. This is a type of script for the ritual, a narrative based on the sequence of events of the myth. Thus, each song narrates a moment of the history and can be repeated over various days, thus evoking the non-linearity of the ritual in relation to the narrativity of the myth. Second, during the entire period of the ritual, some songs deal directly with romantic relationships, jealousy, envy, romance, sex and facts of daily life. These themes constitute a musical sub-repertoire entitled *kawokakumã*. This sub-repertoire is not related to a myth, but to the passions that circulate in the romantic world of the Wauja, to the feelings of men and women in the story, and it is precisely here that a musical bridge is made between the *iamurikumã* and the *kawoká*, as I will explain drawing on Mello (1999, 2005, 2011).

The *kawokakumã* sub-repertoire has profound connections with the music of the *kawoká* flutes. The affirmation of the Wauja women that the 'music of the *iamurikumã* is flute music' is highly revealing: By saying this, they do not refer to something generic, as if anything that they sing could be 'flute music'. In fact, one series of songs in the *iamurikumã* ritual is not considered 'flute music', the songs of the sub-repertoire *iamurikumã* itself. Only the other sub-repertoire, *kawokakumã*, has very clear connections with the flutes: these songs present many similar motifs and are also classified in suites that have the same names as the suites of music for the *kawoká* flutes. In this article, with '*iamurikumã* songs' I refer to this *kawokakumã* sub-repertoire.

Analysing this repertoire, Mello concluded that it is anchored in musical operations that are as complex as the flute music; operations that require a high degree of knowledge on the part of the women singers, mainly the mistress *iamurikumã* singer. Unlike the *kawoká* flute repertoire, which is always executed in blocks of named suites, *kawokakumã* songs are performed alternating in different styles and interspersed with songs from the other sub-repertoire, *iamurikumã*, which refer more to the origin myth.

¹³According to the mythic narrative, the women eat unspecified 'wild fruits'.

The *iamurikumã* ritual displays much joking and considerable provocation between men and women: the former leave the centre of the village, which is their space *par excellence*, to give place to the *iamurikumã* singers, who provoke them with more aggressive behaviour, critical discourses and spicy lyrics to the songs. The sense of jealousy is simultaneously incited and controlled by means of this ritual. Mello (2005) shows that jealousy as a passion is essential in the socio-emotional equilibrium of Wauja society.¹⁴ It must be produced so that romantic relationships have interest in being maintained but at the same time it is a passion, like hate, that must be controlled. In excess, it causes ruptures, harm and disease. In this way, conflicts in the sphere of love relationships are worked out and regulated through a poetical–musical form in the *iamurikumã* ritual.

The *kawoká*–*iamurikumã* complex

From the ritual of the *kawoká* flutes, however, women are excluded. It is prohibited for them to see what takes place. They are actually required to remain inside their houses and listen, given that they know that the entire symbolic–musical universe in question is originally related to the feminine world. Possession of the sacred instruments grants powers (for the Tukano, see Piedade 1997) and reveals a special alliance between men and the *kawoká* spirit. Meanwhile, in the *iamurikumã* ritual, the women take this space of power and also some masculine symbols to remember the myth about the women’s spirit, which holds the capacity for reproduction and the option for cosmic transformation in the face of male violence. The masculine and the feminine are at play in these two rituals that form two facets of one symbolic complex. This complex is distinguished from other ritual sub-systems like the rites of homage to the dead (*kwarúp* and *yawari*), the seasonal festival of *pequi* (*akã*), the rites of male initiation (*pohoká*) and feminine initiation (*kaijatapá*), the festivals of *apapaatai* masks and the curing rites (such as *pukai*) (see Mello 1999).

The *kawoká*–*iamurikumã* complex comprises only two musical and gender rituals and they constitute musical genres that combine to form a single super-genre (Mello 1999). The *iamurikumã* ritual is said to be a type of counterpart to that of the flutes, a type of reply of the women to the performance of the *kawoká* flutes that excludes the women. According to Mello (2005: 96), Wauja women say that with the *iamurikumã* they are *puta o-pete* (‘getting back’) at the men, realising an exclusively feminine rite, emphasising the dialogical and complementary relationship between these two rituals. This interconnection is musically evident in the exchange of musical material between men and women, which establishes what I call the horizontal human cycle. But before this, it is necessary to address a very special quality of the musical masters and their shamanic potential, which allows the verticality in the cycle of musical exchanges.

¹⁴More precisely *uki*, ‘jealousy-envy’ (see Mello 2005).

Musical Masters: 'Clairaudient' Pajés

The flute master, *kawokatupá*, is a super expert: in addition to knowing how to make the flutes and having profound and detailed knowledge of the entire *kawoká* musical repertoire including dozens of pieces, their correct classification in suites and ordering in performance, he also has great musical ability in the execution of the lead flute part in the ritual. During the flute ritual, the master flautist has a great responsibility because the slightest error can displease the *apapaatai* who are present as an audience, making them very angry to the point of breaking the alliance and causing someone's death. Therefore, the *kawoká* flute performance is something extremely serious for the flautists, particularly for the flute master who must have a great capacity for concentration. Before beginning each piece, the master remains stationary for a few seconds in order to recall the order and structure of the pieces that will follow, in the knowledge that no error may occur. All of these aspects are important to show that the structural level of the music is absolutely central. A sacred flute performance involves an effort to achieve perfection in execution of the musical motifs and in the development of the form in order to guarantee the beauty and acuity needed to maintain the cosmic balance. For all of these reasons the *kawokatupá* needs extensive preparation, including the physical and psychological factors required to be able to execute a complete flute ritual.

Thanks to his exceptional memory, the *kawokatupá* brings to the human world audio structures from the supernatural world. The *iamurikumā* mistress has this same ability and is able to realise this same trans-creation. Both the masters of the *kawoká-iamurikumā* complex use mnemonics during the ritual as an aid to concentration and the memorisation of the music to be played: the *iamurikumā* mistress carefully listens to the *kawoká* flute melodies at the time of the ritual of flutes, as does the master of flutes, who carefully listens to the *iamurikumā* songs during the ritual of women.

Mello (2005) recounts how an *iamurikumā* mistress acquired a new piece of music through a dream: after recalling it when waking up, she recognised that this new piece had the standard elements of the suite entitled *sapalá*. Then she created words for this melody and, with that, this piece was transformed into a new song to be included in the *sapalá* suite of the *iamurikumā* songs, which is also a suite of flute music. This account is even more significant if we note that it involves one of the Wauja's broadly accepted compositional processes: that music comes from dreams. It is said that anyone can dream of new music but only the musical masters, the *apaiwekeho*, have the ability to memorise it. This capacity is extremely special and places the musical masters close to the *pajé iakapá*, as I will discuss below.

According to Mello's account, it is necessary to add words to the melody that was dreamed, a fact that complicates the processes of signification in the dialogue between *kawoká* pieces and *kawokakumā* songs. The new semantic material is also

memorised when performing the *kawokakumã* sub-repertoire songs in the *iamurikumã* ritual. The women add another layer of meaning, established by the words to the song, to the instrumental repertoire of the flutes. This meaning also becomes part of the respective flute pieces, to the point of emerging when the men play it again in the *kawoká* ritual. This process takes place both in the case of a new flute melody captured by the memory of the musical master in the *kawoká* ritual as well as by new songs inserted by the musical mistress directly from a dream in the *iamurikumã* repertoire, thus opening the musical production process to both men and women.

In summary, the careful listening of the *iamurikumã* mistress during the flute ritual allows the mistress *iamurikumã* singer to recognise a new flute piece that is played and which she will later work with by creating words and adapting the piece to be transformed into a song that will be incorporated in the repertoire of the *iamurikumã* ritual. Thus, both the mistress *iamurikumã* singer and the flute master can be considered a type of *pajé iakapá*, but instead of being clairvoyant they are ‘clairaudient’ *pajés*: they have the capacity to hear clearly and their greatest attribute is memory. The idea of clairaudience (Schafer 1977) refers here to the extraordinary capacity to perceive clearly the audio world, including the sound dimension of the *apapaatai*. The essence is not only to hear, but to listen, in the sense of understanding what one is hearing, and in this way to be able to capture and memorise what is heard. Given that it is not possible to memorise music without a previous understanding of the details of musical sounds and structures, it follows that the musical masters have a great analytical ability that allows them to conduct comprehensive listening to the musical structures of the music, dreamed of and heard obliquely, and they can therefore memorise and perform them in the ritual of the humans. This ability is a shamanic power, because its agents are capable of perceiving, understanding, memorising and transporting music and sonorous structures to the human reality of the Wauja that are inherent products of the world of the *apapaatai*. These musical *pajés*, through deeper and intelligible contact with the spirits, can transport musical information from the supernatural world—the immanent and imperceptible world of the spirits—to ordinary reality. This ‘musical information’ is not merely audible, but effectively involves a language: the *kawoká* music is understood as the speech of the spirits; a shamanic ability for translation and elocution of the words of the spirits, which is also at the level of cure, given that beauty and musical-discursive perfection are essential elements in this process. In addition, because the alliance between humans and spirits depends on the accuracy of the ritual, the shamanic role of the musical masters can be extended beyond the case of an ill person in particular: it involves guaranteeing the health of all Wauja society. We can now turn to the description of the cycles of musical creation and exchanges that are not limited to sound but also include discourse itself.

The Dual Cycle of Musical Exchanges

The Supernatural Vertical Cycle

The creative cycle begins in human dreams, where the spirits frequently play and sing their music to the dreamer. This can occur with anyone, but most dreamers do not remember the music when they wake up; this only occurs with people gifted with the highly specialised memory of the clairaudient *pajés*. After the musical *pajé* receives new music in a dream, he remembers it after waking and is able to perform it. With that it is transmitted to the other musicians, who perform and incorporate it into the repertoire of the suite to which it was designated. This new material will be executed in the next version of the appropriate ritual. According to the native discourse, on this occasion the spirit is present and listening, thus having the original composition that he delivered to the humans in a dream returned to him. The piece, however, passed through a process of transformation and performance. Consequently, when it returns to its spiritual source, the new composition is a humanised version of the music of the *apapaatai*. This constitutes the vertical-supernatural cycle established in the *kawoká-iamurikumā* complex.¹⁵

The *kawoká* flute music is comprised of the *apapaatai* homonym itself. This is why the Wauja affirm that the music ‘belongs to an *apapaatai*’: we may say that it comes from him, it is his creation, his property. But this is not enough; the *apapaatai* do not compose for themselves, only to create a music that will remain restricted to their supernatural world. For some reason, the *apapaatai* deliver this music to the humans through dreams. This is certainly a gift but also the transmission of an obligation. The *apapaatai* gets back the immaterial object it donated, transformed and enriched by human experience. This delivery is made as part of a ritual that is completely planned as a spectacle for the appreciation of the *apapaatai*, for their enjoyment, pleasure and satisfaction.

As indicated above, the flute master is capable of memorising and playing on his own flute the music he received in a dream. His powerful memory is based on his strong musical knowledge and his ability to concentrate on what is most essential—and from there to capture its design. Part of this process is the recognition of the standard motifs of the suite that takes place rapidly for the flautists, who can normally recognise to which suite a piece belongs after hearing it for a few seconds. The new melody will be rehearsed and performed in the ritual, contextualised, animated by human breath in the wooden flutes and danced to. Here, the great transformation occurs.

In the case of the *iamurikumā* music the transformation is even more intense. The *iamurikumā* spirit does not create the words to the songs. Songs are received in a dream as melodies sung in an incomprehensible language. Nevertheless, the *iamurikumā* mistress is capable of memorising the song entirely and will

¹⁵This vertical cycle can also be present in other Wauja repertoires or other Xinguano music, but treating these instances exhaustively would exceed the scope of this paper.

subsequently create words for the song. This is another creative poetic work for which the mistresses of the *iamurikumã* songs are responsible, and certainly an element that enriches the supernatural melody with traces of living history and human passions, an element the *apapaatai* receive at the time of the ritual. Therefore, this process likewise pertains to the vertical supernatural cycle that is established between humans and spirits; on one hand between the *kawoká* and the men, and on the other hand between *iamurikumã* and the women.

The Horizontal Human Cycle

The *kawoká–iamurikumã* complex reveals another creative musical cycle that takes place horizontally in the realm of the Wauja gender relations. The cycle is active when one of the two rituals is underway, always occurring simultaneously with the supernatural vertical cycle. The process is as follows: the music performed in one of these rituals will be carefully memorised by the specialist master of the other ritual, who retains in his or her memory a new composition that has also been performed. Then he or she can practise this new material in his or her own ritual medium, transmit it to the others, rehearse and incorporate the material at the next execution of the ritual. A new *iamurikumã* song will thus be transformed into a new *kawoká* piece and normally will get a title that refers to the content of the lyrics. In the same way, a new flute piece would be given lyrics and be transformed into an *iamurikumã* song.

There are multiple transformations in this material: the instrumental piece receives lyrics and becomes a song (note that this involves the inclusion of a new semantic layer); and the material performed by men is transformed into material performed by women, and *vice versa* (here it involves the transmission of material that is adapted to be able to belong to another layer of genre). This is the human horizontal cycle, between men and women, which is established at the core of the *kawoká–iamurikumã* complex.

Conclusion

As shown above, the material captured and recreated by men and performed for the spirit is recaptured and transformed when recreated and performed by women for the other spirit and *vice versa*. All of this takes place as if one spirit was communicating with another, using the human world as a channel. It seems as if one spirit created a new musical material primarily aimed at the other spirit, with the result that the dual cycle consequently functions as a communication between spirits. Therefore, the division of the communicative sphere of the ritual into two spheres that revolve in simultaneous cycles results in a proposal for interpreting the rituals in the *kawoká–iamurikumã* complex: because what happens in the indigenous reality is a single and integrated process of co-production between Wauja men, women and *apapaatai* spirits. This co-production is precisely the heart of the *kawoká–iamurikumã* complex. It is nothing else than a single grand cycle of cosmic communication, transmission

and transformation of immaterial objects. These objects first leave a spiritual source and then return to the world of the *apapaatai* enriched by human agency, and the process of enriching is itself musical. The precious motifs are embellished by the accompaniment and contextualised by the ritual. The *iamurikumã* songs are humanised through the bits of history that are aggregated to the original memories, and it is perhaps beautiful to postulate that this entire Wauja musical cosmology explains the desire of the *apapaatai* to communicate among each other, without the consent of, and at the mercy of, humans.

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