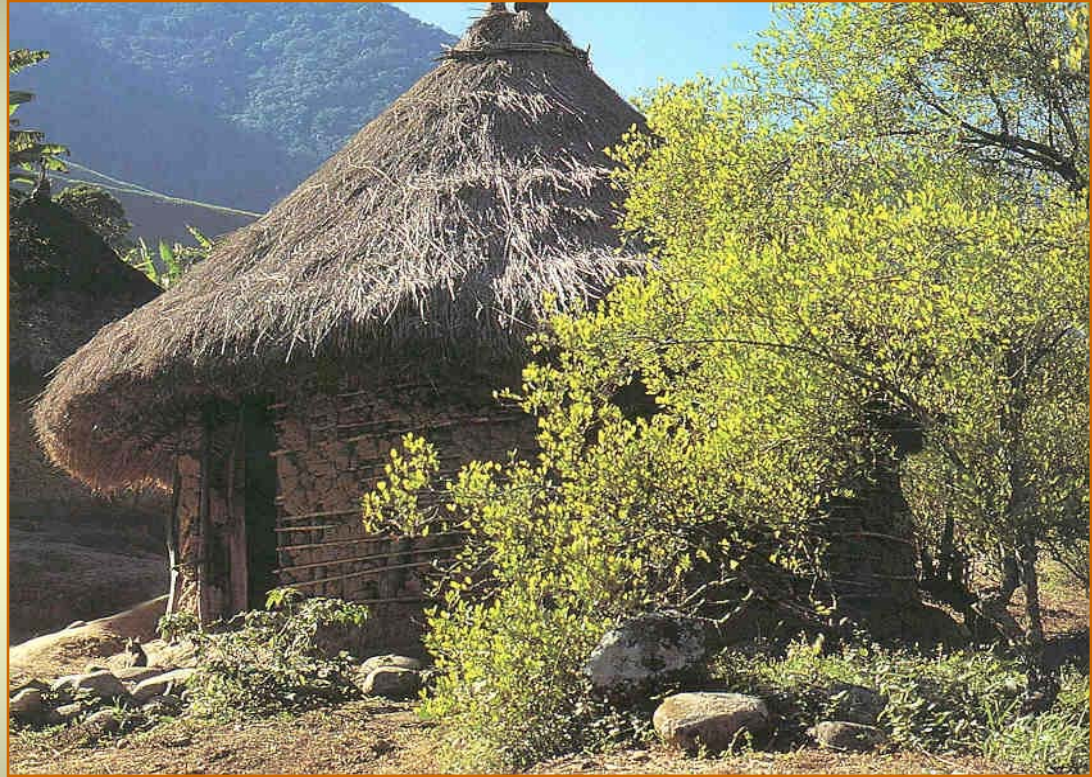


**The Kogi and
their Tairona
Predecessors:
Sierra Nevada
de Santa Marta**





LOS KOGI

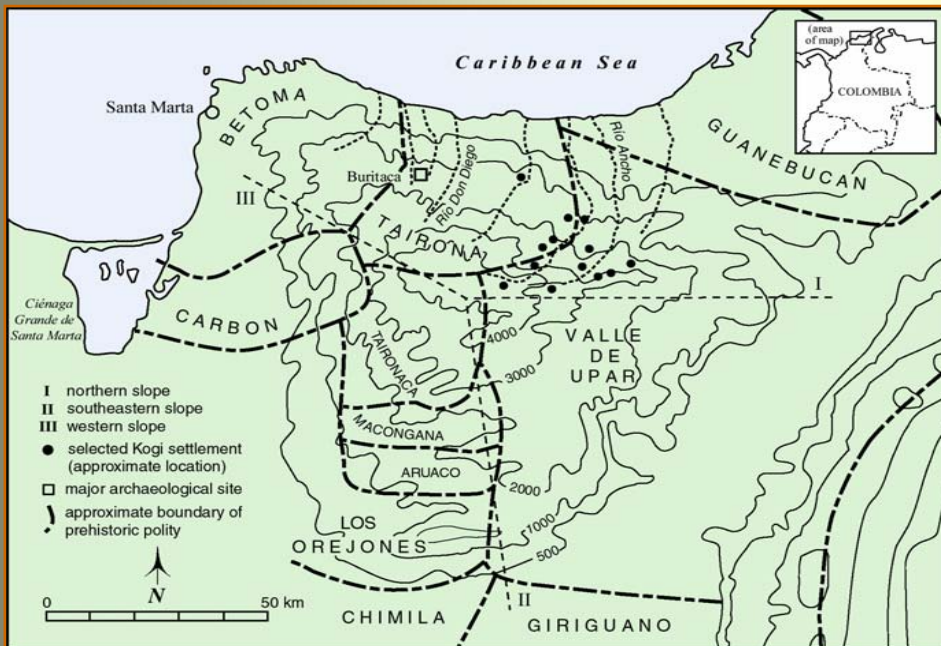
UNA TRIBU DE LA SIERRA NEVADA DE SANTA MARTA. — COLOMBIA.

Por

GERARDO REICHEL - DOLMATOFF,

DIRECTOR DEL INSTITUTO ETNOLÓGICO DEL MAGDALENA

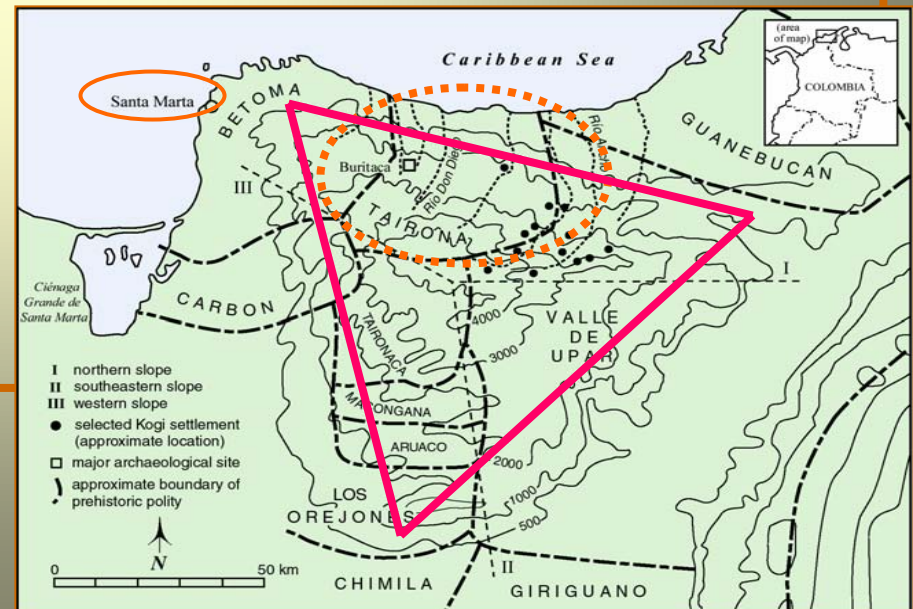
(1950)

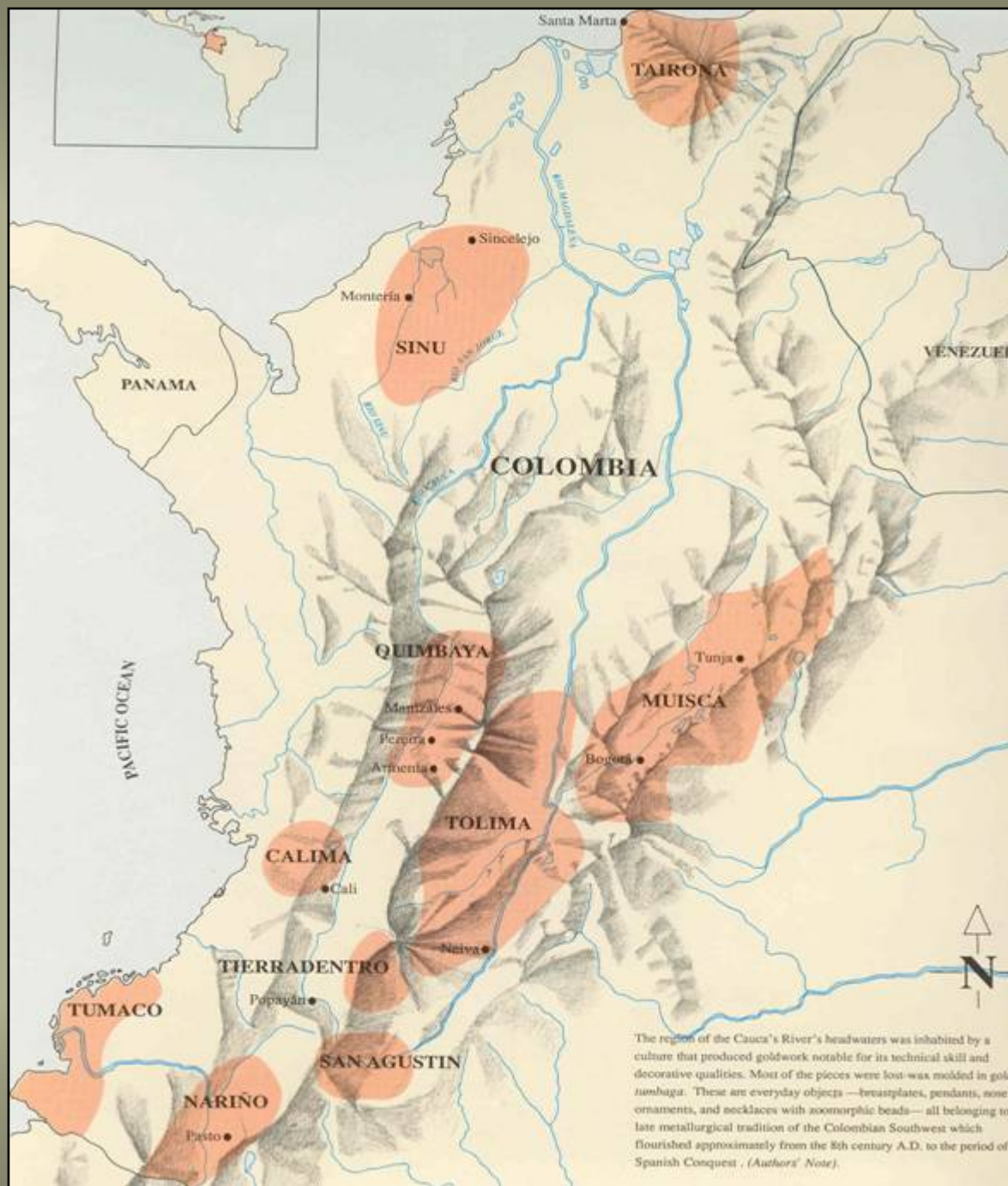


History/Background:

Contacts between the Kogi and Western culture probably date to the earlier 16th century, from the time Santa Marta was founded in 1525. From this time on to ca. 1600, the Spanish interest was focused on the northern slopes of the Sierra Madre because it was famous as an area where gold artifacts were very abundant. By 1600 the region was abandoned by the Spaniards and was left, once again, to the original inhabitants. Since that time, the heaviest influence on Kogi culture has been the European crops that were introduced to the area. The Spanish language has hardly affected the Kogi, and their language has remained basically unchanged. Some men do speak limited Spanish, although the women speak very little if any.

Today, the entire area of the Sierra Nevada remains indigenous, except for scattered European settlements located at the lowermost edges of the range. (Estimated area occupied by Kogi—and Tairona—cultures is 1500 km².)





Tairona





Muisca



Calima



Quimbaya





San Agustín



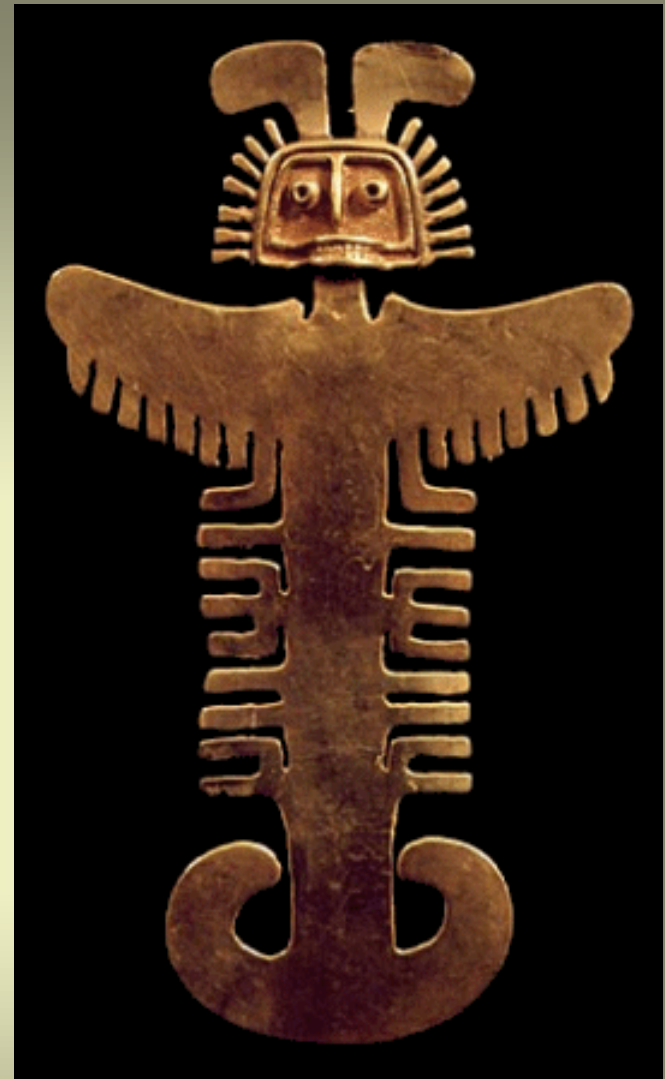
Sinú



Tierradentro



Tolima



Tumaco



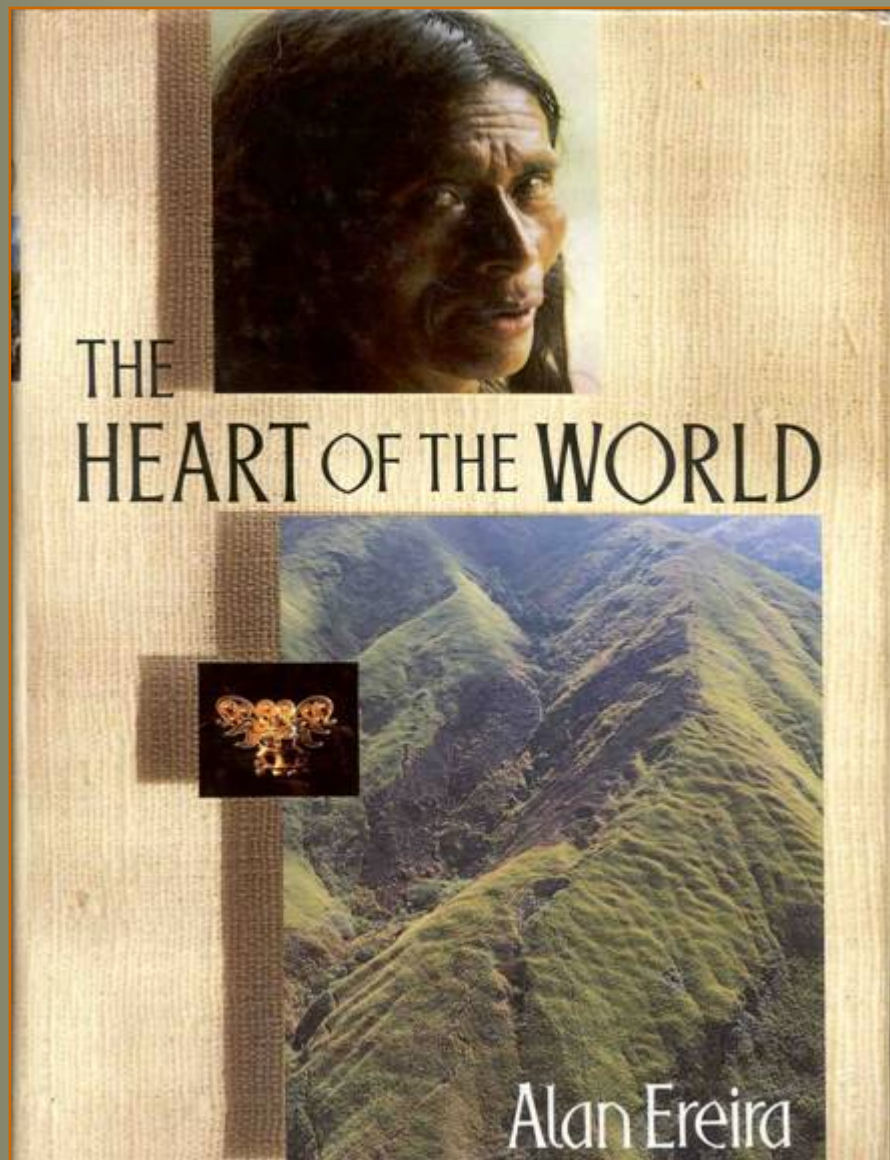
Quimbaya poporos

Hammering

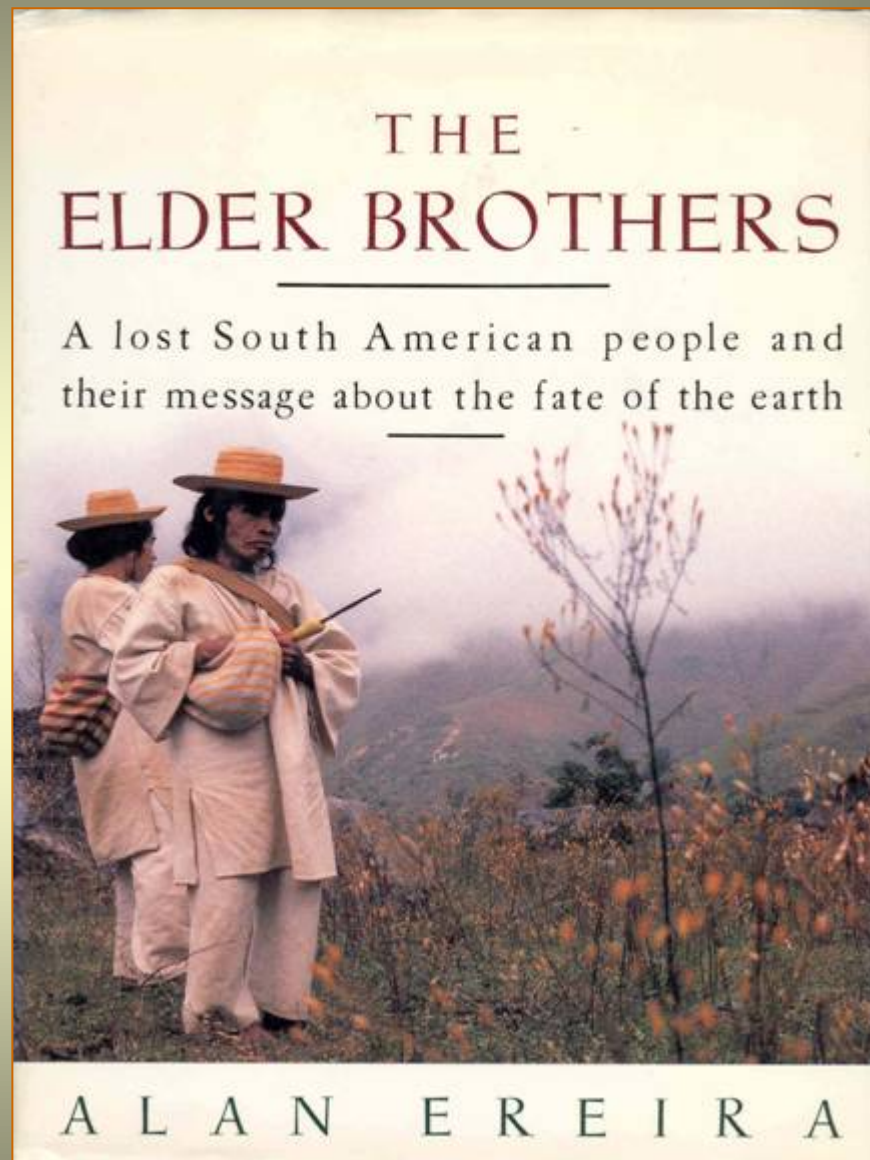


Lost-Wax Molding





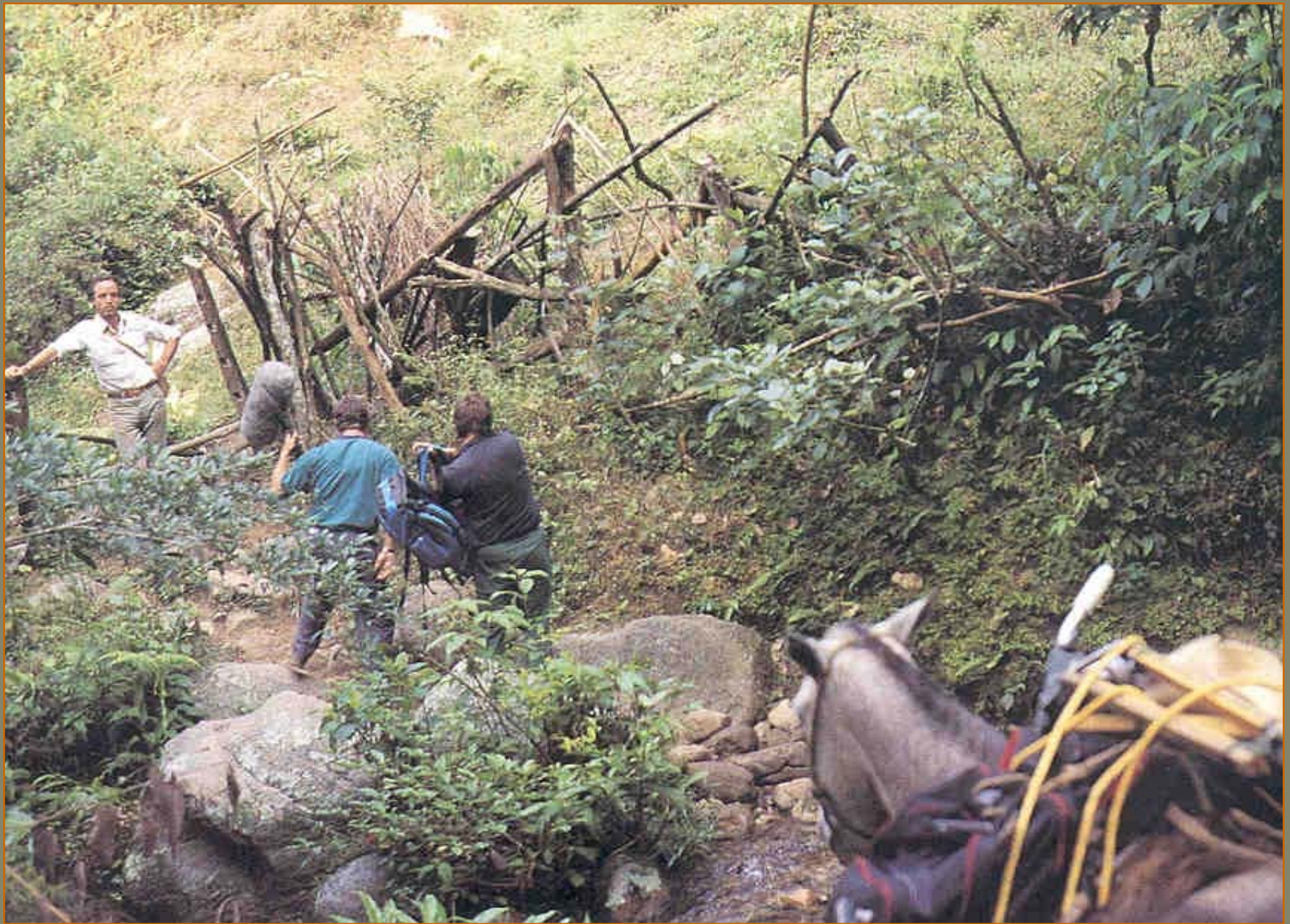
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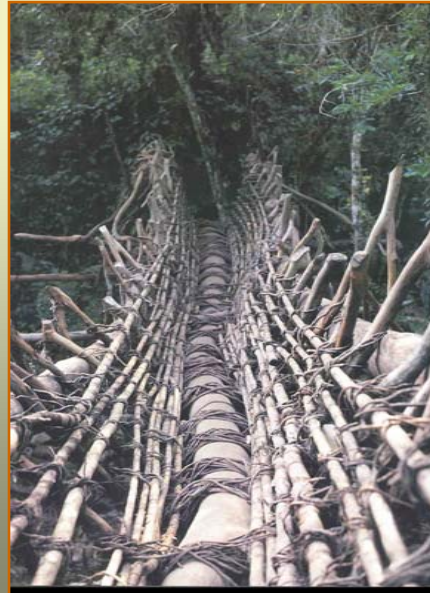
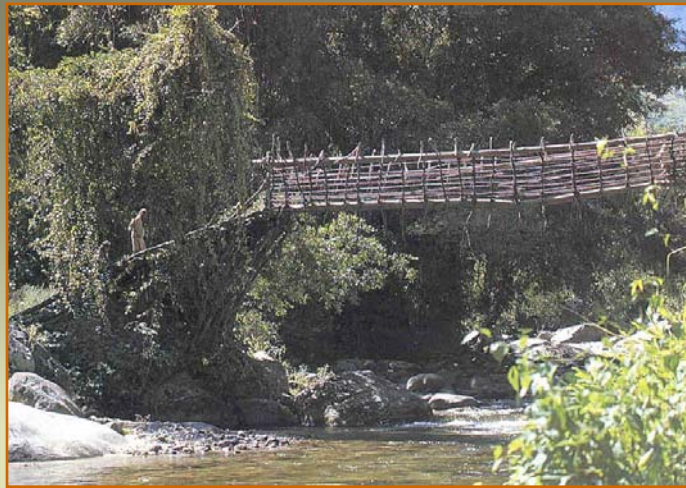
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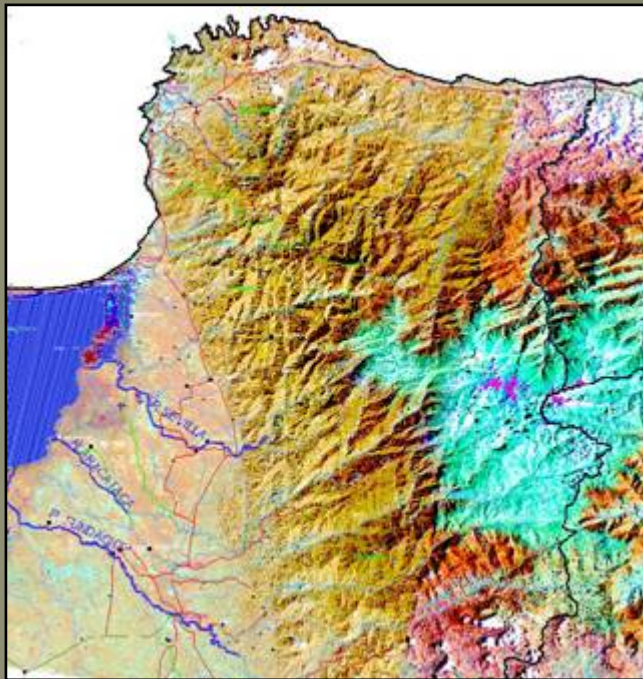


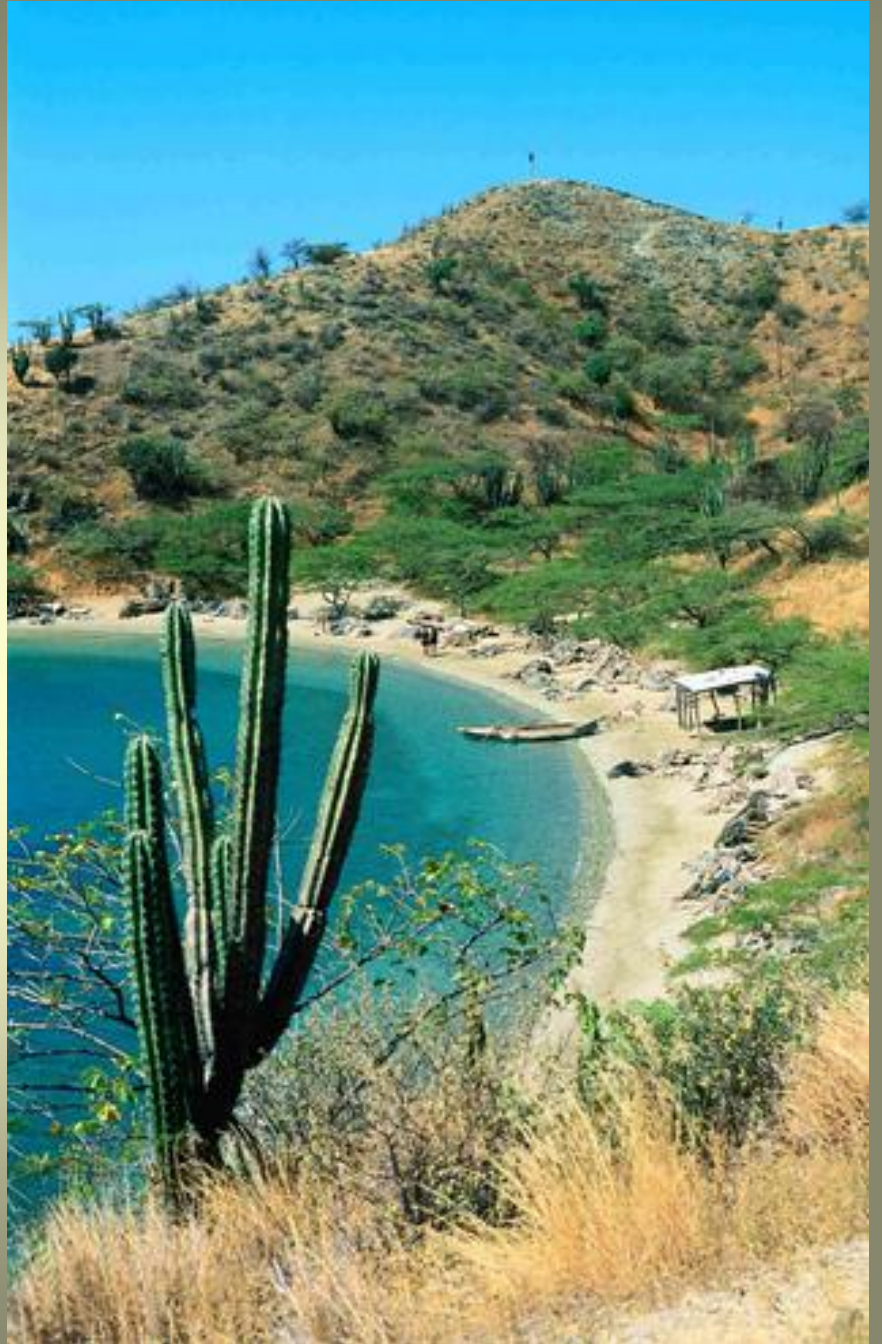
(Sr. "BBC"—ca. 1988-89)













The Mountain:

The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta is an extraordinary geographic phenomenon, since very few mountain ranges rise so abruptly to such heights within a short distance from the sea—from sea level this part of the Andes rises to 19,000 feet within 26 miles (ca. 40 km). The mountain forms a trilateral pyramid with the southeastern edge the widest, the northern slope falling down to the sea, and the western edge leading less abruptly down to the Ciénaga Grande and the marshy edges of the Lower Magdalena River. Nature of the Landscape: There is little level land in Kogi territory, and settlements generally are located in valley bottoms overlooking rivers. Also, there is little forested land on the slopes around Kogi settlements.

Microenvironmental Levels of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta

Seasons:

Rainy (“Winter”): late March to
mid-December
Dry (“Summer”): mid-December to
late March

(Rainfall averages 43”, from May to
December)

Fauna: varied, but not abundant—including
jaguar, puma, tigrillo (gato pardo) tapir
(danta), paca, peccary, capybara, armadillos,
howler monkey, monkeys; birds including
falcon, vulture, owl, toucan, heron, and
pelican; and caimán, marine turtles.



**Snowcapped peaks
at 19,000 ft.**



**Páramo
at 10,000 ft.**



**High savannah at
6500 ft.**



**Cloud forest
at 4500 ft.**



**Sugar cane
at 3000 ft.**



Seacoast

Mode of Production:



Outsiders' view of the Sierra Nevada: For centuries it was seen as a sort of “lost paradise,” a place where there were enormous riches to be found and characterized by extremely rich soils ...

In Reichel-Dolmatoff's opinion, however, the area is not all that rich. Like other Andean highlands, there are areas of good soil and areas of bad soil, but his overall assessment is that the soils are inferior:

- 1. Layers of humus on its lands are generally very thin**
- 2. Little forest cover**
- 3. Much rainfall and erosion**

After centuries of slash-and-burn cultivation, most of the slopes that are farmed by the Kogi are devoid of trees and now covered with grass.

THE ANCIENT TAIRONA:



POPULATION AND SUBSISTENCE: In the 16th century the area was more heavily populated, with the Tairona people farming maize, beans, and yuca. They also had access to the nearby ocean, which provided protein in the form of mollusks and marine animals.

TERRACES: In some of the valleys there are great numbers of artificial cultivation terraces dating to prehispanic times, but no cultivation is practiced on them. The Kogi will not farm these terraces ...

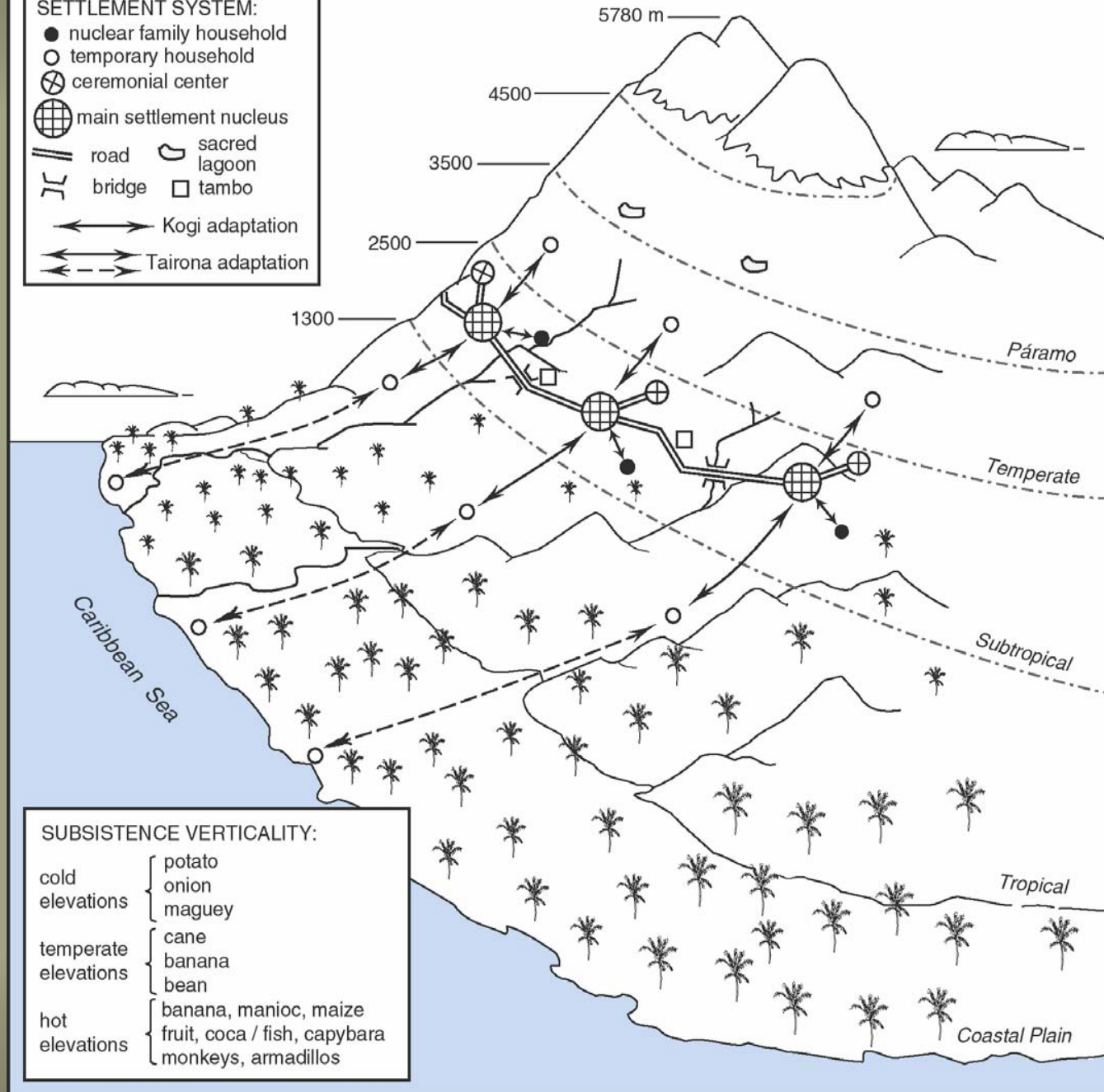
KOGI SUBSISTENCE: Although maize was important in the Tairona diet, one rarely sees maize growing in Kogi fields. Although they value it highly as a food, they say that it doesn't do well in their plots, producing stunted crops. And, although the soil on the ancient fields is black and suitable for such crops, the Kogi have tabooed the use of these fields. Instead, the fields play a ritual role as sacred sites where offerings are made. If someone were to plant his crop there, the Mámas would immediately intervene to stop such a sacrilege. As for planting crops on the terraces inside an ancient center (like Buritaca, or "La Ciudad Perdida"), the Kogi view these places as being filled with devils. Indeed, if a Kogi finds an ancient potsherd while tilling his (non-terraced) fields, he may well abandon the field as being filled with evil spirits. Finally, farming as they do on lower slopes near rivers, their fields become subject to periodic flooding and destruction when the rivers and streams overflow their banks.

- CROPS:**
1. Tierra Baja: banana, yuca, aguacate, maize, zapote, fruit trees
 2. Tierra Templada: sugar cane, banana, arracacha, and beans
 3. Tierra Fría: potatoes, onion, arracacha, maguey



SETTLEMENT SYSTEM:

- nuclear family household
- temporary household
- ⊗ ceremonial center
- ⊞ main settlement nucleus
- ▬ road
- ⤿ sacred lagoon
- ⌒ bridge
- tambo
- ↔ Kogi adaptation
- ↔ Tairona adaptation





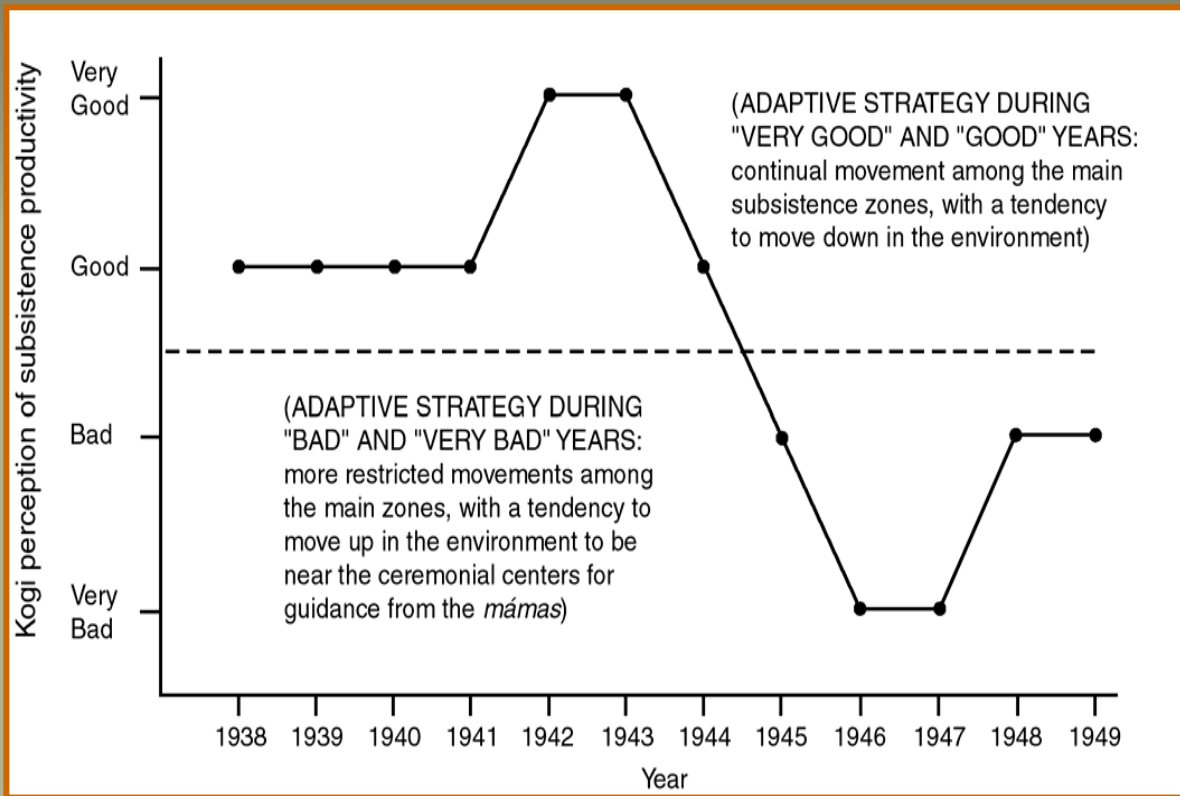
PLANTING AND HARVESTING: The men do the initial work of cultivation and weeding, although man and wife work together to plant the seed and harvest the crops.

DIET: Cut off from access to the sea by modern Colombian settlements and unable to practice animal husbandry due to their constant vertical movement, the Kogi are essentially vegetarians. Meat is eaten perhaps once a year, on occasions when an ox or cow is slaughtered, at which time everyone in a village participates in the feast. Reichel-Dolmatoff also mentions that the banana, introduced by the Spaniards, nearly completely replaced maize.

DIET: At 5-6 years old, the boys are separated from the girls; and the girls, who eat with the women, eat far better than the boys who, together with the men, do not eat well. Because of this, the women tend to be plump (the Kogi ideal) and healthy, whereas the men tend to be skinny.

USPs: In the origin myth, all foods were made from the body of woman, except for maize which was made from the body of man.

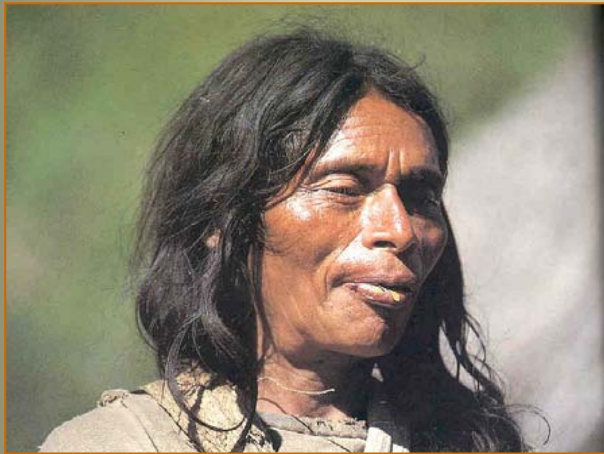




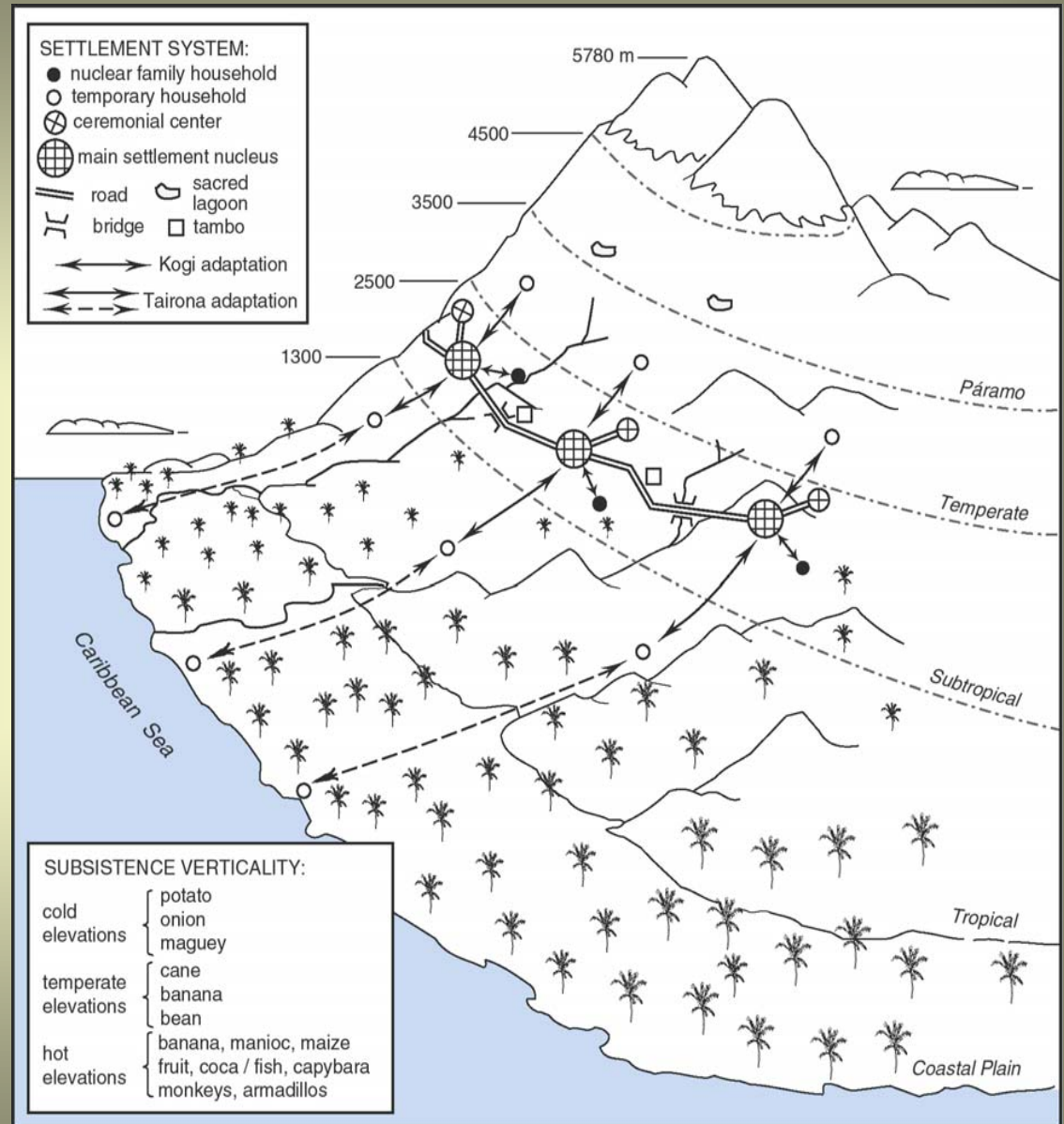
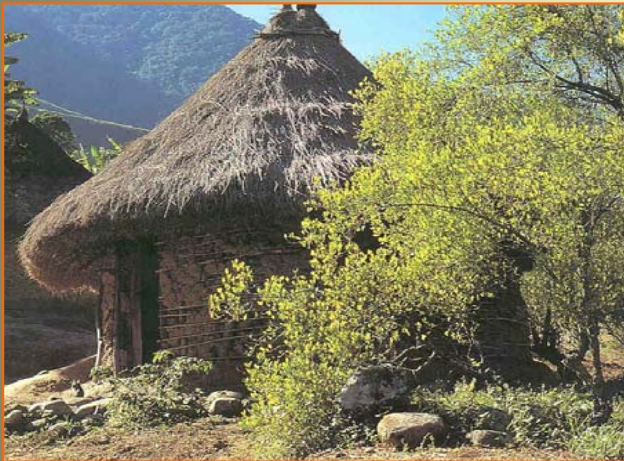
LEAN PERIODS: Although the Kogi consider their land to be rich and productive and, thus they never want to move out and go elsewhere, during the decade of the 1940s when Reichel-Dolmatoff carried out his research they were experiencing both good years and bad years. Bad years came about either because of excessive rain or drought, and during these years whole harvests were lost. And, because of this the Kogi always expressed uncertainty about the future, the next harvest.

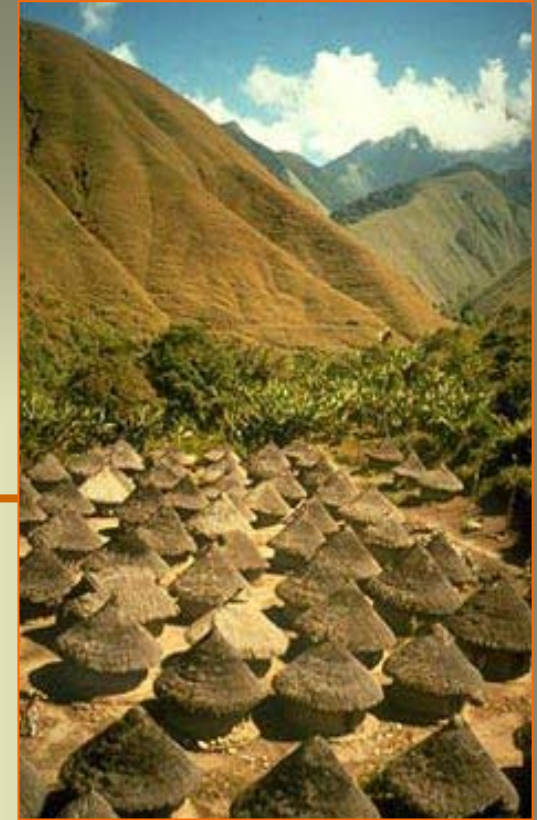
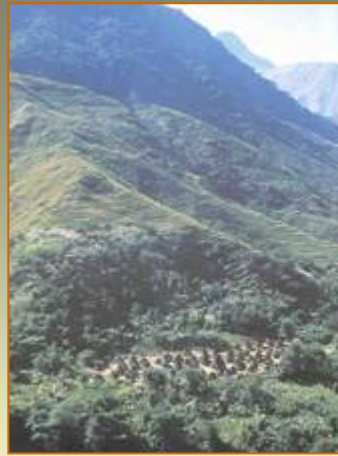


COCA CULTIVATION: The planting and weeding of coca is done by the men, but the women carry out the harvest. Since coca grows only in the sub-tropical zone, planting and harvesting take place year-round. After harvesting, the leaves are toasted inside the ceremonial house. The use of coca is absolutely forbidden to the women, and only chewed by the men after they have gone through the initiation rites into manhood.



Settlement Pattern:

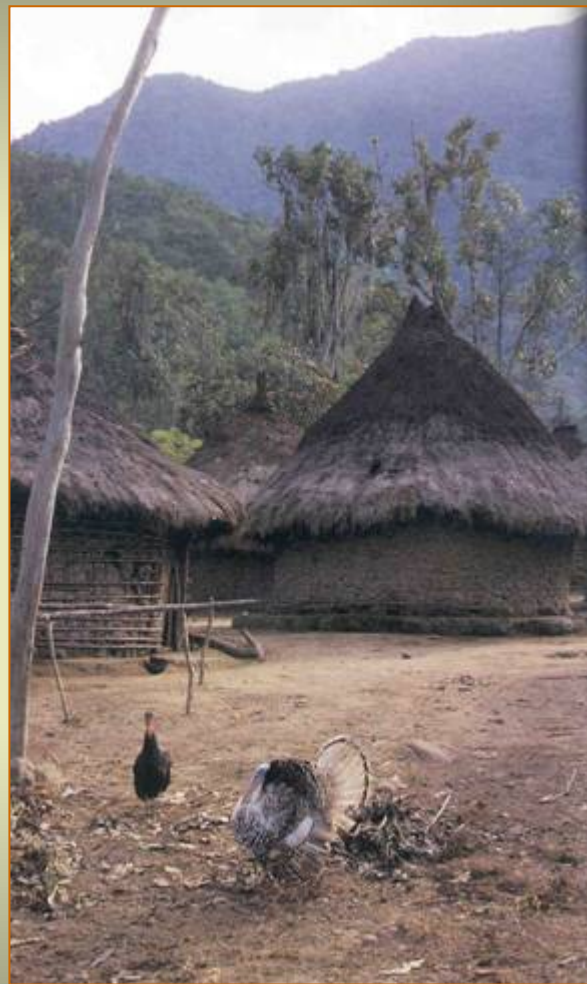
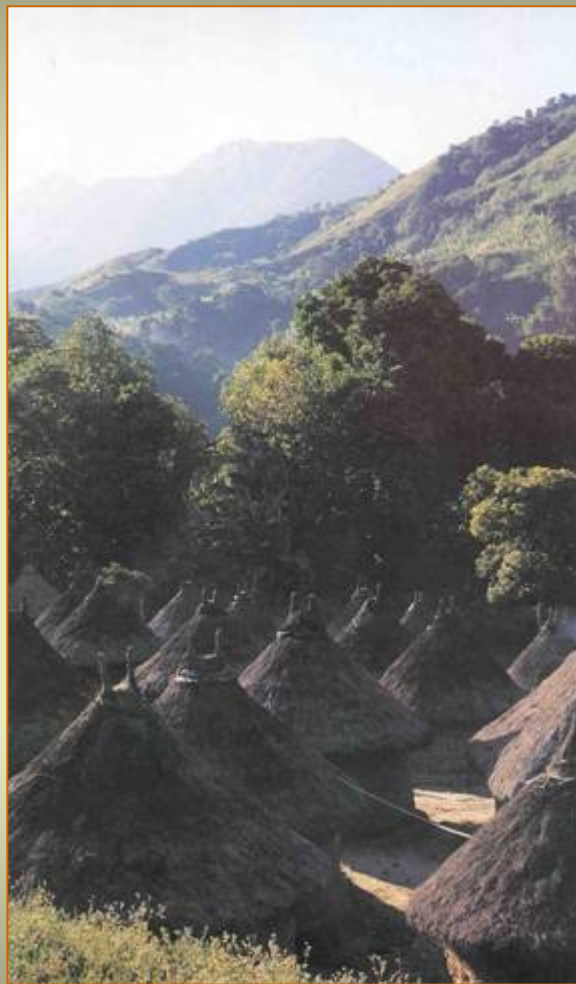


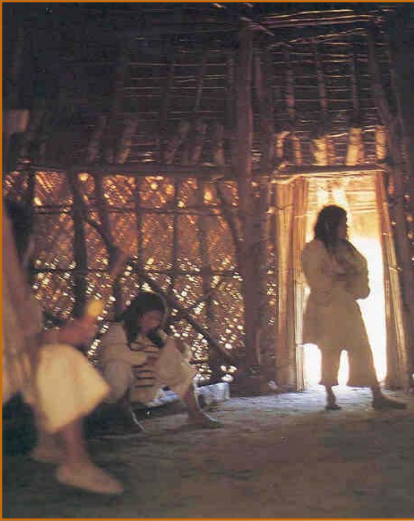


MAIN SETTLEMENT: these do not have any sort of fixed plan, as house are grouped more or less randomly around the ceremonial house. There are no streets and no central plaza. The main settlement is nearly deserted during the weekdays, only being occupied on weekends.

OTHER STRUCTURES IN THE MAIN SETTLEMENT: Women, girls, and pre-pubescent boys sleep here during the times of visit to the main center.

OTHER SETTLEMENTS: Most people have their fields at some distance from the settlement, anywhere from a 15-minute walk away to as much as a day's walk away. Each family has two dwellings which face each other, one for the husband and one for the wife and children. Neither the wife nor the husband may enter the other's structure, and the wife cooks food for all in the open space between the two dwelling.





CEREMONIAL HOUSE: Covers more area than the other houses and is taller, reaching 7-8 meters in height. It has two opposing doorways, while the other dwellings have only one. Inside the roof are place at least four, and sometimes more, shelves of thick wood which represent the different ecological levels that are exploited by the Kogi. This structure is built in such a way that on two days of the year (the spring and fall equinoxes) a ray of sunlight shines down through a hole in the roof and, as the day progresses, traces an equatorial line across the floor between the opposing doors of the structure. When the families are in town, it is here in the ceremonial house that all the (post-pubescent) men sleep in hammocks slung from the ceiling.

Mode of Reproduction:

POPULATION ESTIMATE: 2000 persons
(distributed over 1500 km²), so population density for
the 1940s would have been 1.3 persons/km².

SEX RATIO: Of all births, there were 16% more boys
than girls, a situation which does not equal out later in
life since Reichel-Dolmatoff counted 118 men for every
100 women, equal to a sex ratio of 118. Nevertheless, he
noted no preferential female infanticide.



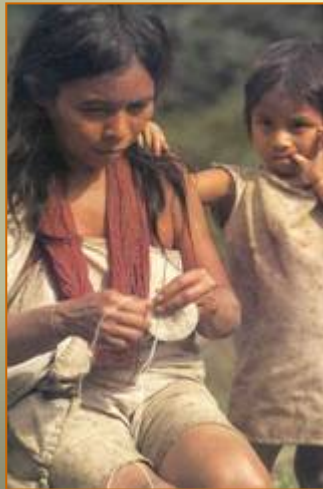
COCA CHEWING AND SEXUALITY: Although coca chewing is thought to enhance the sexuality of younger men just past puberty, the Kogi say that later it reduces the desire for sex and causes impotency. All this is good, since the Kogi say that sex is bad and dangerous, and that the suppression of sex is an important and desired effect of chewing coca. For this reason, however, the younger men try to avoid chewing coca, but the mamas and other men often criticize them for not chewing it.

SEXUALITY: The physical weakness of the undernourished and coca-drugged men causes sexual tension with the women, and Reichel-Dolmatoff noted a high frequency of sexual aberrations among the Kogi: female and male homosexuality is present, he says, in all villages and incest within the nuclear family is also high.

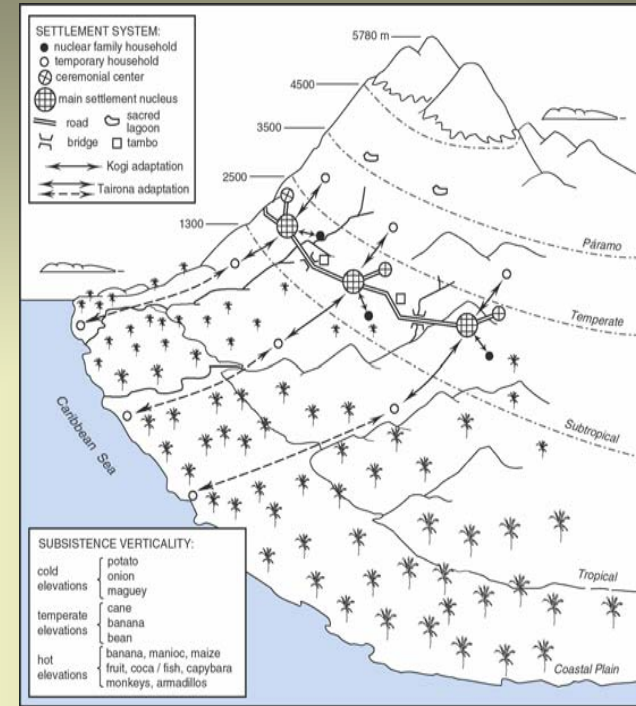
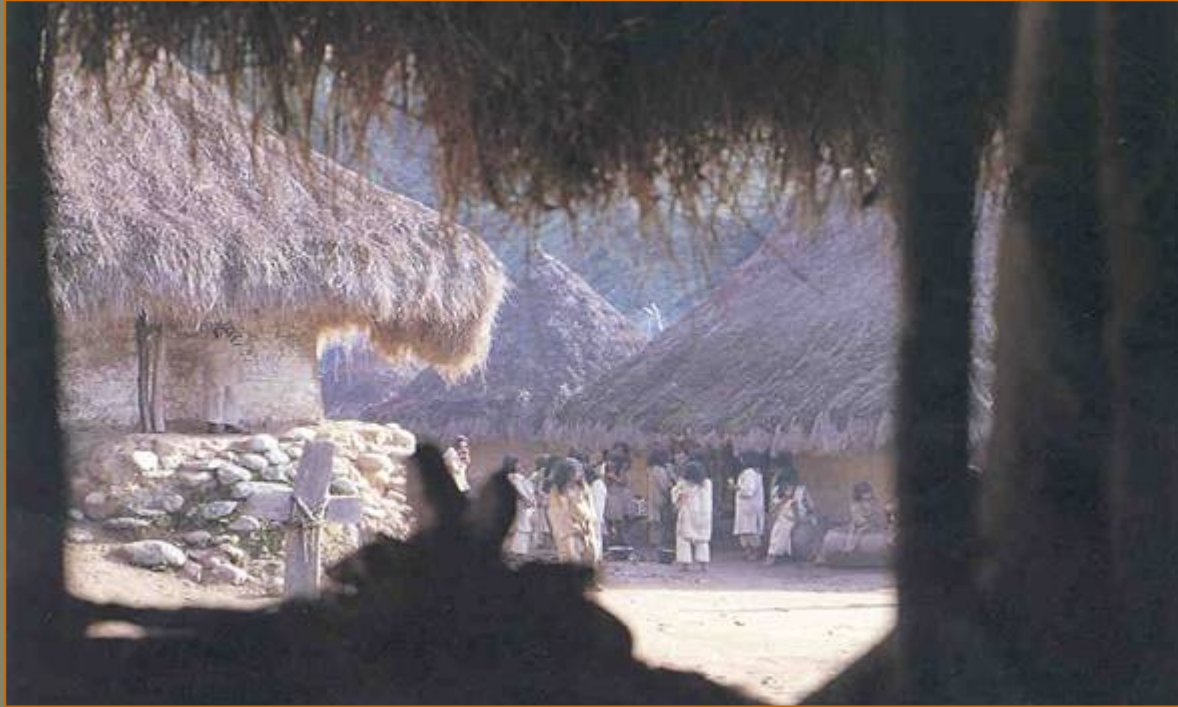


Domestic Economy:

AESTHETICS: The Kogi live a very Spartan life, as no decorations are placed on any of their artifacts (gourds, ceramics, musical instruments). Nevertheless, the Kogi have a sense of beauty in the natural world around them. Valleys and mountains are considered beautiful, while beaches, the sea, and the selva are considered ugly. The men consider themselves to be ugly, skinny, and dirty, while the women think of themselves as nice-looking. The men also think the women are beautiful, especially when they are fat, have long hair, large eyes, and large breasts. Anything in the natural environment that is “fat,” such as animals or trees, is also seen as beautiful.







COMMUNAL WORK: All work on (ancient) roads, bridges, or irrigation facilities for fields is carried out by communal work projects in which the families of one or more settlements participate.

Social Organization:

MARRIAGE: The general rule is that a man may marry anyone who is not related to him as mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, or aunt. Several generations back, a man could not marry a cousin (either cross or parallel), but marriage with (first) cousins was common at the time of Reichel-Dolmatoff's study. The Kogi are generally monogamous, with men and women marrying between the ages of 14 and 18 years old.

RESIDENCE RULE: Residence is matrilineal, usually, after marriage, and the man lives in the house of his in-laws, being obligated to work for them for a period of one or two years, the end of which is determined by the mamas. After that, the young couple lives neolocally.

GENDER TENSIONS:

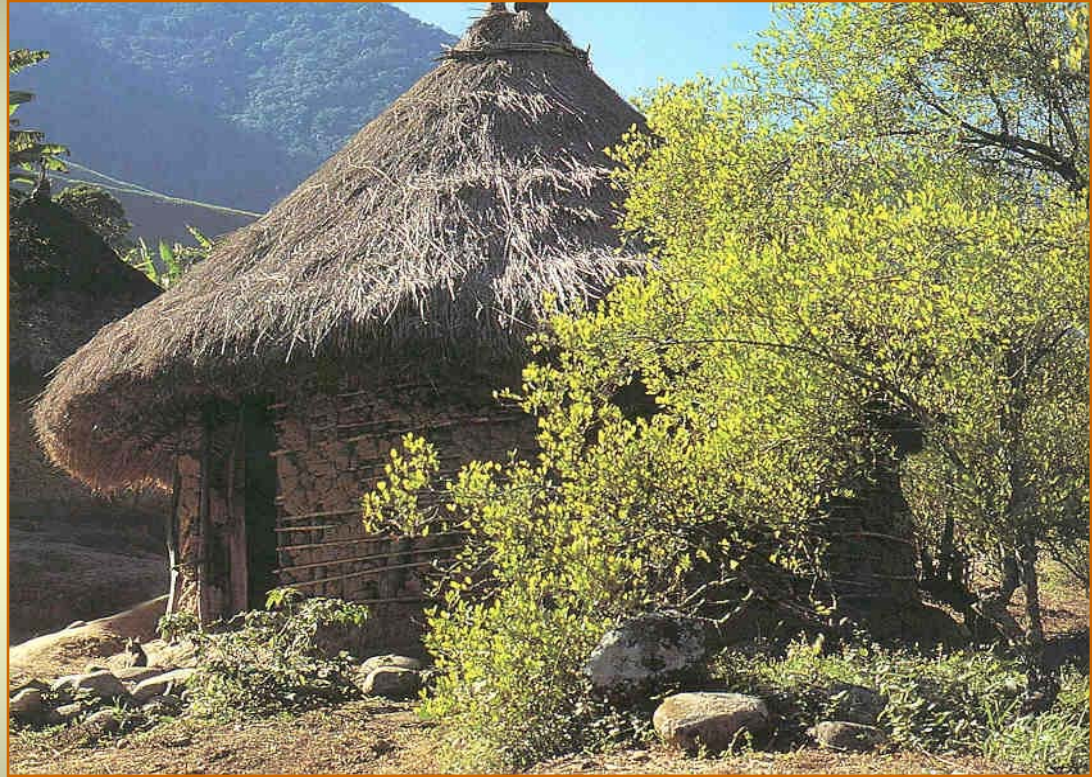
The women see the ceremonial house as their great rival, as they wish that the men would stay with them at home. A women may even pretend to be ill so that her husband will stay home. The anti-aphrodisiac qualities of coca are well known. Overall there is much tension between man and wife. From an early age, a man learns that women are dangerous, that they represent the forces of instability and chaos. Indeed, after marriage men consider their wives to be the greatest stumbling block in their attempt to acquire knowledge (about the Ancient Ones). Such knowledge, they feel, is the only way to acquire security, serenity, and the guarantee that the Cosmos will continue to exist (!).

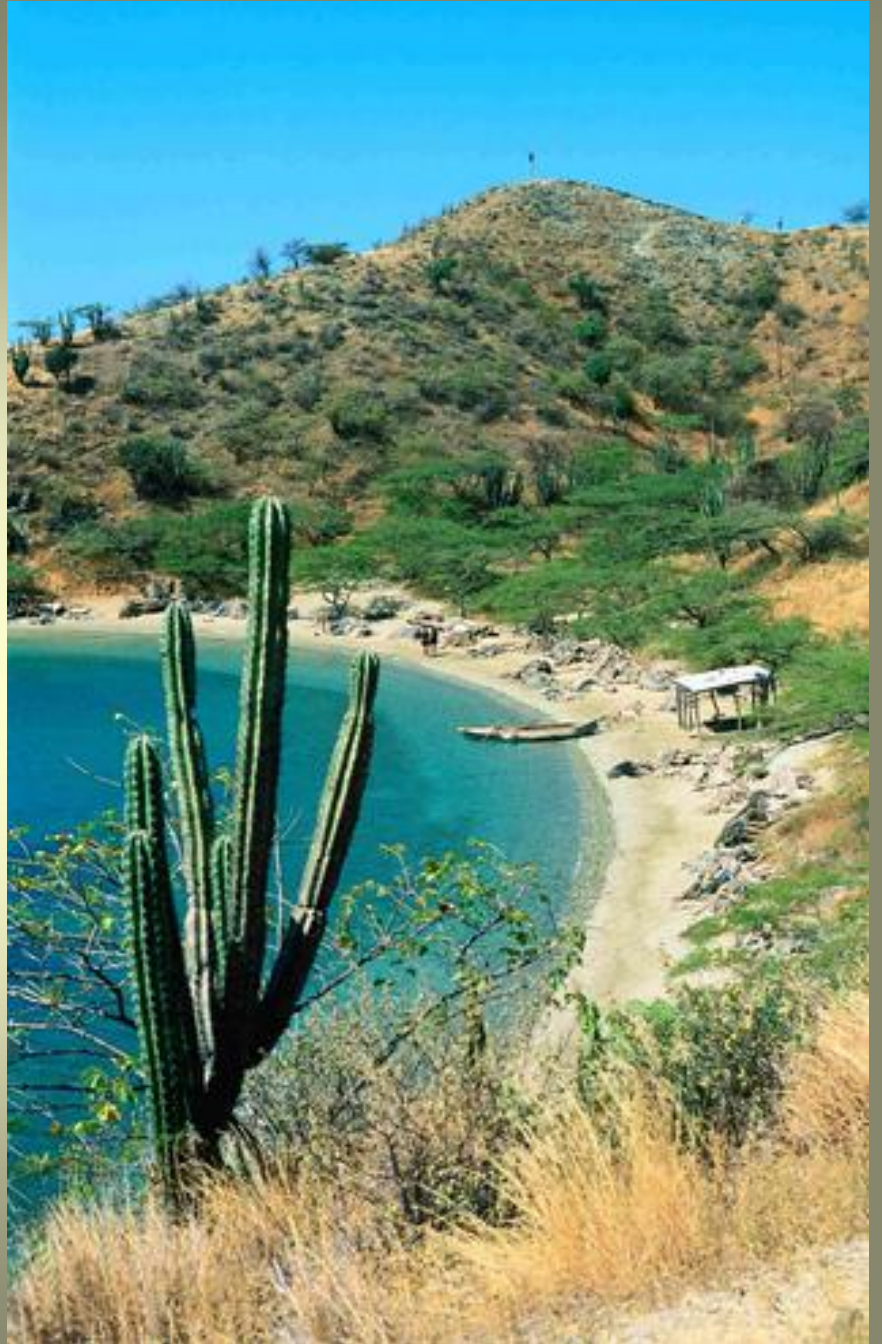
... So, as the ceremonial house increasingly takes over the man's attention, he pays less and less attention to his house and his wife and children, and to "real" life as he opts for the coca-drenched world of the Ancient Ones. But the great obstacle is that the men live in the real world, which requires the production of food and the sexual act to keep the Kogi viable as a population. So, women are dangerous but indispensable, sex makes the men tired but they do desire it nonetheless, and food is a futile pleasure, here now and gone a little later. Finally, the men consider the women as being less responsible for societal maintenance than are the men, since it is assumed they "know less," just as younger people know less than older ones.

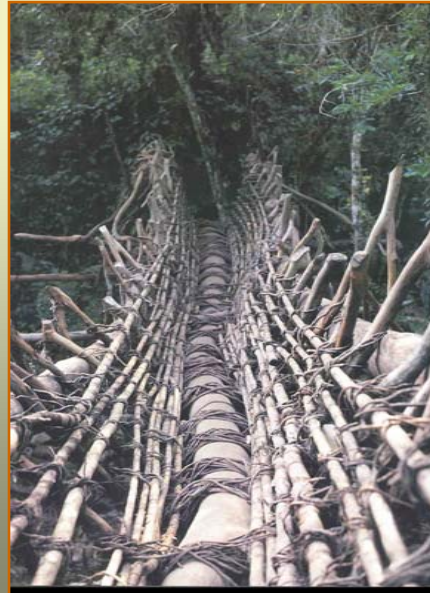
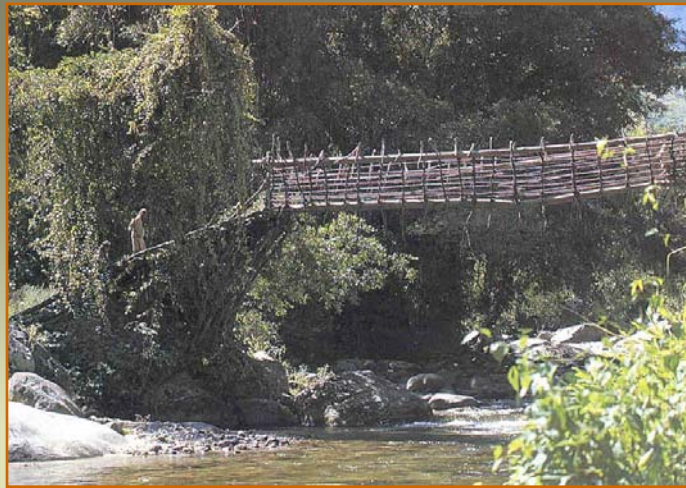
STATUS:

...for the men is achieved only as a function of obtaining and increasing one's knowledge of religious esoterica, including the Ancient Ones.

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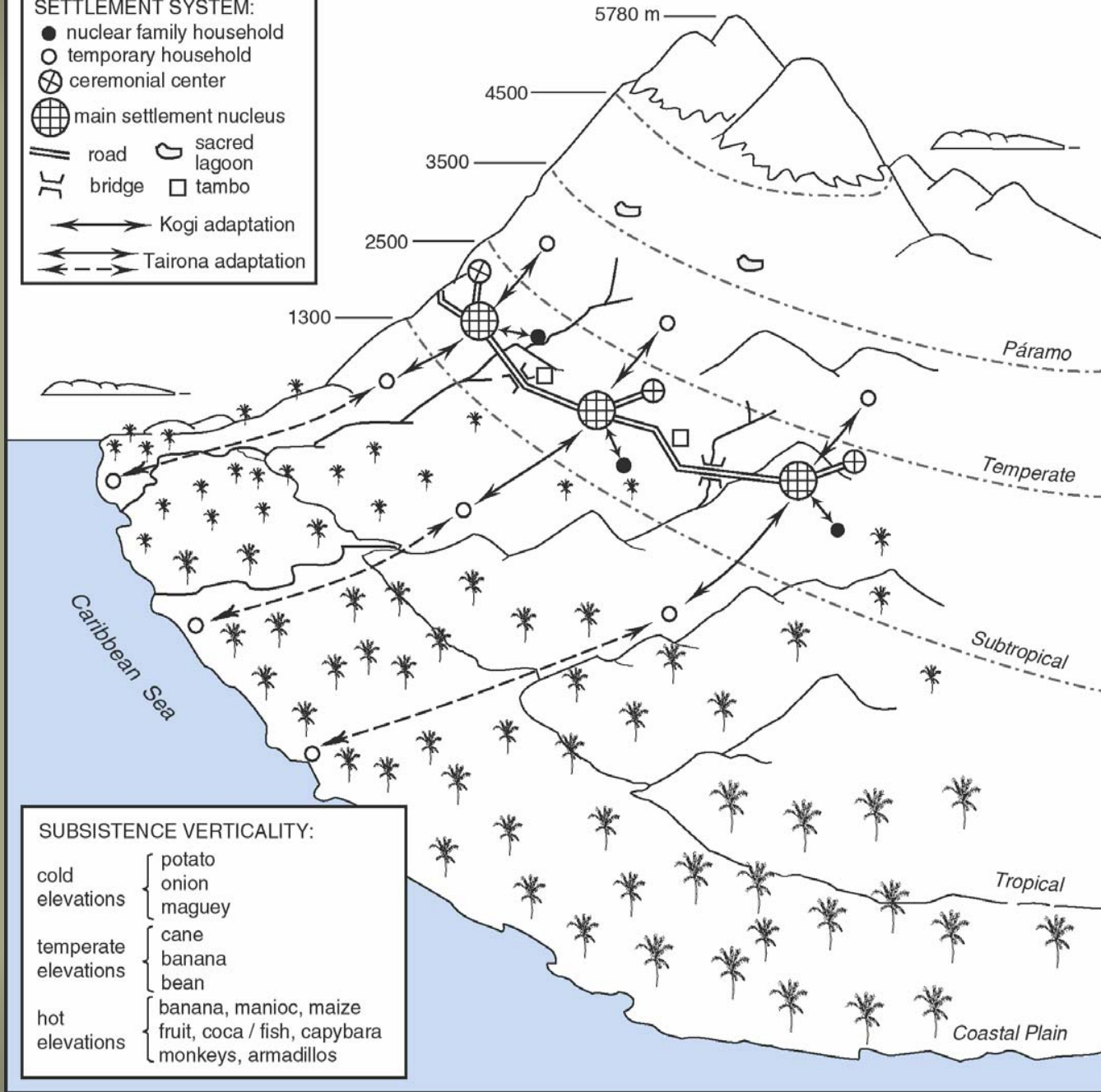






SETTLEMENT SYSTEM:

- nuclear family household
- temporary household
- ⊗ ceremonial center
- ⊞ main settlement nucleus
- == road
- ⤿ sacred lagoon
- ⌒ bridge
- tambo
- ↔ Kogi adaptation
- ↔ Tairona adaptation



SUBSISTENCE VERTICALITY:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|------------------------------|
| cold elevations | { | potato |
| | | onion |
| | | maguey |
| temperate elevations | { | cane |
| | | banana |
| | | bean |
| hot elevations | { | banana, manioc, maize |
| | | fruit, coca / fish, capybara |
| | | monkeys, armadillos |

Mode of Production:

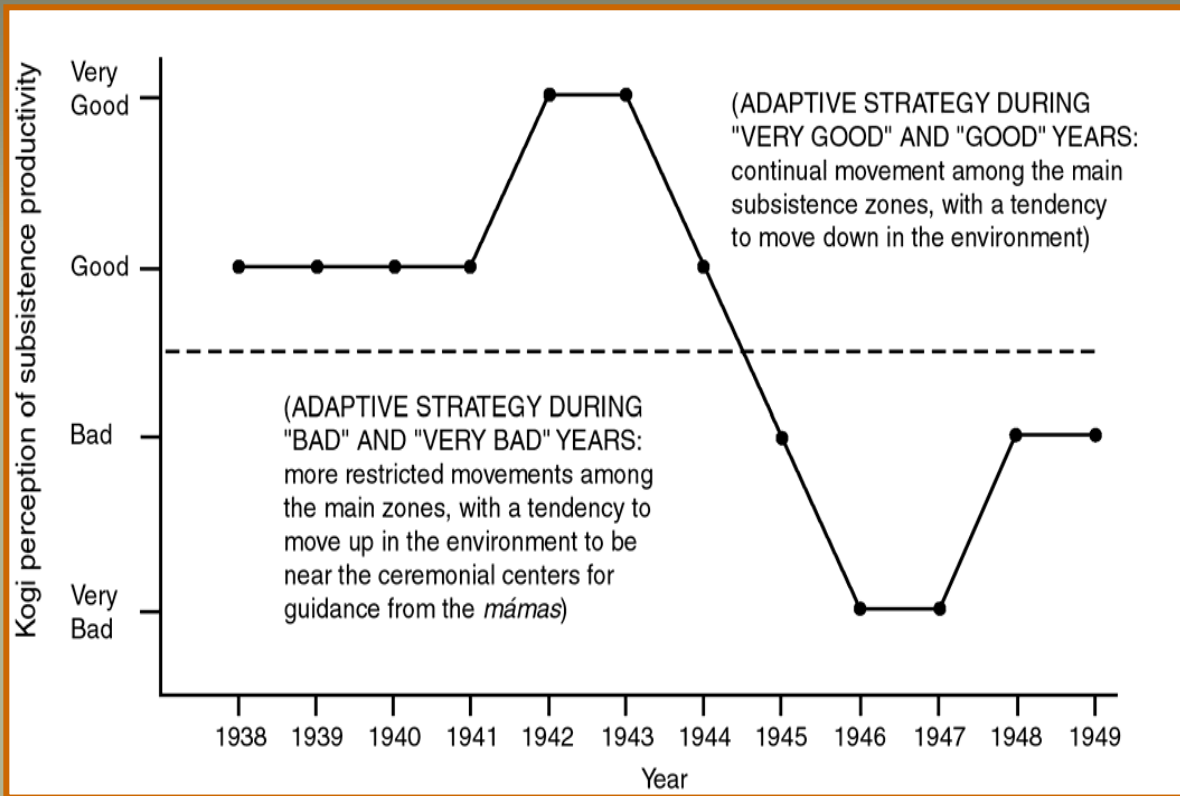


Outsiders' view of the Sierra Nevada: For centuries it was seen as a sort of “lost paradise,” a place where there were enormous riches to be found and characterized by extremely rich soils ...

In Reichel-Dolmatoff's opinion, however, the area is not all that rich. Like other Andean highlands, there are areas of good soil and areas of bad soil, but his overall assessment is that the soils are inferior:

- 1. Layers of humus on its lands are generally very thin**
- 2. Little forest cover**
- 3. Much rainfall and erosion**

After centuries of slash-and-burn cultivation, most of the slopes that are farmed by the Kogi are devoid of trees and now covered with grass.



GOOD PERIODS & LEAN PERIODS: Although the Kogi consider their land to be rich and productive and, thus they never want to move out and go elsewhere, during the decade of the 1940s when Reichel-Dolmatoff carried out his research they were experiencing both good years and bad years. Bad years came about either because of excessive rain or drought, and during these years whole harvests were lost. And, because of this the Kogi always expressed uncertainty about the future, the next harvest.

GENDER TENSIONS:

- **Women see the ceremonial house as great rival**
- **Anti-aphrodisiac qualities of coca are well known, and overall there is much tension between man and wife.**
- **From early age, men learn that women are dangerous, represent the forces of instability and chaos.**
- **Men consider wives as greatest stumbling block in their attempt to gain knowledge about the Ancient Ones, the only way to acquire security, serenity, and the guarantee that the Cosmos will continue to exist ...**

Political Economy:

Outside the level of the local village, the Kogi have little or no relations with the outside world. They do cooperate, however, with other nearby villages in maintaining the roads that run between the settlements, many or most of which date to pre-Colombian times.

Ritual/Leadership:

THE MÁMAS: The training process takes many years, and the position is often inherited, with a máma providing the necessary education to his older son. According to Reichel-Dolmatoff, the tradition has continued in some families for more than 30 generations (or for as many as 750 years, assuming 25-year generations, as Reichel-Dolmatoff states).

Máma Valencia



Máma Bernardo



POWERS OF THE MÁMAS:

- **Every village has two or more mámas. They care for the village in every way, controlling everything including the fertility of people, the land, society, and the cosmos.**
- **The way they control society is simple: namely, through the threat of illness, hunger, and sterility from the supernatural powers in their cosmos.**
- **When a máma is going to die earthquakes and eclipses take place, and these are signs of the approaching end of the world.**

TRAINING TO BE A MÁMA:

- **Those who would become ritual specialists were divined at birth**
- **A boy was taken to a máma's house and treated differently from all other children:**
 - *Had to sleep in the day, stay up all night*
 - *Could not see the sun*
 - *Bodily functions had to be controlled until nightfall*

TRAINING TO BE A MÁMA:

- *Then he was taken to the ceremonial house and kept there separated from the rest of society.*
- *His teachings were carried out only at night, by firelight.*
- *At four or five years old, he was given gold ornaments and a mask to wear that could never be taken off again at night, his hair was permitted to grow long, and he was not permitted to play.*
- *He became the máma's son...*

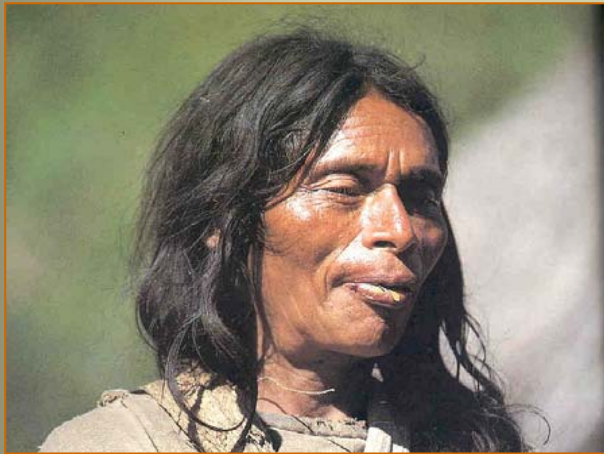
TRAINING TO BE A MÁMA:

- *Nine years after the start of his training, the boy was ready to make a decision to become a full-fledged máma.*
- *During the next nine years, he went through puberty, was given a poporo, and the máma spoke to him about sexuality, marriage, and rituals.*
- *He had still not seen daylight, nor a woman or any person other than the máma ...*

TRAINING TO BE A MÁMA:

- *Then, eighteen years after the beginning of his training, he was permitted to go outside during the daytime to see people, light, houses, sun, and women for the first time.*
- *Everyone saluted him in veneration, but would not converse with him when he went near them.*
- *He was considered, like all other mámas, to have received his powers and wisdom from the Mother.*

COCA CULTIVATION: The planting and weeding of coca is done by the men, but the women carry out the harvest. Since coca grows only in the sub-tropical zone, planting and harvesting take place year-round. After harvesting, the leaves are toasted inside the ceremonial house. The use of coca is absolutely forbidden to the women, and only chewed by the men after they have gone through the initiation rites into manhood.



**COCA
REVISITED**

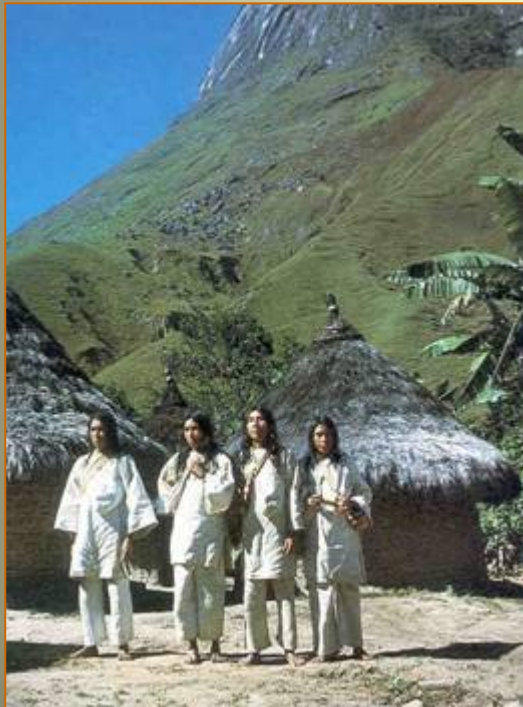


EFFECTS OF CHEWING COCA--

The Kogi say the following about it:

- 1. It causes mental lucidity that helps during ceremonies and with religiosity in general, or in conversations, personal rites, and collective rites. A man who chews coca becomes animated, and his memory and speaking abilities are enhanced.**
- 2. It helps the men talk about the Ancient Ones.**
- 3. It causes insomnia, which is good, since it helps a man stay up for hours if not days on end, and the most prestige comes to those who can talk about the Ancient Ones in this manner.**
- 4. It reduces the effects of hunger, which is especially felt during the long ceremonies when a man may not consume any food.**
- 5. It reduces the desire for sex during a man's middle and later years of life, eventually causing impotence, which is good.**

SUMMARY: Thus, the ideal Kogi man would eat nothing but coca, abstain totally from sex, never sleep, and spend his entire life lying in his hammock “womb” talking with the other men about the Ancient Ones. Coca is the marvelous plant that helps the men approach this (Freudian) ideal.



BOY'S PUBERTY RITE:

- *Each initiate is given his poporo*
- *The máma says that this gourd represents a woman, the young man “marries this woman” during the ceremony, and he perforates its top in an imitation of the ritual deflowering of women.*
- *The stick represents the male sexual organ, so that the introduction of the stick into the gourd and the rapid movements employed in extracting the coca are symbolic of sexual intercourse.*
- *The máma then tells the initiate that this symbolic act should be substituted as much as possible for the actual act of sex, which is bad.*



Máma Bernardo instructs a young initiate in the use of the poporo.

PUBERTY RITE:

Reichel-Dolmatoff notes that "all the necessities of life and all of its immense frustrations are concentrated therefore in this little gourd instrument which for the Kogi signifies food, woman, and memory." Given this belief, it is rare that any Kogi man is ever seen without his gourd, lime, and coca bag.

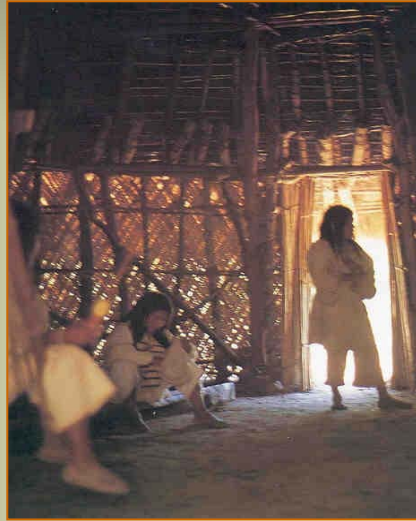
USPs/Ideology:

THREE FUNDAMENTAL USP_s FOR MEN:

- 1. abstention from physical aggression.**
- 2. abstention from sex.**
- 3. abstention from food.**

USP_s REGARDING THE ENVIRONMENT:

- 1. 0-1000 meters: bad lands, where the Ancient Ones live (very dangerous)**
- 2. 1000-2000 meters: good lands, where agriculture is carried out and where the people live more of the time**
- 3. 2000-4500 meters: good lands, in a sacred sense, because the Universal Mother lives here and here the ill are cured and the main ceremonial sites are located.**

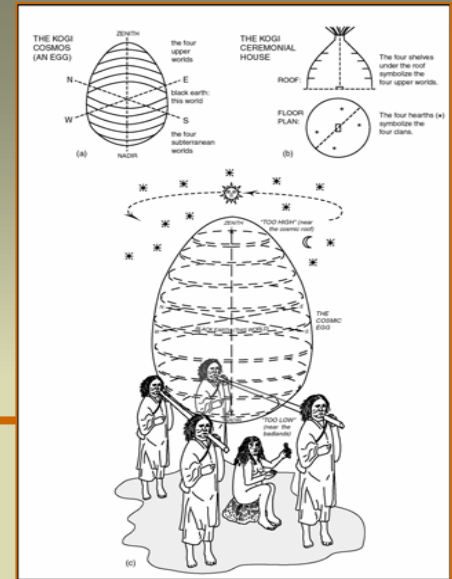


KOGI ATTITUDES ABOUT THE CEREMONIAL HOUSE: The Kogi men view the ceremonial house as the womb of the Mother, the originator of all life and the Kogi. When they go into the ceremonial house, therefore, they see themselves as inside the Womb of the Mother. When they lay down in their hammocks, they are inside her placenta. Thus, the ideal place for the Kogi men is to return as much as possible to her womb, lying inside her placenta.

ORIGIN MYTH: *“First there was the sea. Everything was dark. There was no sun, no moon, no people, no plants. there was only the sea everywhere. In the sea was the Mother. She was water and water was everywhere. Thus, at first, there was only the Mother. The Mother was neither people nor anything; she was nothing. She was alúna. Then, with the Mother existing in this manner, all the worlds above the lowest one were formed. First there was the Mother and the water and darkness. The first dawn had not yet occurred.”*

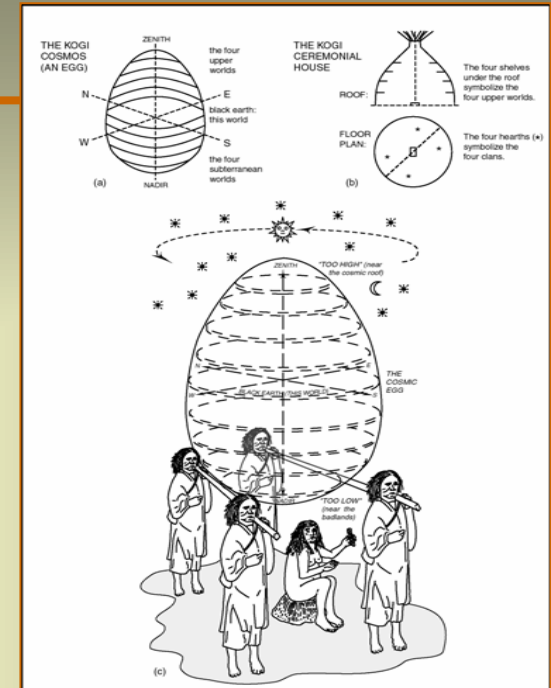
ANXIETY ABOUT THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE WORLD:

According to the Kogi, the course of the universe, the path of the stars, the change of seasons, sun and rain, and with them, fertility and growth, are not guaranteed nor is their continued existence certain. Instead, their existence and continuation are dependent upon proper individual and communal focus on religion. If the individual and society live in accordance with the cultural norms, then the universe will continue its course, winter will follow summer, day will follow night, and the rain will follow the sun, women will be fertile, and illness will claim no victims. But, if society strays from this path of righteousness, if moral codes are forgotten or not followed, then the world will end.



At various times of the year, on the occasion of the solstices and the equinoxes, elaborate ceremonies are carried out. The object of the solstice ceremonies is to “make the sun turn around,” that is to say, to implore the sun to return once again to its house. The object of the equinox ceremonies is to celebrate planting and the harvest. But, there is nothing joyous about these ceremonies; instead, the Kogi exhibit a profound preoccupation for their success [they are “tinkering” with the Universe].

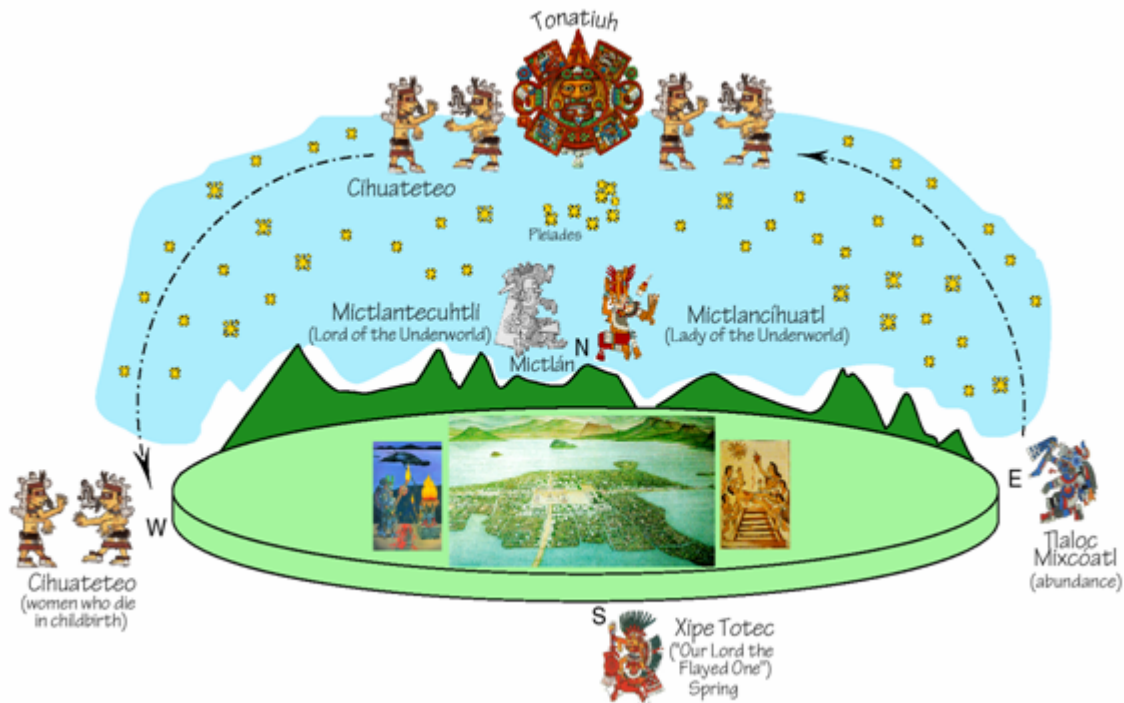
This success depends upon innumerable ritual prerequisites of a personal nature, including dietary restrictions, sexual abstinence, fasting, insomnia, baths, and confession so that everything will be “in its place.” And, it is only the men who are in charge of this, as women are almost entirely excluded from the ceremonies themselves.





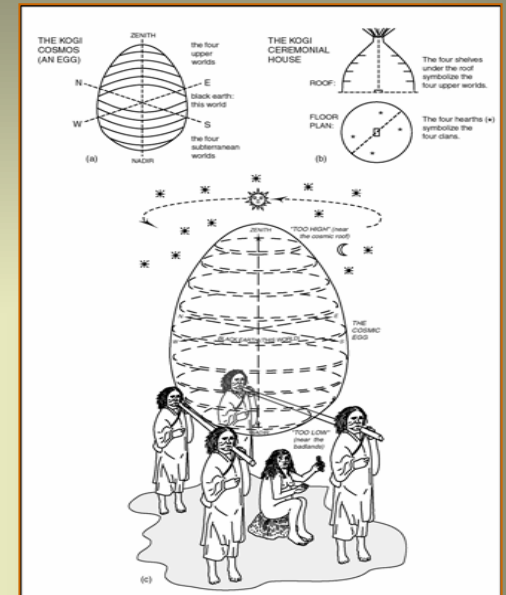
Tonatiuh

"... the sun god, he required that human sacrifices be made so that their hearts could be offered up to him to keep him going across the sky."



THE END OF THE WORLD AS THE KOGI KNOW IT:

“One day in the future, the four men will get overwhelmingly tired and will no longer have the strength to hold up the cosmos. At this moment, the universal egg will come crashing down into the primordial pool and land on the Universal Mother. She will remain unharmed, escaping the interior of the egg. However, every human will die.



Nevertheless, the souls of the good people will climb up into the sky using a giant thread. Those who drown now, those killed in falls, and those bitten by snakes will come back alive.

“We, the Kogi, have endured for nine centuries. Within one century more, we will have complete one half of our time on earth, then a period of 1000 more years will come. By then, the four men who hold up the cosmos will get exceedingly old, and at that point the Universe will end.”

KOGI ANXIETY ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD:

The Kogi are very worried about the end of the world, not only for themselves but also for all other humans. In fact, says Reichel-Dolmatoff, the Kogi consider themselves to be the “Elder Brothers” of all mankind. And in light of this they must care for the “Younger Brothers.” Thus, they care for the French, the Colombians, and the caimans [Crocodiles] alike, and it is a source of wonderment to them that the French, the Colombians, and the caimans don’t seem to care. But what matters more than this is that the Kogi continue carrying out the rituals that will ensure the survival of themselves and every other human, animal, and plant in this world.

ideology (USPs)

The three fundamental USPs of the Kogi urge abstinence from physical aggression, abstinence from sex, and abstinence from food. The ceremonial house symbolizes the Universal Mother's womb, and when the men enter their hammocks in the ceremonial house, they feel enveloped in her placenta. Chewing coca, a substitute for having sex with their wives, helps the men remain awake while remembering and talking about the Ancient Ones. According to Kogi cosmology, the universe is a giant nine-level cosmic egg held up by four mythical men who are fed by the Universal Mother. Kogi women are not supposed to move during the act of sex, since it is feared that this will cause the cosmic egg to shift and fall off the poles held up by the four men. The Kogi take great pains each year to carry out ritual acts causing the sun to "turn around" at the time of the solstices and the equinoxes to ensure that the universe, always in danger of ending, will continue. They thus see themselves as the ritualists in the world who keep it from ending; hence they are "elder brothers" to all other humans, who are their "younger brothers." Nevertheless, observing signs in their environment of ecosystemic decline, they fear that the younger brothers are hell-bent on destroying the world in spite of Kogi efforts to keep it intact.

ritual, leadership

The ritual and civic leaders of the Kogi villages are the *mámas*. They traditionally received a rigorous training that lasted from the time they were a few months old until they were 18. Each initiate was kept from social intercourse with other Kogi, could not view anything in the daylight, and was continually instructed in Kogi cosmology and rules of behavior. At puberty he was given a *poporo*, the bottle gourd container in which the lime for chewing coca was kept; then he was instructed about sex, marriage, and rituals. Unlike other South American ritual specialists, the *mámas* were not healers or curers; instead, they were in charge of nearly all aspects of the civic and personal life of the Kogi. Among their many important functions, the *mámas* were in charge of the male puberty rites, in which young men were given the *poporo* in marriage (the priest perforating the top with a stick in an imitation of the deflowering of women) and told that the stick represented the penis and the gourd the female sexual organ and that the act of dipping for the lime symbolized the actual sexual act and should, as much as possible, be substituted for that act, which was considered "bad."

domestic economy

Kogi work groups supervised by the *mámas* maintain the Tairona road system between the present-day villages, facilitating communication among them. Only the men may spin cotton, plant and chew the coca, and make the pottery. Other activities are carried out by both sexes. The men own the houses, agricultural plots, and domestic animals, although descent is reckoned bilaterally.

social organization

Men and women belonged to separate social groups, the *Tuxe* and the *Dáke*, which, in turn, were divided into several dozen groups, with rules about who could marry whom decided by the *mámas*. Marriage occurred at ages 14–18, men living matrilocally and serving wife's parents for one or two years until the *mámas* decided it was time for the newlyweds to live independently of her family.

political economy

As part of their largely successful attempt to remain independent of the outside Europeanized world, the Kogi traditionally have had no relations with their non-Kogi neighbors. Nevertheless, they not only maintain intersettlement relations, but also rely in part on the Colombian market system to obtain the lime necessary to release the alkaloids in chewing coca, since they have been increasingly cut off from access to the sea by modern population expansion along the coast.

Policy, Regulation

other social systems

As depicted especially in the BBC film *From the Heart of the World*, the Kogi have done everything they can to keep people from the outside world from entering into their territory. To the extent they have succeeded, so has their culture remained more traditional than almost any other throughout the Andes.

mode of production

Kogi subsistence is based on slash and burn in plots located in all three of the main climatic zones of the mountain—hot, temperate, and cold. Maize is not important, and the diet—although diverse in carbohydrates—is inadequate in terms of protein. Ironically in light of the ancient terracing around them, much of land the Kogi use for cultivation is heavily eroded.

settlement pattern

The Kogi move continually between their field houses (occupied during the week) and the ceremonial centers (occupied weekends), as well as up and down the mountain over a year's time. The sexes do not live together, either in the field houses or in the centers, the men congregating in the ceremonial house on the weekends when families converge on the center.

mode of reproduction

The Kogi population of the 1940s was 2000 persons, living in an area of 500–1000 km² which is equivalent to densities of 2–4 p/km². With a sex ratio of 118 (1.18 males to 1 female), it is possible that preferential female infanticide was practiced, although the principal regulatory factors clearly were the superstructural checks on the frequency of sex.

physical environment (biotic & abiotic)

The Sierra de Nevada de Santa Marta rises steeply within a short distance of 35 km from the Caribbean coastline to 5780 m above sea level, providing an environment that is as difficult in terms of rugged topography and scattered land suitable for cultivation as it is diverse in the availability of floral and faunal resources for human adaptive systems. Given the tropical location, rainfall throughout the microenvironmental zones below the *paramo* is high, but the lack of extensive irrigable land has set limits on human population numbers and settlement nucleation in comparison to the Central Andes. The Kogi appear to experience over the longer term a high degree of unpredictability in the ability of their subsistence system to sustain their numbers, the result of years in which either not enough rain falls or too much occurs.

Output, Support Base

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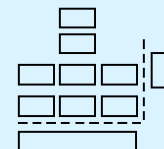
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Policy,
Regulation

other

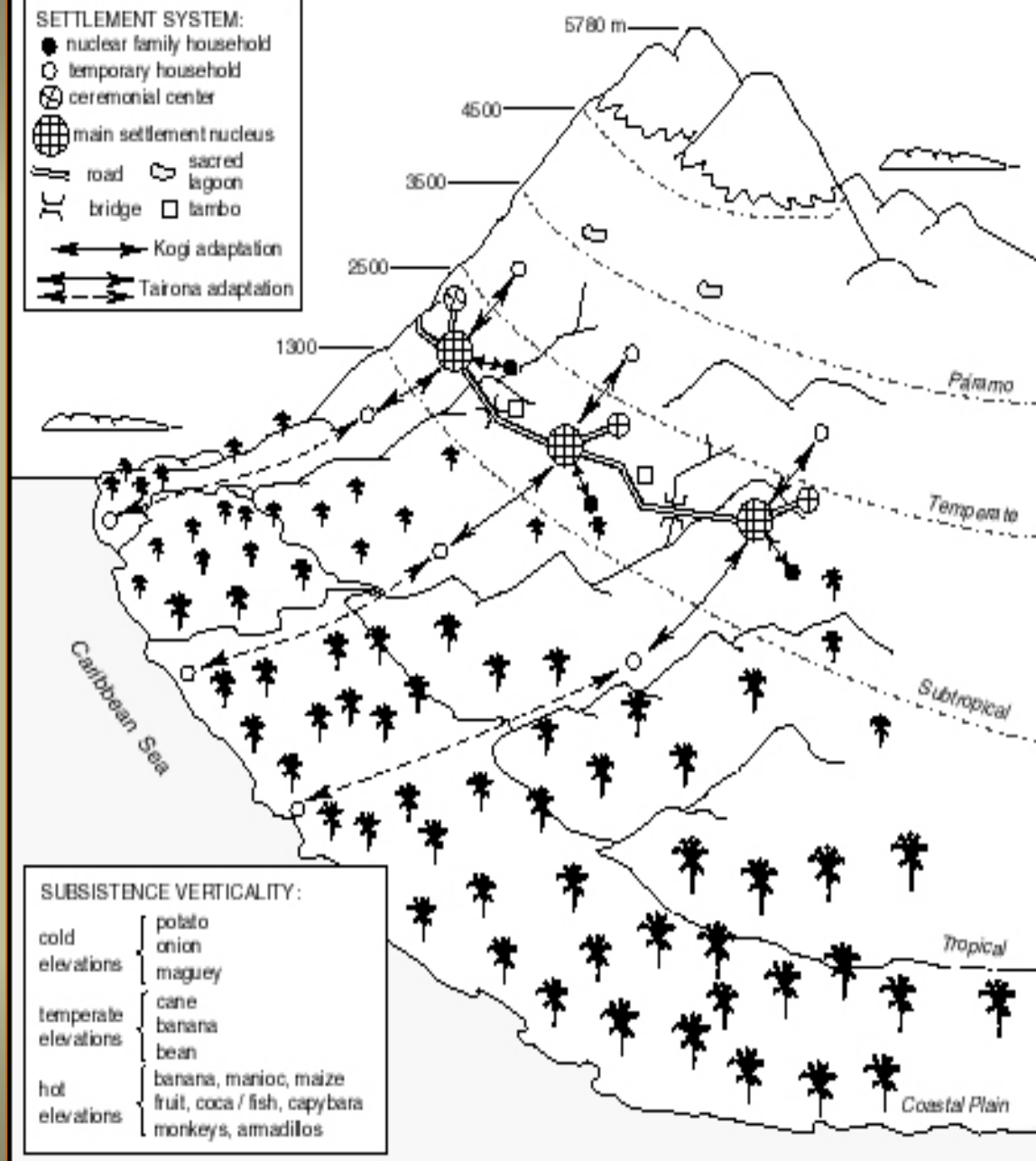


TAIRONA ARCHAEOLOGY:



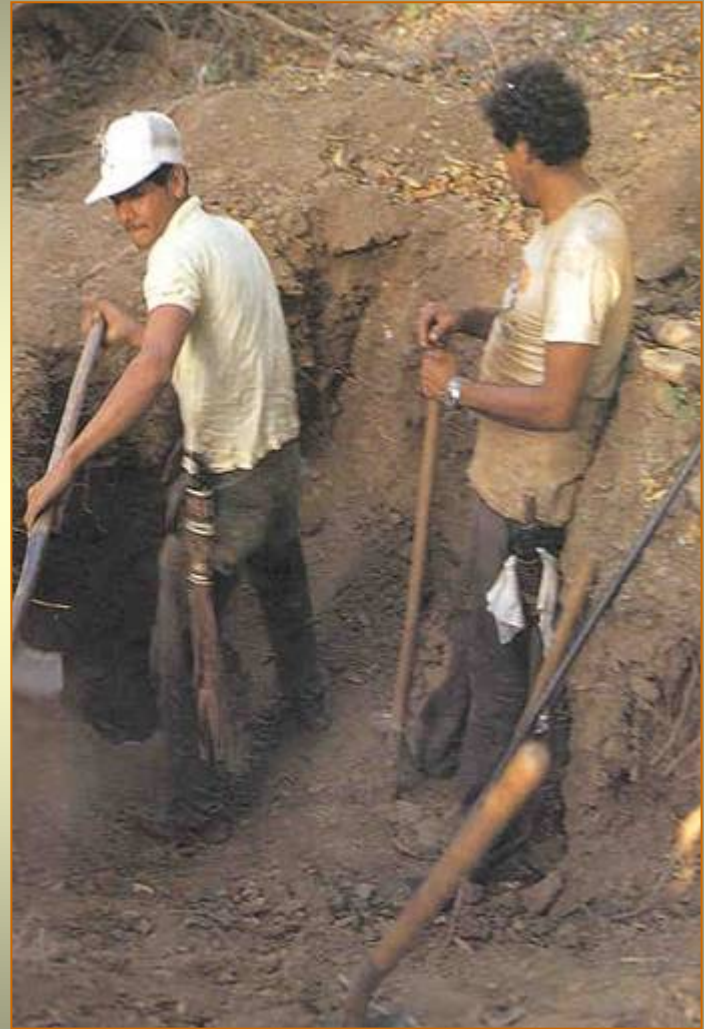
SETTLEMENT SYSTEM:

- nuclear family household
- temporary household
- ⊗ ceremonial center
- ⊞ main settlement nucleus
- road
- lagoon
- bridge
- tambo
- ↔ Kogi adaptation
- ↔ Tairona adaptation

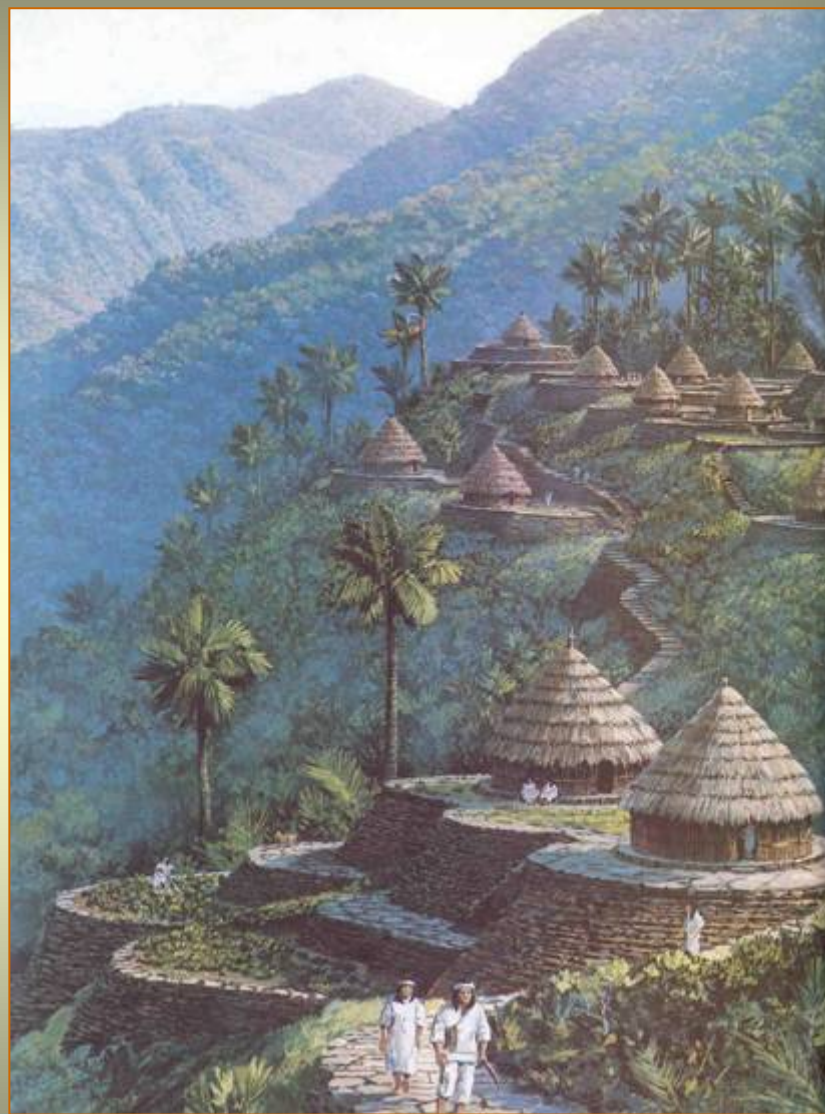


SUBSISTENCE VERTICALITY:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|------------------------------|
| cold elevations | { | potato |
| | | onion |
| | | maguey |
| temperate elevations | { | cane |
| | | banana |
| | | bean |
| hot elevations | { | banana, manioc, maize |
| | | fruit, coca / fish, capybara |
| | | monkeys, amadillos |

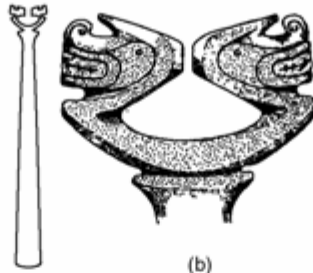




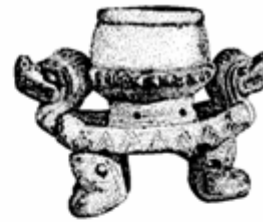




(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

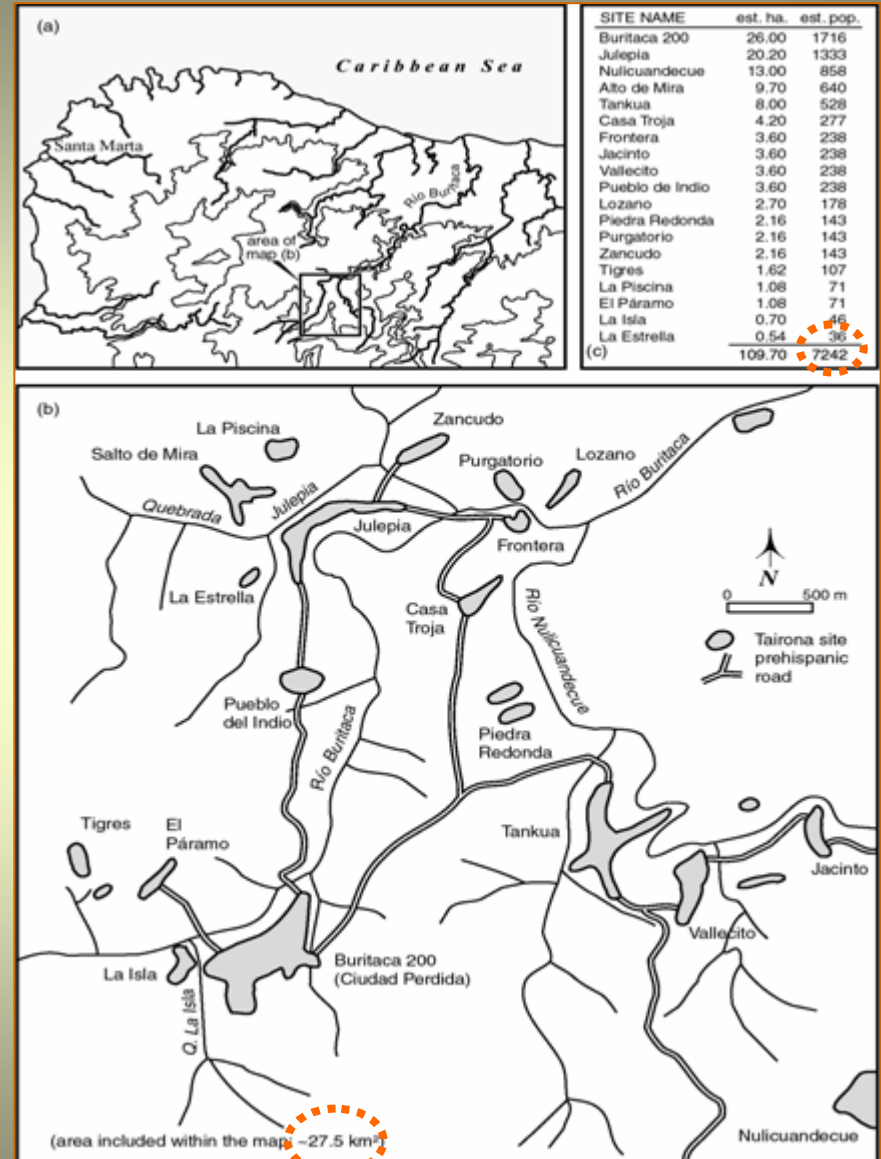
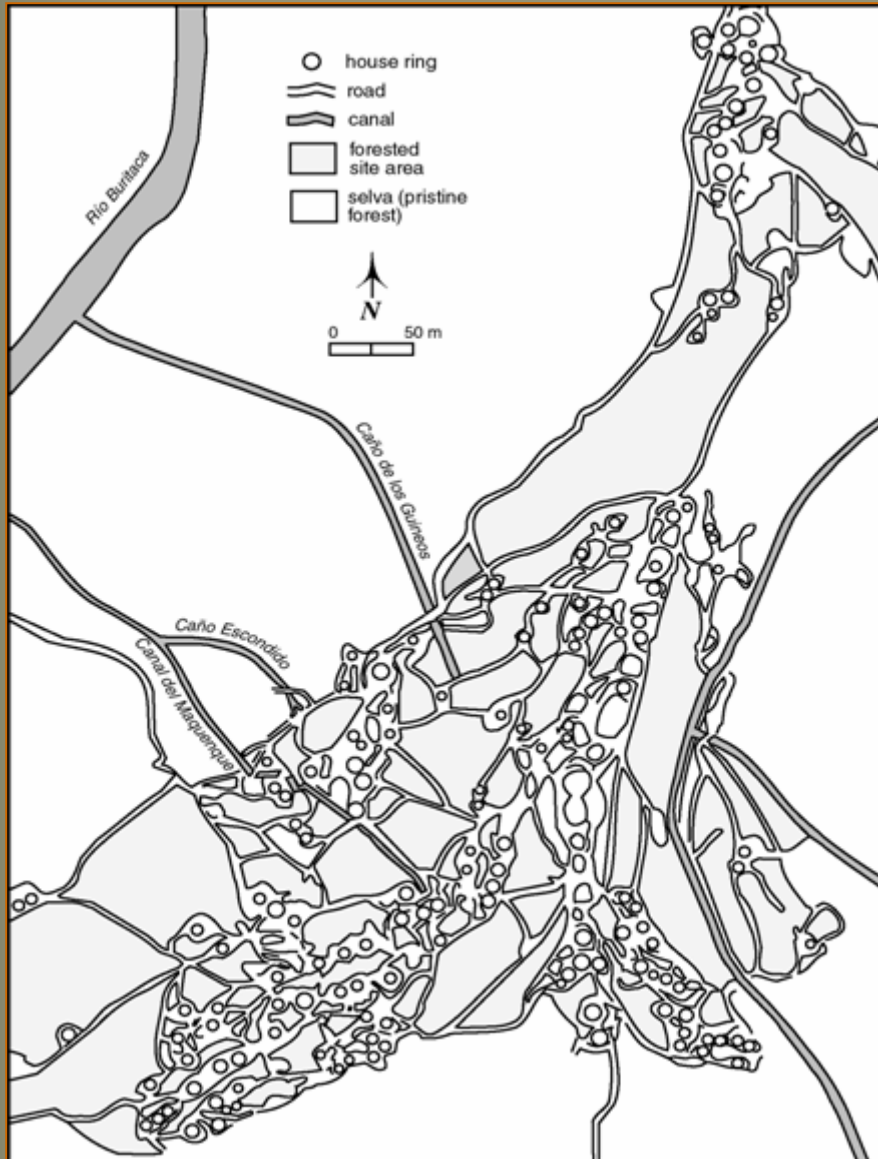


(e)



(f)

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 1. woman's side: | 2. man's side: | 3. pots with offerings |
| fireplace | stools | of stones according |
| grinding stone | axes | to the composition |
| cooking pots | whistles | of the family |
| water jars | fishhooks | |



$$(7242 \text{ p}/27.5 \text{ km}^2 = 263 \text{ p}/\text{km}^2)$$