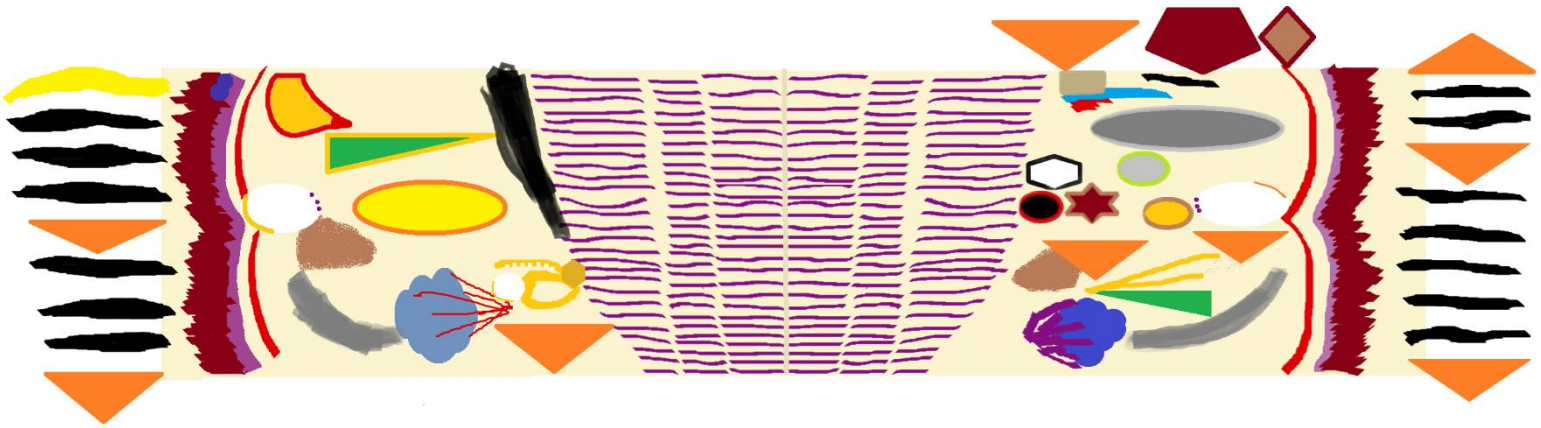
Changing perspectives, the narrative of an object: Provenance research on object TM-5074-2, Ashaninka Hood from the Rio Ene Valley, from the collection of the Wereldmuseum Amsterdam

Kockelkorn, Max



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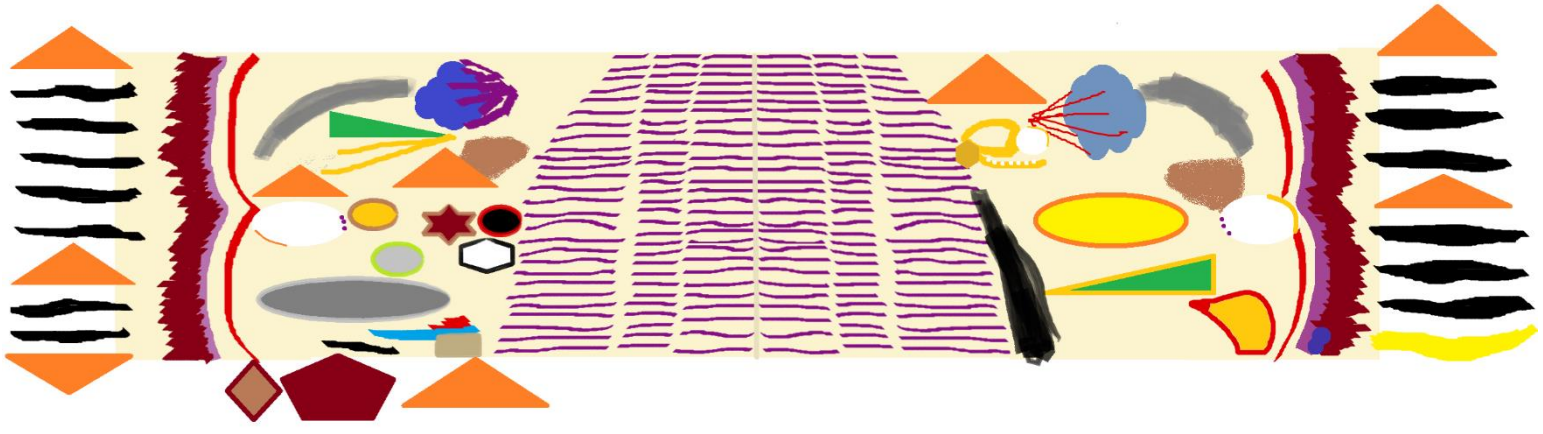

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Provenance research on object TM-5074-2, Ashaninka Hood from the Rio Ene Valley, from the collection of the Wereldmuseum Amsterdam

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(Cover picture: Max K. M. Kockelkorn)

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1. Introduction

Have you ever been on vacation, to a place that gave you an extraordinary feeling? Where you felt a connection to your surroundings? The gravel roads you rode your bike on and the routes you started to memorize, a large pine tree that provided shadow on a warm day, and a kind woman behind the reception desk that you chatted with every morning when you came to buy bread. You take pictures, collect some pinecones while you hide from the sun, and take home the rock that caused your bike to have a puncture. These objects represent memories, emotions, and maybe even the spiritual connection with the landscape you experienced. To you their meaning is evident, but show these pictures and objects to your friends without context, and they will just see the material representation of the object. Without a description, they will not understand the deeper connection you have with these objects, and over time, maybe even you will forget where that pointy rock came from. Objects are like letters, but to make them into words and sentences you need to put them in the right context. In the past, museums were often more interested in the object than in its context. Since most museums today have collections of objects that were assembled over a large timespan, there are often objects that come with poor or no documentation. That does not mean however that all the chances for learning more about these objects are lost. Research into the history of these objects can deliver new insights and contextualize what was lost. This does not only apply to objects collected hundreds of years ago. Objects that have come to the museum far more recently often lack proper documentation too.

Context is important for the sake of understanding. This is especially important for museums in order to become a space that benefits societies and contributes to questions and challenges posed by the modern world. The importance of teaching people about other cultures is to make them understand each other and where in their differences they are alike. Where ignorance stands at the base of indifference and conflict, conversance can instigate understanding and respect.

The above statement stands at the basis of this thesis. In this research, I will analyze an object from the collection of the Wereldmuseum in Amsterdam. This object, which is described by the museum as 'Shaman Hood', was bought by the museum on the 26th of November 1986 in Solothurn, Switzerland, from its previous keeper; Mrs. M. van Garrel. It was not possible to find van Garrel's full name. The documentation provided with the object also dates from the 1980s (Collectie Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1986). The information provided by these documents seems incomplete and does not suffice to understand the object in its totality. For example, the object, which at its base is a rectangular cotton cloth, is decorated with different floral and faunal species. These species have not been scientifically identified, nor is it known why these specific species have been used. According to the documentation, this object was collected in the Rio Ene Valley in the province of Junín, Peru (Collectie Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1986). The documentation does not specify when the object was taken from here. It does however specify that it was produced in a village along the Rio Ene, populated by approximately 100 Ashaninka people (Collectie Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1986).

Fig. 1.1 Left side hood. Floral and faunal attributes attached to the cotton cloth. Photograph: Max K.M. Kockelkorn

Fig. 1.2 Back of the hood. Floral and faunal attributes attached to the cotton cloth. Photograph: Max K.M. Kockelkorn

Fig. 1.3 Right side hood. Floral and faunal attributes attached to the cotton cloth. Photograph: Max K.M. Kockelkorn

I chose to examine this specific object because of its complex composition which seemed to represent both the natural and spiritual world. This is not yet a scientific conclusion, but rather a description of my strain of thought when I first saw the object. In my attempt to answer the research questions mentioned later on, I became sincerely interested in the Ashaninka. Their worldview, cosmology, livelihood, and the challenges they are faced with are both inspiring and touching. I feel humble and grateful for being allowed to perform this research.

To me, ethnographic objects are beautiful. Not necessarily for the way they look, but for what they represent. They are often personal objects that act as a representation of people and their culture. Reading the object correctly allows you to come closer to another culture and helps you to better understand it. As shown in the example above, to understand we need more than just the object. We need good documentation. Showing artefacts that are visually unappealing, which is often true for ethnographic objects, brings interesting challenges. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) writes that ethnographic artifacts are created by the ethnographer (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p. 17). This starts by taking the objects out of its original context, describing and defying it, and placing it in a new context. Important is to realize the difference between an artifact displayed *in situ*, and an artifact displayed *in context*. The first meaning the object in its original surroundings, or a situation closely related to the original situation. Not being given any additional meaning or relevance. In a museum situation this means the object is simply shown with a factual representation like the collection date and location (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p. 18). However, the fact that the object sits in a museum exhibition or collection already of influence on the context of the object. Museum's efforts to change towards a more in situ oriented way of presenting and keeping objects are increasing. In this process it is not only

important to change the exhibitions, but also to critically assess the collections and documentation. For the written documentation influences the perspective on the accompanied object, so the perspective of this documentation should first be analysed before applying it on the object and utilize it in the collection or to construct an exhibition (Wali and Collins, 2023, p. 336).

This research contributes to this exact issue by investigating and reproducing the in situ context of an ethnographic object from which much information has been lost. Simultaneously analysing museum practises and policies regarding provenance related issues. This study will be detailed in the analysis of the material elements represented on the object, but will also look at a wider context so that the findings of this research can be applied on many comparable situations regarding museum objects around the world. This research aims at rediscovering the significance of this object and the role it once played in its community. In order to achieve this goal, the following research questions have been proposed;

What is the narrative of this Ashaninka hood and how can the understanding of an object's history and context contribute to the decolonisation of a museum's collection?

What floral and faunal species are represented in the examined ornament, and what is the abundance in which they occur?

Where do the plants and animals that were used to produce the floral and faunal ornaments on the hood occur, and are these species native to the research area?

What relation is there between the societal function of the plants/ animals used as ornaments?

How can understanding this object help to get a better understanding of the Ashaninka?

2. Methodology

The idea for this research was conceived by Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano and myself. The data collection, documentation, identification and interpretation was executed primarily by me. During this process I received feedback from Dr. Fernandes Caromano, as well as from other specialists being; Prof. Dr. Tinde van Andel, Dr. Alexander Brust, Dr. Joanna Sosnowska, Prof. J. Koprowski, Guido Keijl, Walid Dani Kaki and Goffe Hoving. Their assistance was focused on species identification. The literature review was conducted only by me, with feedback of Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano and Dr. Martin Berger.

The hood analysed in this research represents a diverse range of data with relevance on different levels and from its complex composition multiple narratives can be deduced.

The base of the hood is a rectangular cotton cloth of 160cm long and 50cm wide with vertical bands that are woven of darker cotton. The cloth is folded and stitched up on one side, leaving an opening on the other side. The hood has been adorned with 16 bundles of birds (feathers, wings, a beak and sometimes the whole bird), 17 bundles of mammals, 22 mammal tails and 6 different plant species.

It would be logical to assume the species represented were collected in the proximity of the settlement, though we should not exclude the possibility that some ornaments were acquired through (long distance) trade (Schwartz, 2020).

Research area

The focus of the research area concentrates around the Rio Ene. A 180,6 km long river at an elevation of 400m above sea level in the province of Junín, on the eastern slopes of the Andes (Mendez Crus 2012, 24). Since the species used in the manufacture of the hood can be collected locally and collected from or traded with distant areas, there are no exact boundaries to the research area. Since the object has moved from its birthplace to different locations in Europe it is better to say that the research area is determined by the object. The research area developed as discoveries were made regarding the places that are of relevance for the object.

The first step in this research was the identification of the species represented on the hood. For each group (birds, mammals, plants) slightly different methods shall be applied that best suit each group.

Fig. 2.1 Map research area. Geographical representation of the research area. Reseachgate, https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Rios-Mantaro-and-Apurimac-After-the-two-join-the-resulting-stream-is-called-Rio-Ene_fig6_260335001

Documentation

The documentation provided on the object by the Wereldmuseum's website is concise and does not provide identifications regarding the species represented on the headdress. The information regarding the origin of the object is rather cryptic and does not provide a solid base to answer specific provenance related questions. To find out more about the documentation and so about the history of this object is therefore an important objective of this research. As a start, the collection department of the Wereldmuseum was contacted and, through the access to the internal database of the museum, it was possible to identify the collectors' name.

In addition, Alexander Brust, the curator of the Museum der Kulturen in Basel, Switzerland, was contacted since said museum has a more extensive collection of Ashaninka material culture and associate documents that can help to better understand the context of manufacture and collection of this kind of object.

Object direct analysis and identification

For this research two visits were made to the depot of the Wereldmuseum in Amsterdam whereby photographs and measurements were taken of the object and of each animal and plant species attached to it. All the photographs of the hood that have been used as illustrations in this paper have been positioned the same way as the different ornaments are positioned on the hood when it is worn. For this research only non-destructive methods of analysis and identification were applied, which do not require taking samples from the object. Therefore all the identifications were made through morphological description of the plants and animal parts present on the hood, comparing the observed structures with the specialized literature. When a possible match was found regarding (most of) the species that are represented in the headdress, the Naturalis collection was consulted and the pictures that have been taken during the direct analysis of the object were compared to selected botanical and faunal species in Naturalis' collection. These comparisons helped to establish a well-founded conclusion to the suggested species, and where possible the Ashaninka names for the identified species were added.

Birds

Most birds have distinct plumage patterns by which they are easily recognizable and one would think this contributes to a swift identification. In order to identify the birds represented on the headdress, a systematic approach was applied. First, all the feathers, wings, beaks, bundles and birds were measured and photographed. Then relevant literature about bird species in the Peruvian Amazonia, preferably with illustrations of birds, were sought in order to compare the book images to the photographs taken of the Ashaninka hood. In addition specialists in ornithology were consulted in order to help in the identification of the species. Finally to validate the final identifications, the Naturalis collection was consulted for comparative materials regarding the identified species.

Mammals

The mammals present in this object are represented by pieces of fur, skin, tails, nails, and bones. Also for this group relevant literature on the mammals of Peru and South-America was gathered. The literature was inspected to find animals with features that resemble those on the headdress. Some pieces are already recognisable as Armadillo bones and carapace, and Porcupine quills, but yet need to be determined to species level. When possible, specialists on the topic of mammal identification were contacted. The Naturalis collection was consulted for validation of the suggested identifications.

Plants

The plants present in the artefact are represented by seeds, nuts and endocarps. It is known that Ashaninka use these plant parts to make ornaments and often the seeds are heavily modified making it more difficult to identify the plant (Sosnowska, 2015). In addition to the ethnobotanical literature review of plants used by the Ashaninka people, the colour and morphometric characteristics of the distinct botanical specimens observed in the hood were analysed and compared with the Naturalis' carpological and economic botany collections.

Interpretation

Headdresses are frequently used in ritual contexts so literature was consulted on the use of headdresses among Ashaninka and neighboring communities (Biebuyck, 1984). After most of the birds, mammals and plants were identified, the habitat range of each species and their occurrence in the Rio Ene basin or maybe outside of this region was determined according to local and regional botanical and zoological surveys. With the help of literature the economic, social and spiritual values of these separate species and the possible significance of the combination of these species in the construction of the object were investigated. Through these methods this research aims at getting a better understanding of the worldview of the Ashaninka and the cosmic relations with their natural environment.

Provenance

How did the museum come to possess this object? This is a question that is very significant regarding the provenance research. This research aimed at getting more insight in the origin of this object through the documentation of the museum archives. This type of research asks for a transparency, accessibility and cooperation from the museum. This is not only important for our research but also for any other research that occupies itself with decolonizing practises. Therefore the museum's protocols, service and information facilities were examined in this research too. The museum database was accessed, and the provided information regarding the collector, year of collection, and producer group was gathered. In order to better understand this object in relation with the material production of the Ashaninka, the Museum der Kulturen Basel, which possesses a relevant Ashaninka collection and associated documentation, was also consulted.

Relevance

This research only addresses one object whilst the collections of the Tropenmuseum and of other museums in the Netherlands, and around Europe hold vast quantities of objects that are described as from Ashaninka culture. This object however displays many different crafts and creativity and the object can act as a small keyhole for us to peek through and see part of the world it came from. The plants and animals represented on this headdress were part of the natural world the Ashaninka interact with, where they give significance to and tell stories about. The identification of these species is a very important first step to find out their significance for the Ashaninka and come to understand a little bit more about how they interact with their natural environment.

3. About the Ashaninka, cosmology and worldviews

The Ashaninka are an indigenous group that live in modern-day Peru and in the Brazilian province of Acre and are speakers of the Arawak language. Estimations of population numbers vary from 50,000 to 100,000, of which a small part (between 2000 and 2500) of the population lives in Acre, on the border with Peru (Fortes, 2021, p. 7).

This object provides a look into the Ashaninka culture and it awakes questions and curiosity. Animals and plants of the rainforest hold a central place in Ashaninka cosmology and worldviews. The territory of the Ashaninka is located in a region with one of the highest biodiversity rates on the planet (Mee *et.al.* 1, 2002). Within their territory, four different types of forests can be identified (Rojas Zolezzi 185, 2002). These forests and the species within them are influenced by the Ashaninka, and they are in turn influenced by them. According to Weiss (2005), the Ashaninka of the Rio Ene Valley believe in living in the center of a flat earth wherethrough rivers flow. The main river is the Tamponi. The land on which the Ashaninka live is called Kamaoeni, and on the margins of this land, the good spirits dwell. Spirits not only dwell outside Kamaoeni but also in the mountains within this land. There are two significant locations in the peripheric area, where Shamans come to visit the good spirits as they gather here. One in the south, where the river begins is called Lniatoni, and one in the East where the sun rises and the river ends called Otsiiiriko. Beyond this land in the East lays the land called Otiriano, where the spirits dwell that produce thunder.

The Ashaninka believe that their world is part of a vertically arranged universe and that there are other levels above and below their world, where immortal spirits dwell. The spheres above their world are called Henoki (heaven), and between heaven and earth, an intermediate level is present where clouds form. Also under the land of the Ashaninka different spheres can be found. At the end of the river, there is a connection with the world called Ilarnado Kivinti, where good spirits reside. Under this level, the lowest level exists which is inhabited by demons and called Sharinkaueni. The Ashaninka believe that in their world good and bad spirits are present and consider themselves as good. Good spirits can only be seen in human form by a good Shaman. By others they are perceived as, for example, birds or river otters (Weiss, 2005, p. 42). When for example a bird is killed by the Ashaninka to be used as a sacred ornament, the spirit will return home for the body is only a material manifestation of the spirit (Weiss, 2005, p.42). There are other faunal species that are seen as bas spirits that harm people. Amongst these animals, also called 'ikaharantayete', are many insects, snakes, and some mammals like the Red Agouti. These animals are considered not suitable to serve as food (Rojas Zolezzi, 2002, p. 190). There are different dietary restrictions connected to different events. For example, during pregnancy, the couple is not allowed to eat certain foods so that no harm befalls the child or the parent (Weiss, 2005, p. 34). When a person dies and his spirit does not transfer to the land of the immortal spirits, he can appear in the human world in the shape of an animal. These animals are called 'peyari' and if this is suspected, the animal is not to be eaten (Rojas Zolezzi, 2002, p. 190). Different animals are believed to have been humans before but turned into animals on different occasions. The maniti jaguar for example is believed to have a spirit analogous to that of man as a transformed Shaman. This animal is seen as the enforcer of good manners in societies and in beings of culture (Rojas Zolezzi, 2002, p. 190).

The Ashaninka know a classification system that can be divided into three categories. The first category is closely related to the beliefs surrounding the origin of the cosmos, in which different taxa play a significant role. This category is closely linked to cosmologic beliefs.

A second category is not so much linked to cosmology but to the manner of locomotion by different species (Rojas Zolezzi, 2003, p. 187). The Ashaninka categorizes living beings between those who can move and those who are static. The static beings are animals and humans whilst under the static category we find plants. The moving category is further divided according to the way they transport themselves; on four legs, on their belly, jumping, jumping in trees, and transportation through water (Rojas Zolezzi, 2006, p. 256).

Lastly, a third category of classification focuses on the identification, hierarchy, and mutual relation between faunal species being categorized under mammals, birds, insects, and fish. The prototypical mammal or 'leader' of this category is the Tapier, which is also represented on the hood. Within each category, a subdivision is made in families of which one species is again the leader. The *Ara macao* is for example the leading species within his family (Rojas Zolezzi, 2002, p. 199-202).

Not only plants and animals are seen as living beings, but also rivers and mountains have personhood (Fortes, 2021, p. 26). According to the Ashaninka, there is a prototype for every group which is the most perfect form after which the other forms have been shaped. The most perfect form is the sun Oriatsiri more commonly referred to by the Ashaninka as 'Inti'. The Sun is the main God, and the father of the Sun is the Moon (Weiss, 2005, p. 42). According to the Ashaninka, it is important for humans to stay close to their community for if they don't and for example, get lost in the forest, they might transform into a non-human (Rojas Zolezzi, 2006, p. 266). Shamans are the only humans that have the ability to change form without losing their inner self, and when a person dies they will transform into another being according to their personal development in life. For example, ordinary humans who did not achieve high knowledge can return as predators, and people who disobeyed social rules come back as prey (Rojas Zolezzi, 2006, p. 274). This shows complex relationships and an important connection between culture and nature. Different animals and plants are connected to diverse narratives and beliefs and have different powers. The red squirrel Meiri for example, which is also represented on the hood, is the owner of fire (Rojas Zolezzi, 2006, p. 270). The different animals on the hood do not only represent the species that live in close proximity to the Ashaninka, they also represent the powers of these animals and the narratives they represent.

4. Museum documentation

It required some persistence to obtain the official documentation belonging to the object studied in this thesis. On the first attempt, I was read some of the information in the document by a member of the museum staff. He was not able to show or send the document to me. Additionally, three requests to receive a copy of the document were sent to the collection manager of the Wereldmuseum Amsterdam, but without ever receiving an answer. Eventually, it was because of a helpful librarian that I could for the first time see the documentation. He was not allowed to send it, so pictures were taken off the screen of his laptop. This all felt a bit shady and I could not help but ask myself why it was so complicated to see these documents for scientific purposes. Whilst diving into the documentation provided by the Wereldmuseum in Amsterdam regarding the object researched in this thesis, it became clear that the four-page document devoted to this object was missing some important information. Also, some of the information that was provided by the document seemed incorrect or false. The documentation was as follows:

Verwerving: 26-11-1986, Köningshofweg 2, Solothurn, Zwitserland. Verkocht door Mevr. M. van Garrel (Collectie Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1986).

In this information about the acquisition of the object, a date and address are provided, along with the name of the person who sold the object to the museum. It is not said who this person was and how she came to possess this object. Neither is it known who the representatives of the museum were that bought it and what price was agreed upon.

Herkomst: Zuid-Amerika, Peru (Oost), Rio Ene-gebied, Campa-Indianen (Collectie Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1986).

Here the object's origin is described. No exact location is given, nor is the date on which the object left its place of origin. The Ashaninka are described here as Campa-Indians, which is a denigrating term. The name in Spanish is derived from the Inca name in the Quechua language for the Ahsaninka, which translates to dirty or disheveled (Williams, 2020, p. 104).

Dubbelgevouwen bruin katoenen lap met donkerbruin streepmotief. Één lange zijde is dichtgenaaid zodat er een kap is ontstaan. Deze is opgesiert aan de aan beide zijden met allerlij voorwerpen, van boven naar beneden: Drie rijen onder elkaar van sliertjes zwarte zaadjes aan wit katoengaren geregen. Bij de onderste rijen worden de sliertjes – naar de buitenranden van de kap toe – steeds korter. De onderkant van de kap bestaat uit gevlochten strengetjes van bruin katoen, zwarte apestaartjes(?), Stukjes bruin zwart langharig bont, twee gevlochten beige katoenen koordjes met daaraan daaraan tientallen sliertjes van telkens twee lichtbruine belvormige doppen met daarboven drie kleine zwarte, cilindervormige zaadjes, een slinger rode ovale zaadjes, een bruin-grijs stukje hoef. Tussen de zwarte sliertjes en de rode slinger zijn verschillende kleine voorwerpen genaaid. Toefjes veren, drie bovenkaakjes met een scherp, okerkleurig tandje(?), plukjes bruin-zwart apehaar, grijs-beige bont, een tros belvormige bruine notendoppen bevestigd aan strengetjes blauwe kraaltjes, een onderkaakje van een of ander dier, stukjes grijs-wit bot aan elkaar geregen, een geel-bruin stukje bont en drie stukjes, wit-grijs, geschubde huid. Aan de andere zijde ook drie bovenkaakjes met tandje(?) zoals

bovengenoemd, toefjes veren, apehaar(?), twee geschubde staartjes, stukjes huid van een stekelvarken, een gedeelte van een snavel en een bundeltje van telkens een komvormig bruin nootje met zwarte stippen bevestigd aan een sliertje van zwarte zaadjes.

Materiaal: Rode, zwarte en bruine zaadjes, en doppen van verschillende soorten vruchten, stukjes apehaar, veertjes van verschillende soorten vogels, blauwe kraaltjes, apestaartjes (?), stukjes bot, stukjes pantser van een gordeldier, onderkaakjes van vogels (?), vogeltoestand. Het katoen is enigzins gesleten (Collectie Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1986).

This section is devoted to the description of the hood and the different features presented on it. No adequate identification is given for the floral and faunal species on the hood. The writers of this document simply described what they saw and recognized. In this process, they misinterpreted some of the features. For example, they mention three maxillas with an ochre-colored tooth. These are however three mandibles. They also interpreted the red-brown fur as monkey hair whilst this belongs to a squirrel. And they mistakenly refer to the endocarps as nuts. From this documentation, it seems that no scientific methodology was applied and no other effort whatsoever was made to correctly identify the species represented on this object.

Associatie: Shamanenkap. Afkomstig uit een dorpsgemeenschap van ca. 100 Campa-indianen aan de Rio Ene in Oost-Peru. In dit gebied woont ongeveer éénderde van alle Campa-indianen. Zij zijn een Arawaks prekende indianengroep in de Peruviaanse montaña (III, pp. 258 en I). De kap is niet oud en is door de shamaan gebruikt voor verschillende rituelen, die het hele dorp betreffen en waaraan dan ook iedereen – mannen, vrouwen en kinderen – deelneemt: feesten ter ere van Moeder Aarde of Vader Maan, het verdrijven van boze geesten of ziektes, die volgens de Campa-indianen door boze geesten worden veroorzaakt. Dergelijke seremonielen gaan de hele nacht door, van zonsondergang tot zonsopgang: er wordt tabaksrook geblazen, er wordt gebruik gemaakt van wichelroedes, men maakt muziek en er wordt gezongen en er worden lange, in de Campa-taal gemompelde redevoeringen gehouden, waarvan geen uitleg wordt gegeven aan buitenstaanders; dit alles onder leiding van de dorpsshamaan (I).
Tessmann (II,pp. 93) maakte melding van goede (seripiári) en boze tovenaars (matsínti) bij de Campa-indianen. Alleen mannen kunnen goede tovenaars zijn; boze tovenaars kunnen echter van beiderlei kunne zijn. De slachtoffers van laatstgenoemde zijn altijd persoonlijke vijanden die zij met ziekte of soms zelfs de dood kunnen treffen. Over speciale kledij of een dergelijk soort kap, die door hen of door goede tovenaars wordt gedragen – tenminste vóór 1930 – vermeldt hij echter niets. Vergelijk echter III, plate 207, pp. 259, waar een dergelijk soort kap (tchovinentsi) staat afgebeeld, zij het in veel eenvoudiger uitvoering en in combinatie met een kroon van gevlochten riet of bamboe reepjes. Slechts weinig mannen – door wie alleen zo'n kap wordt gedragen – zijn tevens in het bezit van een dergelijke kroon (III, pp. 258).
Baer (IV, pp. 361) vermeldt, dat de shamanen bij de uitoefening van hun functie vaak geheel naakt zijn om de communicatie met de geesten te vergemakkelijken (Collectie Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1986).

The above text makes use of four different sources, one (I) being the person who sold the hood to the museum, M. van Garrel. It was not possible to find out on what sources her information was based, but the information provided by M. van Garrel about the ceremony is in line with what more recent literature says about the Ashaninka ceremonies (Lenaerts, 2006). Unfortunately, biographic research did not reveal any other information on this person or her relation to the Ashaninka. It seems that she interpreted the events that were occurring in front of her using her own frame of reference. The information she provides suggests that she has been in the village along the Rio Ene at the time of such a ceremony. Whether the hood she sold to the museum was indeed used during these ceremonies cannot be proved by this document alone. The other three sources mentioned in the documentation Baer (1969), Biebuyck & van de Abbeele (1984), and Tessmann (1930) only provide general descriptions of Ashaninka material culture, headdresses, and cultural aspects of different indigenous groups around the world. These texts do not hold any specific information about the object studied here, or about the context in which it has been produced. The last sentence of this section in the document is derived from an article by Baer (1969) and mentions that the Shaman was often naked during ceremonies to ease communication between them and the spirits (Baer, 1969). However, it was not possible to find any other source to confirm this statement. Literature does say that the Shaman wears a Kushma (Pinhanta, 2019). Baer might have been correct in his observation, but then he most probably did not observe the Ashaninka. This means the information that is shown on the museum's website is incorrect.

Vervaardiging: De doek is door vrouwen geweven (III, pp. 258); alle onder rubriek 4 vermelde voorwerpen zijn er later met de hand opgenaaid (Collectie Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 1986).

This short text about the manufacturing process of the hood mentions that the cotton base of the hood was manufactured by women. This information was derived from (Biebuyck & van de Abbeele, 1984). The collectors concluded that the objects now attached to the hood were later added by hand, which is an obvious and correct observation.

As becomes clear from this section, the documentation provided by the museum regarding this object is missing some important elements that are necessary to understand this object, the context in which it was made, and the context in which it came to Europe. The document does contain general information related to the object, but most of this information is so broad or even out of context, that it becomes in fact irrelevant. Important questions that remain unanswered are; what is the exact location and date on which this object was produced? Under what conditions did the object come to Europe and what was the role of M. van Garrel in this exchange? How has the object been assembled, why did the manufacturer choose this design, and what species are represented on the hood? And lastly, do the species that are selected to be attached to this object serve a specific purpose or hold a specific meaning?

Besides this object, the librarian who provided me with the documentation on the hood explained that there were three more objects sold by M. van Garrel to the museum at the same time as the hood. Two of these objects, like the hood, belong to the Ashaninka culture, and one object belongs to the Shipibo culture. These objects might provide valuable insights into the questions posted in the above section.

Therefore this section will be devoted to the documentation of objects; TM-5074-1, TM-5073-13, and TM-5074-3.

TM-5074-1

This object is a brown, rectangular, cotton cloth with dark brown horizontal bands running the length of the object. The object is decorated with white pendles which are placed at one side of the object, on the longitudinal edge. This object measures 97cm by 21,5cm and the length of the pendles is not given. They will be approximately 5cm in length and 1cm in width. Though a different color, the fabric of this cloth shares many similarities with the cotton base layer of the hood. It is however not folded in half and stitched up on one side, and neither is it so richly decorated. The description on the museum website is as follows:

Herkomst : Midden- en Zuid-Amerika / Zuid-Amerika / Peru. Voor 1986. Circa 97 x 21,5cm (38 3/16 x 8 7/16in.)
Materiaal : been (dierlijk. Bewerking van dierlijke en menselijke materialen. Katoen. Weefprocedés en -technieken (textiel).
Deelcollectie en trefwoorden : Textiel, vervoer door mensen, magische bescherming en afweer, babydragers, draagdoeken.
Verwerving : Aankoop, 1986-11-26 (Wereldmuseum, 2024).

This object was bought on the same day as the hood. This description states that the object is a sling used to carry babies, and the spindles which are made of animal bone functioned as a defence against evil spirits.

TM-5073-13

For this object, no pictures or measurements are available, just a description which is as follows;

Herkomst : Midden- en Zuid-Amerika / Zuid-Amerika / Peru. Voor 1986
Materiaal : katoen, textielprocedés en -technieken.
Deelcollectie en trefwoorden: Textiel, vervoer door mensen, draagkoorden, babydragers
Functie en categorie : vestiging, infrastructuur en vervoer / vervoeren en navigeren / vervoer en vervoeren / vervoer naar krachtbron / vervoer door mensen
Schenking, 1986-11-07 (Wereldmuseum, 2024).

From the description, it seems that this object is also a sling made of textile (presumably cotton), used to carry babies. The web page does not mention any additional artifacts that could be attached to the object, and neither does it mention the exact location of production. It does mention that this object was donated 19 days before the other objects mentioned above were bought.

TM-5074-3

This object is a multicolor rectangular cloth with three linear bands running proportionately in the length of the cloth. Between these three, multicolored bands, geometric patterns are woven into or painted onto the fabric in brown and ochre. The main color of this object is beige but there are details of green, brown, yellow, ochre, orange, red, and blue. The measurements are 73cm by 183cm. Besides

the difference in appearance, this cloth also differs from the Ashaninka object in dimensions. Whereas for the Ashaninka cloth, the length is 4,5 times the width, for this cloth that is 2,5 times. The documentation provided by the museum's website is as follows:

Cultuur : Shipibo
Herkomst : Midden- en Zuid-Amerika / Zuid-Amerika / Peru. Voor 1986
Ca. 73 x 183 cm (28 3/4 x 72 1/16 in.)
Er zijn twee typen versiering in de Shipibo cultuur: fijne, gebogen en rechte lijnen, of dikke blokpatronen. Elke pot is uniek doordat de range aan motieven onbegrensd is. De motieven die ook gebruikt worden op het lichaam, verbeelden rivieren, sterrenconstellaties, plattegronden, visioenen en grote boa's (slangen). Ook wordt gesteld dat de patronen afgeleid zijn van het gezang van sjamanen.
Inventarisnummer : TM-5074-3
Materiaal : beschilderen (versieren), katoen, kleurmiddel, weefprocedés en -technieken (textiel)
Tentoonstellingen : Amazonia, KIT Tropenmuseum Amsterdam, 1996-1997.
Functie en categorie : - kleding en uiterlijke verschijning / kleden en versieren van het lichaam / kleden en versieren naar lichaamsdeel / kleden en versieren van het bovenlichaam / kleden en versieren van schouders, romp en armen
- kleding en uiterlijke verschijning / kleden en versieren van het lichaam / doeken (kleding of kledingaccessoire)
Deelcollectie en trefwoorden: Textiel, kleden en versieren van schouders, romp en armen, doeken (kleding of kledingaccessoire), poncho's, doeken (kleding)
Overige titels : Cotton shawl, or part of a poncho (Wereldmuseum, 2024).

The documentation mentions this object belongs to the Shipibo culture. Most of the Shipibo people live in the Ucayali River valley in the central-eastern part of Peru. Their language is part of the Panoan family and is spoken by about 30,000 people (Pilar et.al., 281, 2001). Shipibo people use a multimodal design of geometric and linear shapes known as Kené (Smith and Macheski, 2023, p. 333). Kené designs are applied to bodies and objects by women, and the designs and production are taught from mother to daughter. The design interacts with the body and objects as an extra skin embellishing the entity whilst also connecting with movement. These designs do not have a tangible origin, but the woman sees these designs in their dreams and imagination. No drafts or sketches are made, and the ability to envision these designs is ritually acquired with help from the plant; Cyperus sp. (Piripiri plant). Some drops of this plant's juice are applied to the navel. The eyes are treated with steam that arises from boiling Piripiri. Also, Shamans have visions of Kené. They don't materialize the designs, but use them to cure. The shaman's song is also connected to the kené when as he sings the singing influences the design, and vice versa (Belaunde et al., 2016, p. 83).

Shipibo-Conibo mythology explains the art of Kené as follows; at first woman did not know how to make the patterns, but a boy saw a beautiful young lady across the river. To get to her, he crossed the river and ran after her. To protect his feet from the burning sand on the riverbank he built a bridge from tree trunks, but when he caught up with the girl, she had died. He carried her back to the village where people from the Shipibo-Conibo, then the Conibo, Huari Pano – and lastly the Piro arrived and all looked at her with fascination. The woman was dressed in various skirts with different patterns. They were

respectfully taken by each group, and this is how they learned the patterns (Belaunde et al., 2016, p. 83).

When interpreting these patterns a common misconception is that these patterns are a strict representation of a certain thing. This is also what happened in the documentation by the museum regarding the above-mentioned object stating that the patterns represent rivers, constellations, maps, visions, and large snakes. Some designs are indeed named after a bird, star, or body part, however, this does not mean the design is intended to be a strict representation of the said image. The designs are personal and besides the physical aspects they represent, they also establish a relationship between the design, someone's memories, and those of their kin and ancestors (Belaunde et al., 2016, p. 85).

The information on the museum's website mentions that the patterns are sometimes derived from the singing of a Shaman, as we also established here. It does not mention however whether this is the case for this object as well. Cotton is mentioned as the only plant with a material representation in this object. No plants or animals are directly displayed here, however multiple floral and faunal species, and perhaps even minerals were likely to be used to produce the different pigments found on this object. According to the website, the cloth represents a piece of clothing, it does not specify what particular piece of clothing it is.

This object was bought by the museum on the 26th of November 1986, on the same day as objects TM-5074-1 and TM-5074-2 (the hood) were bought.

The original documentation belonging to the hood is more complete than the information on the museum's website. It mentions for example who sold the object to the museum and refers to different sources of information. For the other three objects mentioned above it was not possible to see the original documentation. It is possible that the information extracted from the museum's website is based on the original documentation and, like with the hood, has not been copied sufficiently meaning important information is missing here. We know these objects came from the same source because of the helpful librarian mentioned earlier. Because of this, we know that she was in possession of more than one indigenous object. But even with this information, we can't say how she came to possess them.

5. Comparing other objects

We have established that the hood studied in this thesis was produced in a village inhabited by around 100 Ashaninka people along the Rio Ene and that it was made at least before 1986. Hoods are an important part of Ashaninka material culture and therefore this hood is not the only one ever produced. To better understand this object, looking at similar hoods might shine a light on the situation at hand and tell us more about why this object is designed a certain way. Comparing with objects from which the context has been better documented will help to understand the context of this hood.

Multiple museums have in their collections hoods belonging to the Ashaninka culture. For this comparison, we investigated the collections of a selection of museums that have objects representing the most common form of hoods as we know from literature studies. We also looked at items that were similar to the hood this thesis is centered around. The collections we looked at were those of the following museums; the Museum of the American Indian, the Houston Museum of Natural Science, and the Wereldmuseum. These museums have been selected for different reasons. The Museum of the American Indian has a large collection of Ashaninka material culture, including hoods. This museum cooperates with indigenous groups and states to communicate with them on the written and visual presentation of the museum (National Museum of the American Indian, 2024). Besides sufficient comparative materials, I hoped to find more in-depth documentation provided for the objects. The Houston Museum of Natural Science was selected because in their collection they have a hood that displays similar features to the one researched in this thesis. And lastly, the Wereldmuseum was selected because perhaps in their collection other objects or hoods could be found which had been bought from the same collector. Perhaps these objects are accompanied by more detailed documentation, which could help answer provenance-related questions regarding the hood discussed in this thesis.

The first museum (Museum of the American Indian) has in its collection 12 objects labeled as Ashaninka hoods and 1 object labeled as Ashaninka Head Scarf/ Bandana. The hoods come from different sources and have been collected between 1919 and 1938. The head Scarf was donated to the museum by Nicole H. Maxwell in 1970. The hoods are represented by a rectangular cotton cloth with brown and sometimes red lines woven into the fabric. They are modestly decorated with green, yellow, red, and black feathers at the bottom ends of the rectangular cloth. One hood collected by Egbert P. Lott and bought by the museum in 1928 is additionally decorated with dried gourds and a string whereupon seeds are laced. The seeds appear to be Canna sp. but this identification is not certain since the photograph on the museum's website does not allow us to see the seeds in enough detail. Another hood, collected in 1924 by Alpheus Hyatt Verrill, is decorated with not just feathers, but with bird's wings (NMAI, 2024).

The Head Scarf is slightly different in appearance. Although the applied colors and the pattern by which the feathers are attached are similar to the hoods, this object is decorated with geometric forms that are painted onto the cotton base of the cloth. The Wereldmuseum has in total 22 objects belonging to the Ashaninka culture in their collection. There is only one hood among these objects, which is the hood around which this thesis is focused. There is however another object that is worn in combination with a hood. This object is a small round crown made of bamboo and decorated with feathers. The cotton

cloth is folded over the head so that it forms a point (fig….). On top of this, the crown is placed which represents the sun. The feathers represent the rays of the sun (Pinhanta, 2019).

Fig. 5.1 Ashaninka man with hood. In this picture we see on the left an Ashaninka man wearing a hood, with on top a feathered crown. HMAI, https://americanindian.si.edu/collections-search/edan-record/ead_collection%3Asova-nmai-ac-141

In the Houston Museum of Natural Science, an Ashaninka hood is exhibited of which the design reminds strongly of the hood discussed in this thesis (Houston Museum of Natural Science, 2024). Unfortunately, only one picture of this object is shown (fig ..), but it is possible to see that different birds, mammals, and plant species have been attached to this object. The bottom part is adorned with seeds/ endocarps and feathers and the picture only shows the left-hand side of the object. Next to it in the same showcase, a small crown as discussed above is shown. It is not clear whether this crown belongs to the hood and neither any information on the origin of this object is provided. The object is part of an exhibition called '5 of the most magical objects in our collection' and is accompanied by a small article. This article states that the species attached to the hood contain the spirits of these animals. It also states that these species are thought to increase the Shaman's powers whilst wearing them (Wells, 2017). The identification of the species is not given and neither is their cosmologic explanation. The Houston Museum of Natural Science was contacted with a request to share more information about the context of this object, however, this question remains unanswered.

We have established in this section that the design of the hood researched in this thesis is uncommon, and we have seen what type of hood is commonly used and produced by the Ashaninka. We have not yet answered the question of why this hood is designed this way. At the beginning of this section, we hoped to find comparable material that had better documentation than the hood. Regrettably, documentation of these objects is poor and often does not explain the reasons behind certain choices regarding the designs made by the Ashaninka.

Fig. 5.2 Ashaninka hood HMAI. HMAI, https://blog.hmns.org/2017/06/5-of-the-most-magical-objects-in-the-museum

6. The role of the museum

Museums, where objects from various cultures are carefully arranged and displayed, serve as repositories for artifacts from all over the world (Hopkins, 2021). These objects have been actors in gatherings, feasts, exchanges, and rituals. As silent witnesses, they were naturally integrated into their societies, observing and influencing life around them. Some of these items held significant roles, actively participating in community life and bearing great importance to the cultures they originated from.

Whether simple or complex, all these objects were crafted by people to meet their cultural and social needs. They reflect human worldviews and daily experiences. But how much did these objects influence the societies they were part of? Their visual beauty is a source of creativity and inspiration, and their sounds and smells are a representation of cosmology.

However, when these cultural objects are placed in museums, their roles and values are transformed. In this new setting, they shift from being functional parts of their original contexts to curated pieces, where their significance is redefined and interpreted through the lens of the museum's narrative. It is important to keep in mind that most objects that are now found at the museum were not meant to be seen there (Vogel, 1991, p. 191).

Museums are not neutral spaces in an inequitable world built on complex networks. They are part of this network. The choices made by museums on how to treat and exhibit their material culture collections influence the relationship between institutions and visitors, Indigenous groups, and even between nations. The way a museum exhibits its collections determines whether the narrative that is told is that of the collector or that of the cultural group an object belonged to (Hopkins, 2021, p. 39). Today it is hard to think of a world without museums, yet the existence of these institutes is not self-evident. The museum as we know it has its roots in the 18th century, when the first museums emerged as places of study and of gathering curiosities from around the world (Hopkins, 2021, p. 39). People in the Western world became increasingly interested in systematically categorizing the natural world, as Pliny's texts on 'Naturalis Historia' were rediscovered (Darab, 2014, p. 206). In the course of the 19th century, the museum became a more firmly established institute, embodied by a space (building) and purpose. Said purpose is to serve as a scientific place, and to inform the public in a systematic way about the world and by doing so influence people's perception of other cultures and their own (Bennet, 1995, p. 1).

Today a museum is often still a place to learn about and to express culture. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) definition of what a museum should be can be read on their website and states that " *A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible, and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.*" (ICOM, 2024). But how often still is a museum a decadent space designed to impress, exhibiting objects that are appealing to the eye, there not because of social responsibility or because of the urge to teach visitors and researchers something

about de diversity of the world's cultures and to show the connection between humans and their environment. Why are museums often monumental palaces where you have to whisper as you walk past ancient statues? Isn't all this grandeur a way to justify the relevance and the existence of a type of institute that is built on old values, and should be reinvented in order to actually become relevant again?

A museum is a sensible environment for it is the gathering place of these objects representing people around the world today, and in the past (Schorsh, 2020). A growing number of museums have started to work towards decolonization of their institutes (Brulon Soares, 2021). All objects have a story attached to them. Are these stories actually yours to tell and the objects yours to possess? The museum once was seen as a neutral space for science and education in service of the greater societal good, a Western concept born from ideas established in a period where colonial rule and oppression of the indigenous communities by the Europeans was common. During the period of colonization, a vast amount of culturally significant objects were stolen, taken, or bought from indigenous communities (Hodge, 2018, p. 142). Collectors were often not sincerely interested in the local communities but had their own objectives, which often related to making a name for themselves by bringing back objects with cultural and economic value. Considering these past misapprehensions it is even more important for museums today to know their collections so as to tell the correct and complete story about each object and apply this knowledge as a tool to decolonize the collections and if necessary alter the narrative of the exhibitions.

This essay will further analyze the principle of linearity in the museum world. Linearity in this context is about passing down information via a linear route in time (assuming that time is linear for the sake of understanding this principle). For example, a certain concept (a museum) arises as a representation of the needs, values, and opportunities at a given time. The chance of the establishment of such a concept is dependent on many actors and is chaotic in essence (Gerding & Ingemark, 1997). This new concept including all the values it entails is passed down to the next generation, and so on. If the information does not change the concept will not change and if the information is supplemented with new information but viewed and thought about through the initial values, the concept will not change but only become more established within a theoretical framework. Museums have been around for a few hundred years, which means the understanding of what a museum is and does has been deeply rooted in our Western society. Most of these values have been passed down to us as almost unquestionable truths, but these values have come from past times and maybe it is time we ask ourselves whether these are still correct. In an attempt to look into linearity in the museum context, this essay will take as its subject for researching the issue Dutch Natural History Museum, Naturalis. This museum houses the largest collection of objects of Natural history and cultural significance in the country and has been collected roughly during the last 200 years. In August 2019 the completely rebuilt museum opened its doors to the public, but how new is their approach to its role as a museum, and does it break loose from the traditional consensus?

An object is put in context when the exhibit is interpretative, and texts as well as visual elements or other objects are added to the exhibition. A challenge here is to remain as objective as possible, which

is often difficult because the researcher is limited by the information that is provided by the museum or collector, and by his own perspective (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p. 19).

7. Botanical results

In this section, the identification of the plant species represented in the hood will be given. Despite the efforts it has not been possible to identify all the plant species since there is little literature describing the species used by Ashaninka to make ornaments. Also, the seeds, nuts, and endocarps have been modified which complicates the identification. Nonetheless, pictures of each species and their habitat shall be included in the appendix.

Astrocaryum sp. ***Tiroti***

Of this palm genus of which there are 44 species endemic to South America, 14 species occur in Peru (Palmpedia, 2023). These palms grow fleshy fruits on a bunch and the fruits contain a woody seed that is almost the size of the fruit. The seeds are contained by the endocarp which has a light brown surface and dark brown section. The endocarp is the part represented on the hood. Many species of *Astrocaryum* are used by humans for different purposes however there are only a few species with greater economic value (Kahn, 2008, p. 29). For example, *Astrocaryum perangustatum* is used by Ashaninka for various purposes. This plant provides fruits that can be eaten, it's fibers are used to make mats, fans, and baskets, the wood is used for house posts and the seeds can be used to make ornaments (Sosnowska et al., 2015, p. 456). Trees of the genus Astrocaryum occur in almost all ecological zones in the Amazon basin, from wetland forests and fluvial terraces on clay soil to more arid savannas. Most species do not occur above 1000m elevation, except *Astrocaryum faranae* which thrives from Amazonian lowlands in Acre, Brazil to the eastern cordillera of central Peru until 1650m (Kahn, 2008, p. 30). Because of the modifications that have been made to the seeds represented on the hood, it is difficult to identify them at the species level. However, Kahn (2008) gives specifications per species that occur in Peru with information on their distribution. Taking this into consideration and assuming that to collect this seed the Ashaninka did not travel far from the Rio Ene Valley, the species identification can be narrowed down to four suggestions being; *Astrocaryum chambira, A. faranae, A. jauari, and A. perangustatum* (Kahn, 2008). The carpological collection of Naturalis does not provide the reference material needed to identify the endocarp represented in the hood, and the literature does not provide useful visual content to come to a conclusion about species level. Perhaps further research on the endocarp and consulting collections of other institutes might benefit the future identification of this specimen. The endocarps used to adorn this hood have been modified. The top and bottom have been cut off, revealing the dark brown section. Each endocarp has been decorated with three dots created by scraping or cutting off a controlled section of the light brown exterior. The seeds are all attached to the the end of a cotton string, which also contains seeds of *Cana sp.* laced upon it. This assemblage is used 27 times and makes up a bundle that is attached to the left front side of the hood. The bundle reminds of ear ornaments (see picture) only with a greater number of ornaments.

Fig. 7.1 *Astrocaryum sp.* **Tiroti.** Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Adenanthera pavonina

This deciduous tree species is native to the tropical rainforests of southeast Asia and has been introduced in the Afrotropical and Neotropical regions where it is often seen to be used for a variety of applications. The young leaves are edible, as are the seeds when cooked (Maiden, 1889). These trees can grow to a height of 18-25m and it is fast growing. When in bloom this tree displays small yellow flowers that grow from a long stem that attaches to the branches. The assembly looks like an animal's tail. Each flower has five petals and is fragrant. The wood of this tree is red and very hard. Therefore it is very durable and often used as a building material by indigenous communities (Mujahid et al., 2016, p. 588). This tree species is also a source of fodder, green manure, and medicine. It has been reported to be used for several medicinal purposes among which are anti-inflammatory and analgesic activities and antifungal properties. These effects can be explained by the presence of glycosides, saponins, flavonoids, and steroids in this tree (Mujahid et al., 2016, p. 586). The tree produces brightly red colored seeds, that grow in bean-shaped seedpods and besides its medicinal purposes, this tree is also used as a food source. The leaves and seeds are edible when heated. The preparation of the seeds and leaves can differ. The leaves are often cooked and the seeds can be cooked but also roasted and eaten with rice. Another important application of these seeds is the production of ornaments in indigenous dressing. For cultivation purposes, this tree is often planted in home gardens and agroforestry systems in close proximity to the settlements. However, it also thrives in uncultivated forests of the tropical and sub-tropical climate zones where it sometimes becomes invasive (Rojas-Sandoval & Acevedo-Rodríguez, 2013). Because of its bright red seeds, this species is referred to in English as the Red Lucky Seed. Also in other languages, the seeds are often a source for the common name giving and are referred to as beads. This highlights the practical application of these bright red seeds. The significance of *A. Pavonine* for the Ashaninka is a subject that has not yet been published and to learn more about this it would be recommended to consult people from this cultural group.

From the many supposed applications of this plant, one is used for certain by the Ashaninka who made the object studied here. The seeds are used as beads and have been perforated either through the longitudinal axle or through the vertical axle (see picture) and woven on a cotton string which makes up a pendant of 88 beads that run along the bottom of the hood.

Fig. 7.2 *Adenanthera pavonine*. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Cascabela thevetia Tánoki

This shrub is endemic to Peru and other parts of Central- and South America, including Mexico. The plant can grow under a wide range of conditions but prefers to grow in warm areas with well-drained and fertile soils. At an elevation between 50 and 200m, with temperatures that range between 17C to 37C. It does however also thrive in sandy loam and clay soils in areas with temperature ranges between 12C and 47C. The plant is also relatively tolerant to drought. Depending on the environmental conditions it can grow to a height of 2m to 8m and occasionally grow into a small tree with a maximum height of 10m. This species has been introduced in North America, Africa, Southern Asia, Australia, and on many islands in the Pacific and Indian Ocean (Rojas-Sandoval, 2020). All parts of this plant are poisonous. It grows yellow flowers that each produce one green fruit. The fruit turns black when it ripens and contains a large stony endocarp that is triangular (National Parks, 2023). The name *Cascabel* in Spanish translates to small bells, a rattle, or a rattlesnake. This could be either a reference to the shape of the endocarp or to the application of the endocarp which would be to make a rattling noise. It is also possible that the name refers to the poisonous properties of this plant species (Quattrocchi, 1999, p. 448). A wide range of cultural groups in Central and South America, among which are the Ashaninka, use the seeds of this plant for ornamental purposes.

On the headdress, 23 endocarps of *Cascabela thevetia* are found. Each endocarp is attached to the end of a cotton string which is also laced with red and blue glass beads. These strings are assembled in a bundle and positioned on the front left side of the hood, at almost the exact opposite of the bundle that contains *Astrocaryum sp.* Also, this assemblage reminds me of the ear ornaments that have been discussed in the *Astrocaryum* section. Because the seeds are hollow from the inside and have a linear opening at the bottom they make a rattling noise when the bundle shakes. So when the headdress was worn, the bundles had besides a visual also an audible component.

Fig. 7.3 *Cascabela thevetia* Tánoki. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Aiphanes horrida **Panataroki**

This is a species of palm that grows spikes on the stem and leaves and bears bundles of fruits with mostly red epicarp (Bernal & Borchsenius, 2010, p. 123). The round endocarps have a black section. *A. horrida* is endemic to northern South America, Trinidad and Tobago. The palm grows in rainforests as well as in drier areas and prefers soil that is rich in organic matter with good drainage (Jardineriaon, 2023). *A. horrida* is one of the palm species that are used by the Ashaninka for the purpose of ornament production. This palm seems to be used specifically for this purpose and the fruits out of which the ornaments are made are collected from trees that grow close to the settlement or that are cultivated in home gardens (Sosnowska et al., 2015, p. 454). However the fruits occur in great numbers on a bunch, for the adornment of this hood, only two endocarps have been used. Both endocarps have been slightly modified by cutting off the bottom and perforating the top for suspension from a cotton thread. Additionally, each cotton thread is laced with 3 seeds belonging to *Cana sp.* and is attached to a 30cm long cord of which 64 other bundles are suspended each holding 3 *Cana sp*. seeds and 2 unidentified seeds. This cord is attached to the bottom edge of the hood on the left side. When the hood is turned

Fig. 7.4 *Aiphanes horrida* **Panataroki.** Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Canna sp. ***Antsíriki***

Canna sp. are flowering plants in the family of *Cannaceae* and all this genus's species are endemic to the Neotropics. The plant can reach a maximum height of 2m to 3m and its flowers are colored bright red, orange, or yellow. This plant prefers to grow in nutrient-rich to sandy soils with good drainage (Cooke, 2001). Plants belonging to the *Canna* species were introduced in Asia, Africa, and Europe at the end of the 19th century. In the Neotropics, this plant is cultivated for the seeds it produces. These seeds are used by indigenous groups for the production of ornaments. When ripe the seeds have a smooth surface and are black or dark blue (Maas-van de Kamer & Maas, 2008). Another reason this plant is cultivated is because its rhizomes are rich in starch and are used for consumption (Khoshoo and Mukherjee, 1970, p. 204). The Ashaninka commonly use the seeds of *Canna sp.* in their ornaments as becomes clear from the examination of the collections of the Wereldmuseum and the Museum of the American Indian. Also, the object examined in this thesis represents many seeds produced by *Canna sp*.

The Canna seeds on this hood are used in different features of the hood. At the top of the hood, three rows of in total 162 spindles with Canna are attached. Only the top of the cotton cord on which they are woven is attached to the rectangular cloth at the base, which allows the individual spindles to move freely. They are also used in an assemblage with *Aiphanes horrida, Astrocaryum sp.,* and the unidentified seed at the bottom of the hood. At least two species of *Canna* can be found on this object. The seeds used in the spindles are visibly larger than the specimens used in combination with other seeds or endocarps. However the difference was noticeable, it was not possible to determine the seeds to species level using comparative methods only.

Fig. 7.5 *Canna sp*. **Antsíriki.** Worked by the Ashaninka.
Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

8. Ornithological results

In this section, the results of the identification of the different birds that are represented on the hood are presented. Although most birds have very distinct features that make it possible to identify them at the species level, it was not always possible to come to such a conclusion here. This has mainly to do with the fact that sometimes only a few feathers are represented which by using comparative methods could not be matched to the species they belong to. Despite these difficulties, it was possible to identify 11 of the 16 species. To verify our conclusions, the species represented in this object were compared to appropriate literature and the Naturalis collection.

Pipile c. cumanensis ***Kanari***

This black and white feathered bird is endemic to northern South America and occurs in the Guianas, Surinam, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia. *Pipile c. cumanensis* can grow to a length of 60cm to 70cm and an adult specimen can weigh between 970g to 1350g. There is no significant difference in the plumage between both sexes (Hilty, 2003). This bird feeds mostly on fruits and leaves and its habitat ranges from humid tropical forests to semi-deciduous woodlands with an elevation between 300m and 1100m. It is mostly seen within a range of 100m from rivers and is rather common, for the IUCN has given it the status of “Least Concern” (IUCN Red List, 2023). This bird does not migrate and spends most of its life in the same area (Kirwan et.al*.,* 2022).

A comparison of the feathers shown in Figure 7 to a female specimen of *Pipile c. cumanensis* from the Naturalis collection was made. This comparison shows a similar feather length, pattern, and color on the Naturalis specimen and the feathers represented on the hood. The feathers on the hood belonged to the left wing, and have naturally been compared to similar feathers on the Naturalis specimen.

Fig. 7.6 *Pipile c. cumanensis* **Kanari.** Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Max K. M. Kockelkorn

Pipra chloromeros/ Pipra rubrocapilla **Pitsikemzi**

Both these birds are species of manakin and in appearance, they are very much alike. Both species occur in tropical to subtropical lowland forests with a wet climate. However*, P. chloromeros* also thrives in tropical montane forests (IUCN Red List, 2023). The males of both species are mainly black and have a characteristic red crown. The females are alike the males in shape and size but their colour consists of different shades of green and therefore they are easily distinguished from their male counterparts. Despite the similarity of the male specimens, there are some features by which it is possible to determine the correct species. *P. chloromeros* has a white-coloured iris whereas this part of the eye is orange in *P. rubrocapilla*. The red crown feathers of *P. chloromeros* are long in the neck whereas with *P. rubrocapilla* the transition between the red and black feathers is equable. Lastly*, P. chloromeros* has yellow feathers around its legs and in *P. rubrocapillia* these feathers are white and red. Also, according to the IUCN red list, their distribution differs considerably. *P. chloromeros* occurs mainly in Peru east of the Andes but also in the western part of the Brazilian state of Acre and in the northern half of Bolivia. *P. rubrocapillia* has a much larger range and is found mostly in central Brazil, on the east coast of Brazil in South- and North-East Peru, and in Northern Bolivia (Ridgely & Tudor, 2009, p. 497).

The specimen attached to the hood only shows one feature by which it is possible to determine the species. The legs and the eyes are not present to serve as an indicator. However, because of the long red crown feathers, this bird is determined as *P. chloromeros.* This identification is supported by the presumption that the Ashaninka used local flora and fauna to adorn this hood and therefore did not come into contact with *P. rubrocapillia* because it does not occur in the research area (see appendix).

Fig. 7.7 *Pipra chloromeros/ Pipra rubrocapilla* **Pitsikemzi.** Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Pseudopipra pipra

At first, this bird attached to the hood reminds me of a female *Pipra chloromeros* for its green colour and its similarity in size and shape to the male of this species which is also represented on the hood. However, the head of this specimen clearly has a different colour than the rest of the body and after consultation with the Naturalis collection, it can be concluded that female P. chloromeros do not show this feature. In fact after consulting the book “Birds of South America: passerines (2009)” it became clear that this specimen is a female or juvenile *Pseudopipra pipra* for they resemble the female round tail manakin but can be distinguished from them by their grey head (Ridgely & Tudor, 2009).

Pseudopipra pipra occurs in large parts of northern South America and on the Brazilian east coast roughly between Salvador and Rio de Janeiro and the species counts thirteen subspecies. When matured this small passerine reaches a length of 9-10 cm. They are most common in (Rain)forest habitats with an elevation between 800 and 1600m, although they also occur in lower elevation levels. This bird does not migrate and feeds on fruits and insects that are most often plucked in flight (birds of the world, 2023). As can be seen on the distribution map of this species, it occurs within the margins of the research area.

Fig. 7.8 *Pseudopipra pipra.* Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Max K. M. Kockelkorn

Ara macao, ***Sari****/ Ara chloroptera,* ***Sahuaho***

The *Ara macao* and *A. chloroptera* are large birds with brightly coloured feathers that occur in large regions of South America. The former is also endemic to Mexico and Belize and occurs until the elevation limit of 1000m as the latter can be found until the elevation limit of 1400m. *A. Macao* can reach a length of about 80cm. Its plumage consists mostly of red feathers and the wings are adorned with yellow and blue feathers. The beak is white on top and black at the bottom with a sharp point. This bird mainly feeds on nuts, fruits, seeds, flowers and nectar and uses its strong beak and tongue to open nuts that contain a nutrient-rich centre. Also, insects, snails and larvae are on their menu. To suffice in their need for mineral intake *A. macao* as well as *A. chloroptera* are often seen at clay licks. *A. chloroptera* is bigger than *A. macao* and can reach a length of 90-95cm. Its beak is similar in colour to its smaller cousin but the beak of *A. chloroptera* is larger. The plumage is mostly red, however, the wings are coloured green and blue (IUCN Red List, 2023).

Looking at the distribution of both species we see that they occur on the east, just outside the research area. It is possible that the bird was caught outside the research area, or that the map is not completely accurate.

On the hood, the Ara is represented by the upper beak and three feathers (blue, red and green). These colours suggest they belong to the *Ara chloroptera*. It would be logical to assume that the beak belonged to the same bird as the feathers and to verify this assumption these features on the hood were compared to the Naturalis collection. The feathers were indeed most similar to those of *A. chloroptera*. The beak on the hood measures 6cm. The beak of the *A. chloroptera* specimen of the collection measured 7cm in length and the beak of *A. macao* only 4,5cm. Since the beak attached to the hood is broken at the base and the tip has been cut off, it is imaginable that it was slightly bigger originally and therefore more similar to the beak of *A. chloroptera.* This means that both the beak and the feathers belong to this species. It is tempting to assume they belonged to the same animal, but unfortunately, this is impossible to conclude based only on a comparative analysis.

Fig. 7.9 *Ara chloroptera,* ***Sahuaho*** Beak. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Max K. M. Kockelkorn

Fig. 7.10 *Ara chloroptera,* ***Sahuaho*** feathers and beak. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Max K. M.

Tityra semifasciata fortis, ***Pachakitzi*** (chick)

When fully grown these birds have a black and red beak and a red eyelid. Their quills and tail are black while the rest of their plumage is a contrasting white. They occur in large parts of Northern South America, Central America and Mexico. Also in the research area, they have been recorded. Because of the Andean mountains west of the research area, these birds do not occur further west (Birds of the World, 2023).

The specimen attached to the hood is still covered in down feathers and has a wide beak. These features suggest that this specimen is a chick which makes it more difficult to identify the species by using comparative methods. It has not developed the distinctive features characteristic to this bird yet, but therefore the conclusion is based on the measurements and shape of the beak.

Fig. 7.11 *Tityra semifasciata fortis*, Pachakitzi *(chick).* Worked by the Ashaninka.
Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Amazona farinose farinose/ Amazona ochrocephala, **Kintavo**/ *amazona amazonica,* **Erotzi**

This parrot occurs in Central- and South America with its most southern range at about 25° at the east coast of Brazil. It prefers a habitat of humid to semi-humid forests and is also found within the research area. This bird can grow to a size of 41cm and with this length, it is one of the largest parrots in South America. Its plumage is coloured different shades of green. The tail is comparatively short, has a square shape and the ends of the tail feathers are a lighter shade of green as if the tail was dipped in paint (IUCN red list, 2023).

This species is represented on the hood by only a few tertial feathers. These feathers have been cut off, but still show the distinct colour and separation of light and dark green which is seen in the tail of the *Amazona farinose farinose, A.* ochrocephala *and A. amazonica.*

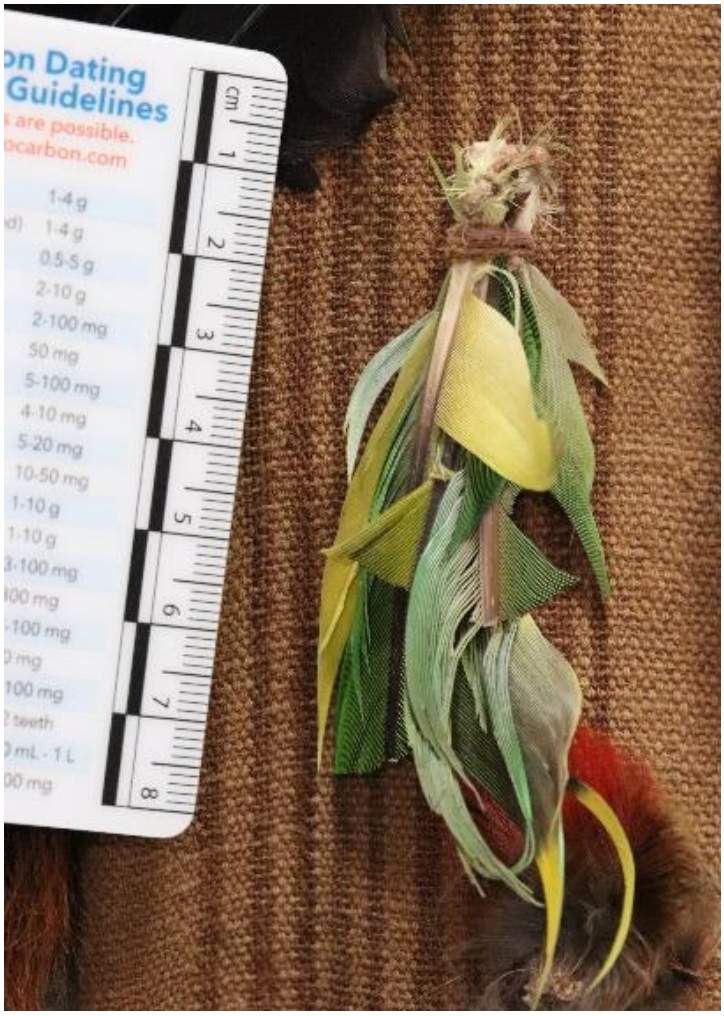

Fig. 7.12 *Amazona farinose farinose/ Amazona ochrocephala*, **Kintavo**/ *amazona amazonica,* **Erotzi.** Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Pteroglossus bitorquatus/ P.beauharnaesiihas **Tairinkari**

These near-passerine birds from the Toucan family can reach a length of 42 to 46 cm. Their large beaks are serrated to allow them to open nuts and fruits, which makes up their main diet (IUCN red list, 2023). *P.beauharnaesiihas* occurs in Peru (east of the Andes), North and Central Bolivia, and West and Central Brazil while *P. bitorquatus* occurs only in Brazil and East Bolivia. On the hood only a few feathers are represented. The feathers are coloured black and red, black and yellow or red and yellow. Since these feathers are not long and do not seem fit to withstand aerial force it is most likely they belong to the chest or back part of the plumage (IUCN red list, 2023).

Comparation with the Naturalis collection shows that the feathers on the hood are more similar to those of *P.beauharnaesiihas* because the red and yellow colours merge in the feathers of this species while in *Pteroglossus bitorquatus* the red and yellow stays separated. Also, in contradiction to *P. bitorquatus, P.beauharnaesiihas* is found in the research area which supports the assumption that the feathers on the hood do belong to this species.

Fig. 7.13 *Pteroglossus bitorquatus/ P.beauharnaesiihas* **Tairinkari.** Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Capito auratus ***Kintyokiri***

The Capito auratus is a bird with black yellow and orange to red plumage. The red/orange colour only occurs on his throat and chest. The plumage of these birds differs per individual and the colour on the chest varies from pale yellow to red (ebird, 2023). The colours of males in this species are divided in patches while the females bare a more stained pattern. The bird occurs mainly in lowland rainforest from Bolivia to Venezuela but can also be found at the margins of (rain)forests and at higher altitudes up to 1600m (IUCN red list).

The specimen on the hood has most resemblance with a male, however because it seems the bird has been somewhat torn up it is difficult to distinguish since the feathers of the plumage are not all in their original position. Despite the state of this specimen, the determination is almost certain since no other bird was found with the same colour combination, beak and orange throat feathers that matched the research area. Other suggestions were *Poecilotriccus luluae, Setophaga fusca, Wetmorethraupis sterrhopteron and Macronyx capensis.*

Fig. 7.14 *Capito auratus* Kintyokiri. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

9. Mammalian results

In this section the results of the mammal identification will be presented. In total nine or ten different mammals are represented on the hood. Mammals generally have less distinct features by which to recognize them and for most of the specimens here it is just a small part of the body that was used. Nevertheless it was possible to identify multiple species from this material using comparative methods.

Chlamyphoridae or *Dasypodidae* ***Etzi***

There exist two families of Armadillos today and all species within these families are native to the Americas. The hood displays two bundles with Armadillo remains; two (pieces of) tail, patches of skin, nails and two bones. It is clear that the skin and tails belong to an Armadillo because the scales do not resemble any type of lizard or snake but there is a strong coherence with those of Armadillo's (Ciancio et al., 2011). Since there are two tails represented on the hood, it is possible to conclude that at least two specimens have been used to adorn this object. It is however difficult to come to a conclusion as to what species are represented. Based on the other data it is very likely that the armadillos were collected locally, which allows to narrow our scope to the species that occur in the research area (IUCN Red List, 2023). Doing this the options that remain are; *Priodontes maximus, Cabassous unicinctus* and *Dasypus novemcinctus.* The latter shows most similarities in size and shape of the tail (GBIF, 2023).

Fig. 7.15 *Chlamyphoridae or Dasypodidae* **Etzi.**. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Coendou sp.

There are several species that belong to the New World porcupine family. These animals are large rodents and easily recognized by their spiky coat (GBIF, 2023). The hood is adorned by a piece of skin belonging to an animal of the Erethizontidae family and the spikes on this piece of skin are between 5 and 6 cm long. The spikes are coloured in bands of white and dark brown but because the piece is small there are no other distinctive features by which it is possible to identify the species. There are two genus within the family of Erethizontidae; *Chaetomys and Coendou.* The first can be excluded because it does not occur in or around the research area. The latter is a genus that counts 17 species and of these species four occur in the research area being; *Coendou Lacépède, Coendou bicolor, Coendou prehensilis* and *Coendou longicaudatus* (David, 2006). Based on the represented material it is not possible to come to a conclusion for the species. The genus however can be identified and these four species are suggested.

Fig. 7.16 *Coendou sp*. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Sciurus pyrrhinus / S. spadiceus/ S. igniventris **Meiri**

These three species of *Sciurus* have been selected for their flaming red and dark brown tail hair. These species all occur within the margins of the research area and spend most of their lives in the canopy (IUCN red list, 2023). Sciurus pyrrhinus is the least occurring of this selection of rodents and is only known to be extant in Peru between the elevation limits of 600 and 2500m. *S. spadiceus* occurs in a larger area and is endemic to Peru, Equador, Colombia, Brazil and Bolivia. And lastly S. igniventris who's distribution area includes Peru, Equador, Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil (Palmer & Koprowski, 2013). The hood is adorned with 9 pieces of the tail of one of the said species. Also on the left and right side of the hood, a bundle of three lower jaws in adjusted that belong to the genus. It was not possible to specify the species through analysis of these jawbones because they had much similarity with all three species. Prof. J. Koprowski, was contacted with the question regarding the identification and also in his opinion it would not be possible to distinguish between these three species without molecular genetics.

Fig. 7.17 *Sciurus pyrrhinus / S. spadiceus/ S. igniventris* **Meiri.**
Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Max K. M. Kockelkorn

Fig. 7.18 *Sciurus pyrrhinus / S. spadiceus/ S. igniventris* **Meiri.**
Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes

Tapirus terrestris, ***Kemari***

Different species of this herbivorous mammal occur nowadays in Asia, Central- and South-America. They have a distinct prehensile nose trunk and belong to the order of Perissodactyla. There are only four species of *Tapirus,* of which three occur in the Americas (Celestino Holanda & Soledad Ferrero, 2012). Three of the four species are marked as endangered species by the IUCN red list and one as vulnerable. The species belonging to this last category is *Tapirus terrestris* and is the only one that is extant to the research area. Their habitat varies between forest, shrubland, savanna, grassland and wetlands (IUNC red list, 2023).

On the hood a tapir hoof, of which the tip is cut off, is attached at the back. It is quite safe to assume the species this hoof belong to is *Tapirus terrestris* because of the size of the hoof and regarding the fact this animal is the only species of Tapirus present in the research area.

Fig. 7.19 *Tapirus terrestris,* **Kemari.** Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Saimiri boliviensis

The Black-Caped Squirrel Monkey is native to Bolivia, Western Brazil and Eastern Peru and can reach a length of maximum 37cm (Schuler & Abee, 2005). They spend most of their lives in the canopy in native forest, plantation forests and cultivated forests in close proximity to running water (Aquino et al., 2013). These monkeys have an omnivorous diet and live in, mostly female dominated, groups made up from 40 to 75 individuals (Nowak, 1999). Two subspecies are known to this species being; *S. b. boliviensis* and *S. b. peruviensis.* The coat of this species is dense and short with a mostly grey to olive green colour with a hint of yellow at the back. Its tail had the same colour as the back except the tip which is black. The head is black as well which contrasts with the yellow/ white belly and bright yellow to ochre coloured limbs (Hershkovitz, 1984).

On the hood two pieces can be found that most likely come from *Saimiri boliviensis.* First the tail of this monkey can be found at the bottom edge of the hood and secondly a piece of bright yellow fur is attached to the bundle of Armadillo remains on the right hand side of the hood. This is the only species of Saimiri that occurs in the research area and therefore it is most likely the items on the hood belong to this primate.

Fig. 7.20 *Saimiri boliviensis*. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Fig. 7.21 *Saimiri boliviensis*. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Max K. M. Kockelkorn

Different possibilities

The hood contains a patch of fur that is approximately 10cm wide and 6cm long with a grey brown colour and woolly appearance. Considering the size of the patch in combination with the thickness of the fur it probably belongs to a mammal that is larger than a squirrel. This patch does not contain any other features by which it can be ascribed to one specific animal and since there occur dozens of animals with fur almost similar to this piece, a selection of suggestions is provided in this paragraph. Species to which this piece of fur possibly belong to are; *Herpailurus yagouaroundi, Leopardus colocolo, Procyon cancrivorus, Odocoileus virginianus* and *Atelocynus microtis* (David, 2006).

Fig. 7.22 Different possibilities. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano

Different possibilities

The hood contains 13 black tails with lengths between 10cm and 15cm. Considering the diameter of these tails they probably belong to a primate. It is however not possible to determine to which species these tails belong without the use of genetic analysis. There are multiple primates occurring within the research area with tails that have much resemblance with the once seen on the hood. Species to which these tails could possibly belong to are; *Leontocebus weddelli , Saguinus weddelli, Saguinus fuscicollis* and *Leontocebus leucogenys* (Gardner, 2007).

Fig. 7.23 Different possibilities. Worked by the Ashaninka. Photograph: Max K. M. Kockelkorn

10. Assemblage

The question when it is appropriate to describe something as cultural has led to many discussions and definitions. There is of course a difference between material and immaterial culture, however the two are often inseparable. Culture is what makes us human and connects all the people on earth. Not because we understand the definition and act according to its specific requirements, but because every object that humans interact with becomes part of a larger network of social, economic, and personal stories that defines who we are, what we do and believe and what we identify and interact with. When I pick up a rock and throw it away does it become something cultural because I have interacted with it? Not everything that humans interact with becomes cultural, however in the western world almost all material things we interact with on a daily basis are manmade and so a product of cultural construct. I propose a categorisation for cultural objects and to explain these categories I will use the rock I threw as an example to explain how one object can serve different cultural purposes.

If I use the rock to crack a nut this rock becomes a tool. This tool allows me to access a nutrient source that otherwise would remain concealed, which would mean I had to find my nutritional need elsewhere.

When I am with some friends throwing rocks at a stick for fun to see who can hit it first, the rock becomes the main actor in a game, and serves social interaction. Because of the game the rock transforms into something else, as does the stick.

I can also collect rocks and systematically pile them up until they form a wall. This construction can serve many purposes, for example they can form the base of my shelter.

Rocks in different shapes and colours fascinate me, and I make a composition with them that I find pleasing. They become a work of art. I attach meaning to it which can transform this piece of stone to a ritual place as well.

Lastly, there is large cliff faces of limestone visible in the region I grew up in. These rocks occur naturally, but I associate them with memories of my childhood and even with my identity. Landscapes or landscape elements can also be transformed into cultural spaces.

Some objects are more culturally significant than others, this can for example have to do with the amount of effort it takes to produce them, the societal function they fulfil, or the ritual value it has. Patterns are often recognized in objects created by humans, even if in first instant the assemblage seems random, there is often an underlying construct that caused an object to look certain way. This section will focus on the assemblage of the hood and aims to understand better the assemblage that on first sight might seem random.

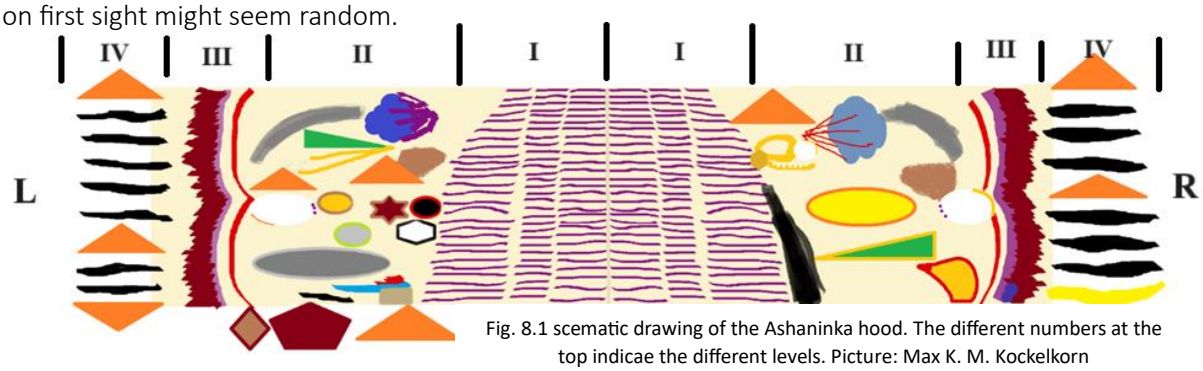

Fig. 8.1 scematic drawing of the Ashaninka hood. The different numbers at the top indicae the different levels. Picture: Max K. M. Kockelkorn

This is a schematic drawing of the hood when folded open (*fig. 8.1*). The different elements attached to the cotton cloth are represented by lines and shapes in different colours. Each colour and shape representing a different species. The surface of the hood can be divided in a left and right half, which can each be divided into four sections. Because of the many features attached to the hood the assemblage seems random at first, however there are different symmetrical elements to be found. The left and right half of the hood are similarly structured. Section I is marked by the purple lines which represent the strings with *Canna sp*.. Their positioning seems structured. The strings are attached to the hood so they form three horizontal rows. The length of the strings on the bottom row increases towards the back, giving the impression of a wig.

Section II represents the largest number of species and this section is recognizable by the colourful assemblage of different bird and mammal species. Also two bundles of endocarps are attached to this section represented here on the left side by a blue bundle with purple lines and on the right side by a grey bundle with red lines. In one of their exhibitions the Museum of Indigenous People in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil houses Ashaninka Kushmas decorated with patches made of endocarps and also loose bundles of endocarps. In their descriptions it is stated that these plant parts can represent the jaguar skin. The museum's documentation is as follows;

Object number: 13.4.61a

Culture: Ashaninka, Acre, 2013

Object description: Pair of seed bundles (…)

Function: Palm seeds (peach palm) are fixed in bunches in women's 'kitarentses' (woven clothing), at shoulder height. The seeds, cut in half and placed in bunches, look like a set of circles, which refers, according to Katsimiro (from the community of Sete Voltas, Rio Envira) to the three-dimensionality of the jaguar's skin. (MI, 2024). (Museum of Indigenous People, 2024).

It is possible that the same is true for the bundles present on the hood. This would mean that even though the endocarps come from a palm, they should be seen as animal. This would explain why these bundles are placed in section II. Although most ornaments attached to section II seem randomly placed, some bundles or objects have a symmetrical position with the objects of the same nature on the other side. The two bundles with endocarps sit in mirrored position, as do the mandibles of the squirrel, and the feathers of the 'Kanari'. For the other objects no significant symmetry was discovered.

Section III again consists of plant materials. Four different species are represented here, divided over three laces. One species remains unidentified (brown line) and the others are; *Canna sp.* (purple line), *Adenanthera pavonine* (red line), and *Aiphanes Horrida* (Blue dots). The lace represented in the drawing by the red line runs across the left and right half of the hood in one piece. The lace represented by the brown and purple line consists of two parts. One on the left and one on the right bottom half of the hood. The one on the right is additionally decorated with two endocarps of *Aiphanes Horrida*.

Section IV is made up by (pieces of) mammal tails and runs across the bottom of the hood. The orange triangles in the drawing represent pieces of tail belonging to the Red Squirrel, the black lines represent the tails of unidentified monkey species, and the yellow line represents the tail of a Squirrel monkey. Both the left and the right side are decorated with two parts of Squirrel tail and seven monkey tails.

The one remaining squirrel tail is attached exactly in the middle where the two halves of the cotton cloth are sewed together. This proportionate division of elements has most likely been deliberately designed.

It is possible to recognize certain elements of symmetry. We are able to divide the hood in four different sections, whereby the uneven sections represent floral material and the even sections represent faunal material. A number of elements, the laces in section III, the bundles with endocarps, the squirrel and monkey tails etc., are in mirrored position, indicating a planned design.

Besides these elements of symmetry that are recognised in the design, another element of the assemblage stands out. A close examination of the different elements attached to the cotton cloth suggests that a number of these elements have not been initially designed to serve as decoration on this hood.

The laces described in section III all have different measurements and appear to be remade to fit. The designs of these laces is not seen in any other hood that was studied in the above section. Compared to the other hoods of which the designs are rather neat, the design on this hood seems less precise. Some more research into the Ashaninka collection at the Museum of the American Indian revealed several objects described as necklaces that resemble in much detail the laces attached to this hood. Also the bundles at section II look like what is described at the website of the museum as ear ornaments. This suggests that some ornaments used to adorn the hood have been reused, and have not been custom made for this piece.

Fig. 8.2 Ashaninka necklace. Object 14/2653 from the HMAI. HMAI, museum number: 14/2653, https://americanindian.si.edu/collections/search/object/NMAI_152989

Fig. 8.3 Ashaninka necklace. Object 14/7545 from the HMAI. HMAI, museum number: 14/7545 https://americanindian.si.edu/collections-search/object/NMAI_158510

Fig. 8.4 Ashaninka ear ornaments. Object 5/8799 from the HMAI. HMAI, museum number: 5/8799 https://americanindian.si.edu/collections-search/object/NMAI_63628

Fig. 8.5 Ashaninka ear ornaments. Object 5/8802 from the HMAI. HMAI, museum number: 5/8802 https://americanindian.si.edu/collections-search/object/NMAI_63632

II. The weaving

In this research I looked at colourful birds and spikey palms, and the focus has been on these features attached to the hood that emphasize the uniqueness of this object. One species however has been underexposed until now. The cloth itself is made of cotton, that is planted, picked, worked, and woven by the Ashaninka. There is little scientific literature available on this subject. The cotton production process of the Ashaninka community in the province of Acre, Brazil, however has been appropriately documented. Therefore most of the information in this section is based on traditions and processes from this region.

The process that has led to the production of the cloth which is now the base of the hood, is connected with tradition, cosmology and also with gender roles. Working with cotton is done by the Ashaninka women. Tradition and spirituality are closely connected to activities that involve cotton from the planting to the weaving (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 1). The Ashaninka make more than 70 different types of objects, from hunting gear to instruments to clothing. Some objects are produced by men, other by woman (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 14). The production of these objects is not only important for practical reasons, but with this process important knowledge is passed on to new generations. Knowledge about how to plant, harvest and work the raw materials, but also spiritual knowledge connected to certain customs and believes (Pinhanta 2019, p. 14).

The main products made out of cotton are; nets (kewotsi), tiaras (omarikonta), bracelets (omarentsi), slings (kayenthawõtsi), hoods (txowinya), bags (thato), and the Cushma. All these products fulfil a different societal role whereby some are fundamental in the representation of Ashaninka identity, and others are less important and fill a more practical role. The production of nets, mainly used as hammocks, is for example of secondary importance. Also because nowadays mainly industrial hammocks are used (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 47).

Hoods (txowinya) on the other hand are important objects both in practical sense and culturally. Hoods can be adorned with other materials like seeds, feathers, bone and skin. Traditionally it was used by man and sometimes by women. However nowadays hoods are almost never worn by man, but women wear them frequently to protect them from the cold or the sun. These objects are still often produced and besides utilisation by the community, they are also produced to be sold in order to generate an income for the community (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 48).

Slings come in two variations, one made of cotton and one made with seeds and fibres. This last variety is only used for ornamental purposes, and the usage of these objects is only attributed to male members of the community. The cotton variation is used by woman and is more common because of its practical and cultural values. Woman generally have two or three slings that are used during different times of the day. It is used for example during the *piyarentsi* ceremony, when a fermented cassava drink is served. During this occasion a sling adorned with seeds is worn. Often different herbs that are believed to have magical powers are worn on the sling as well during a certain ceremony (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 50). The sling is also an important object in nonverbal communication. By different designs or ways of wearing it, woman communicate different messages. For example aromatic herbs are worn on this sling by a single woman that wants to be seen by a man. A married woman with children would wear her sling over the shoulder, and under the opposite arm, however a single

woman who does not have children will wear it on the opposite arm. The sling is a personal object closely related to a woman's individual identity. They are used to carry personal belongings and products from the forest gardens. When a woman has a baby, the babies are also carried around in these objects. Also during a woman's menstrual period the sling in a significant object. At present, rituals surrounding this event have become less significant, but until a few decades ago a woman's first menstrual period would mean she had to be secluded from the community for as long as her period lasted. She had to follow a strict diet whereby the consumption of certain foods was prohibited. Also sunbathing was not allowed. During this period she would spend her time inside spinning cotton. Her mother would bathe her during those days with medicinal plants. On the last day of her period before her return to the community, her mother would bathe her one last time, and cut her daughter's hair. At her return to the community the girl would wear a sling over her head until her hair had grown back. Although the rituals regarding menstruation became more flexible, the bathing and dietary restrictions are still an important component during these events (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 50).

Fig. 9.1 Ashaninka woman wearing sling on head (2008).
Museu do Índio, museum number: : BR MI MI DA EMA 1-20 /EMA20 https://www.museumofindigenouspeople.org/

The most important piece of clothing for the Ashaninka is the Kushma. However the object studied in this thesis is not a Kushma, I will spend some attention to this type of dress in the following paragraph. This in order to understand the hierarchy of importance between cotton objects, and to add an extra perspective to the analysis. This Kushma has great cultural value and is connected to identity and cosmology. The Ashaninka claim to have never walked around naked. They are in fact proud of this fact, and see walking around naked as something inappropriate. This contradicts with the statement made in the museum's documentation about a naked Shaman. The Ashaninka say that in ancient times, before the use of cotton, the Kushma was made from fibres of the bark of a tree called

iyãtxama. Nowadays only men's Kushma's are made with the natural cotton that is worked according to the traditional techniques. Producing a Kushma can take several months and requires a lot of work. The colour is mostly the original colour of the cotton, however decorative striped patterns are woven into the fabric with pained cotton. Most colours range from black to light brown. Women's clothing is made from industrial fabrics, that are painted with traditional patterns. The patterns in women's as well as in men's clothes have different cultural meanings (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 54). Patterns can represent natural phenomena like the rainbow, but can also be a representation of animals or body parts. Besides this the patters are related to values that are culturally significant for the Ashaninka, as love, unity, beauty, happiness and the celebration of life (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 69). For the Ashaninka living in the Amônia River valley at least five different patterns were identified and they are called shimamereki, shopa, sawawonoma, kõpero and tsirotxeiriki. It is possible that other Ashaninka communities use different patterns and different names. The shimamereki pattern represents fish scales and the fish is a symbol for togetherness. The pattern consists of two parallel lines with in between a broader line built up of small diamond shaped lines. The Shopa pattern is a representation of caterpillars. These insects often walk in the same direction, therefore this pattern is also a representation of the strength of unity. The pattern looks like five parallel lines whereby the outer and middle lines are dark. The Sawawonoma pattern represents the Scarlet Macao (*Ara macao*) and represents besides togetherness also happiness. This pattern is build up from more than ten vertical black stripes forming a band. This band sits between two wider vertical lines that are also black. The Kõpero pattern represents a bird known by the Ashaninka as 'the Sleeper' and it represents love. The article however does not specify which bird this is. The pattern is represented by two broad bands with a dotted filling. These bands sit between two vertical lines. Lastly the Tsirotxeiriki pattern represents a fish with small scales and which is thought to be beautiful. For this characteristic this pattern represents the strength of beauty and delicacy (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 70). This pattern is represented by one vertical line, with next to it a band that is twice as wide as the line and filles with a pattern consisting of small diamonds.

The male Kushma is the most important woven object produced by the Ashaninka women because it entails many important aspects of their culture, history, and identity and it is an object by which they differentiate themselves from other indigenous people and of which they are proud.

The materials used to produce these cotton objects can be found in the forest and are all plant based. The woman use palms of which mats (ishitashentsi) are made. On these mats the cotton is beaten with a stick to make it more malleable which eases the spinning process. Tree bark, various types of vegetables and leaves are collected to produce the pigments for the paint (thakamentotsi). Two types of clay; pitsitha, which is also used to produce certain pigments. And kitamapithari, which is used to make the base of the spindle that is used to spin the cotton. A stone can also be used for this purpose. Another type of stone, (makawiro), is collected along the rivers to produce lime which is used in the process of making the cotton thread. Wood (intxato), often from the Peach Palm, is used as the base of the spindle and as the base of the loom. Eventually, cotton (ãpe) it material that will eventually be used to produce the end product(Pinhanta, 2019, p. 75). Wood collecting and the making of the spindle and loom can also be done by the man. This is a gesture of love for example between a husband and wife.

There are different types of pigments of which a brown pigment (Patsitaki), that comes in different shades, is most commonly used. It is considered a powerful being and should be handled with care. This type of clay is watched over by the boa constrictor (nõke) and should not be touched or handled by men, woman who are menstruating, pregnant or have a newborn child. If a person does not respect these rules it is possible that they become ill.
The process for making for exciple a male Kushma can be divided into ten steps; 1, planting the cotton, 2, collecting the cotton, 3, cleaning the cotton, 4, threshing and beating the cotton, 5, constructing the spindle and yarn, 6, the dyeing or pigmenting, 7, assembling the loom, 8, the weaving, 9, the cutting, and 10, the final stitching (Pinhanta, 2019, p. 81).

As becomes clear from this section, the production of the cotton base is a process that involves a lot of cultural and historical components. It requires a great deal of knowledge to complete the steps that lead to the end product successfully. The process and design are loaded with spiritual, ritual, and personal significance. Although these examples do not come from an Ashaninka community in the Rio Ene valley, they still contain valuable information that helps us to better understand the depth of the object studied in this thesis, and to refute the questionable documentation provided by the museum.

12. Contact with Ashaninka

When we first saw the object studied in this thesis, it was like something we had never seen before. Our minds started to think of a function for the object, using the design as a basis for our conclusions. First it takes time to identify the complex structure of the hood, as we have tried before. Then to identify the species represented on the object. Once it is possible to say more or less how the object was made, where the materials came from and who collected them it is time to try and understand another layer of its function. Looking in the documentation of the museum and reading scientific literature provided a better understanding of the Ashaninka society, their culture and cosmologic understanding. However what we read in articles and try to link together with wat we analysed and identified still does not give us the truth. And what is the truth? Of course it is the factual analysis of events, and the infallibility of materiality, the actual course of events. But what is perceived as the truth is something else. Museum visitors who visited the exhibition that showcased this hood believed it was the truth that it was used by a Shaman, and that he was naked. The museum presents unverified notes as truth and provides little handles to stimulate critical thinking. The real and complete factual truth can no longer be traced back, but there is something that can come close. The Ashaninka follow their traditions and know their own history and material culture. They know who they are now, and what the meaning is behind their immaterial and material culture. The factual truth is important to consider, but their truth is also important. It is important to understand the history of this object, but also to understand it's meaning today. Therefore approaching the Ashaninka and asking for their views is the only way in which we can come close to understands different truths.

For this research we reached out to some people via social media. Some Ashaninka are active on social media where they present and share stories of their culture and projects. One account is called yorenka.tasorentsi and another ashaninka.apiwtxa. The stories shared on these accounts come from an Ashaninka community that live in the Rio Amônia Valley in Acre, Brazil. The Ashaninka from the Rio Ene Valley could not be found on social media. Multiple attempts were undertaken to reach by a message as a reaction to some posts on these accounts. Some of the seeds and endocarps that were shared on these accounts were similar to the ones we find on the hood. At some point, one of these accounts shared a post from a Dutch woman who was involved with the Ashaninka. We are very grateful to her for responding to our message, because it is through this we got a little more information about the Ashaninka and this object. I have to clarify we did not have direct contact with the Ashaninka, our questions were passed on by this woman to the Ashaninka. We provided them with pictures of the hood and with the information we had obtained at that moment. We then asked about its function and the function of the different species attached to the hood. Surprisingly they did not recognize the object as being a hood, but suggested it was a women's sling. Unfortunately we did not get answers to questions regarding the identification and interpretation of species attached to the hood. It is however interesting that the Ashaninka did not recognize the design of this object to be similar to a hood. Our interpretation of the function of this object is based on the design, and the positioning of the different objects attached to it. There are multiple reasons for our conclusion. first, when this object is worn as a sling, most of these features would not hang straight down, but in an angle. Most vertical objects (stings with *Canna sp*., Armadillo tails, monkey tails etc) are only

attached with a single cotton threat at the top. This means wearing this object as a sling, which changes their position to a horizontal one, would course the positioning of these features to change so they do not sit neatly organized, but would dangle on top of one another.
Another reason to believe the design of this object as it is now was meant to be worn as a hood is the symmetry found in, for example, the bundles with endocarps on the left and right side of the object. When worn as a sling this symmetry would not be visible.
Lastly, a sling is worn over one arm and under the opposite arm whereby the back of the object makes contact with the body. This would mean that when this object is worn as a sling, that one half of this object would be in constant contact with the body. Many ornaments attached to the cotton cloth are very delicate and would wear down easily when constant friction occurs. Besides the impracticalities, we did not see any evidence on either side of the object that would proof friction of any sort.
When the design of this object is compared to an object that has already been identified as a sling, like object TM-5074-1 discussed in the above chapter, we find that the ornaments on this object are positioned in such a way that they hang neatly organized when the ling is worn horizontally. It is however possible that the object we identify as hood, had a different function before and only at a later phase changed function and was decorated with the diversity of species we see today.

13. Violence

As we have read before, the hood was purchased by the museum by the end of 1986. At this time the age of this object had been described as 'not old'. However not certain, it is possible that the hood has been assembled in the 1980's and had not been with M. van Garrel for long at the time of the purchase (Caromano et al., 2024, p. 10). The events occurring in the amazon region and in particular in the Rio Ene Valley at this time are also a variable that could have been of influence regarding the design of the hood.

Starting in the 1980's, Peru was tormented by an internal armed conflict that officially started in 1980 and lasted until the early 2000's. This period was marked by gross violations of fundamental and human rights such as, violence, killings, disappearances and other systematic crimes against humanity (Amnesty International, 2004, p. 4). These violations were committed by the Peruvian State and the armed opposition groups, Partido Comunista del Perú (Sendero Luminoso), Communist Party of Peru (Shining Path), and Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (MRTA), Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, and this period is reported as the most intense, violent and impactful event in the whole history of the Peruvian Republic (Amnesty International, 2004, p. 5). These black pages in Peruvian history have been dominated by terrible events, and most crimes were committed by the opposition group Shining Path. They were responsible for 54% of the reported killings and disappearances (12 500 people). Most of the violence was directed against the most defenceless parts of the population, namely low income or indigenous groups, and was carried out by state officials as well as by opposition parties (Amnesty International, 2004, p. 5). Forcible displacement occurred often and mostly the Ashaninka, but also other indigenous and peasant communities, were badly affected by this and other consequences of the armed conflict. It is estimated that around 10 000 people of the Ashaninka communities from the Rio Ene, Tambo, and Perené valleys were violently displaced. In addition to that another 6000 people were killed, and 5000 were captivated by Shining Path. Other sources speak of 8000 casualties (Bianchi, 2018, p. 169). These crimes have led to the disappearance of between 40 and 50 Ashaninka communities (Aministy International, 2004, p. 16). The Rio Ene and Rio Apurímac regions were strategically important for the guerrilla movement of Shining Path. They also recruited young man and woman in the Ashaninka villages, where some joined the guerrilla movement because they believed in the socialist values proclaimed by Shining Path. Some others joined the Peruvian army, and even self-defence armies were formed (Bianchi, 2018, p. 169). This meant that community members had to engage in conflict against each other, which resulted in mutual distrust and fear within communities (Bianchi, 2018. P. 171). During the second half of the 1980's violence against the Ashaninka intensified. Communities dominated by Shining Path became places much like concentration camps, where torture, executions, illnesses, malnutrition and forced labour happened on a structural basis (Bianchi, 2018, p. 172). By the end of the 1980's the Ashaninka started to organize themselves and in September 1990 the the *Comité Central de Autodefensa y Desarrollo Ashaninka* was established as a measure of self-defence. Together with the Peruvian Army the Ashaninka were able to gain multiple victories on the guerrilla, and eventually expel them from the region. In the western part of the region another guerrilla group was active named the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), and there were indications that this organisation had ties

with drug trafficking (Weiss, 2005, p. 53). Officially the conflict ended in 2000, with the diminishing of guerrilla violence. For the Ashaninka of the Rio Ene valley however the conflict has not yet ended. The guerrilla violence might have ended, but with the arrival of illegal coca producers and consequently the Peruvian armed forces violence in the region is still present (Bianchi, 2018, p. 174). The indigenous self-defence forces that arose during the time of the internal conflict remain operational to guarantee territorial safety and alertness (Bianchi, 2018, p. 174). The region also described as the Valley of the Apurímac, Ene and Mantaro rivers (VRAEM) remains unsafe until today due to the violence related to drug trafficking, and illegal logging (Nederland wereldwijd, 2024).

Now we have a better insight in the tragic situation that has unfolded in the region since the 1980's, it is possible to look with another lens at the hood discussed in this thesis. The Ashaninka believe that the spirit of plants and animals have powers that can be transferred to for example the Shaman when he carries them with him (Pinhanta, 2019). Perhaps in these times of peril, this object was produced as a source of great power to help and protect the community, because as we saw the consequences of the internal conflict were devastating for the Ashaninka. If the hood was indeed produced during this period of conflict, it could also explain why it has been assembled from reused materials; as we read in the above chapter it takes a lot of time and effort to produce an object like this. It is imaginable that the disruptions could have caused daily activities like weaving and ornament making to diminish, meaning new resources for the production of new objects became scarce.

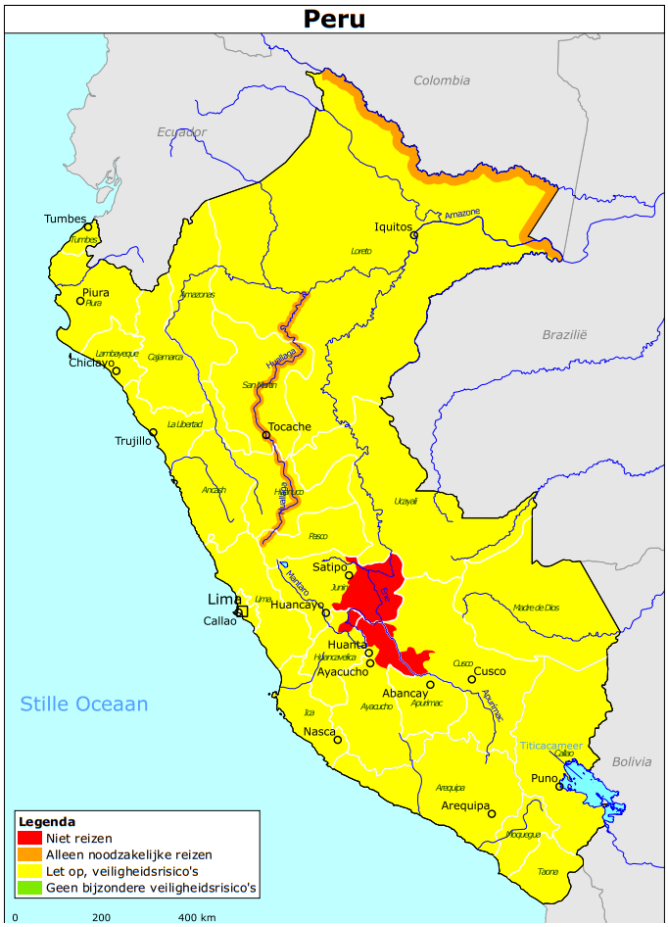

Fig. 11.1 Map with travel advice Peru. This map by the Dutch government shows the travel advise for the different Peruvian regions. Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/reisadvies/peru

14. Discussion

The exact location where the object was produced is not known. However the documentation provided by the Wereldmuseum in Amsterdam suggests that it has been produced in a settlement in the Ene river valley. Therefore the research area includes the complete river valley. A suggestion for further research would be to map all the Ashaninka settlement along the Ene river to get a more detailed overview of factors like the proximity of settlements to the river and to other settlements. The identification of species has shown that all the animals and plants that were used to adorn the hood were collected locally. The seeds could have been derived from wild plants but most likely they were gathered from plants that were planted by the Ashaninka for various purposes like, building material, food recourses and ornament production (reference). The Ashaninka are not known to exploit domesticated animals or keep wild animals in captivity and therefore it is most likely that the birds and mammals were gathered in the wild, in close proximity to the settlement. None of the species used to decorate the hood are endangered (reference). The least occurring species that is found on this object is the *Tapirus terrestris* and it has the status of "Vulnerable" on the IUCN red list.

When taking a look at the assemblage of the hood, a certain symmetry can be detected. On the right we find a bundle of *Cascabella threvitia,* part of the tail of a Sciurus, three Sciurus jaws, different parts of Armadillo, a piece of skin and brown feathers, and feathers of *Pipile c. cumanensis.* On the left side of the hood we find a similar assemblage whereby the bundle of seeds is made up from *Astrocaryum sp.* and the placement of the features is a bit different than the right side. Nonetheless this assemblage does not seem random. The bundles are placed roughly at the position of the ears, which supports the assumption that they are assembled from ear ornaments. Other floral ornaments consist of; 162 strings with beads produced out of *Canna sp.* seeds. They are attached to the top of the hood in 3 rows of superposed strings whereby the length of the strings on the lowest row increases towards the back. At the bottom part of the hood runs a string with 81 *Adenanthera pavonina* seeds. This is one piece of string running over the left and right side. Lastly we see two strings holding left 77 and right 66 pendulums. The pendulums are made up from a short piece of string which is attached in the middle to the main string. On these short strings 2 to 3 *Canna sp.* seeds and 1 unidentified seed are attached. On the string at the right side, closest to the seam, 2 pendulums are made with *Canna sp.* and *Aiphanes horrida.* The bottom of the unidentified and the *A. horrida* seeds have been cut off to reveal a small cavity in which the knot that keeps the beads attached to the string resides. Close examination of the hood has suggested that it has been made in different phases and is a composition of other ornaments that used to have other functions. For example, the cotton thread on which the *Adenanthera pavonina* seeds have been strung is less foxed than the thread of the same material on which the *Canna sp.* seeds in combination with the unidentified seed have been strung. Also, different ornaments that have been attached to the hood are likely to have had a different function before. Like the bundles of *Cascabela thevetia* and *Astrocaryum sp* that resemble ear ornaments, and the strings that were probably once made to function as necklaces.

Examination of the position of the ornaments attached to the surface of the hood suggests there is an interrelationship between these objects and their position. The hem of the hood is hung with a total of

19 tail fragments whereby each side holds 9 tail fragments which makes an equal distribution between the left and right half. The one remaining piece is attached exactly between left and right on the seam. This middle piece belongs to *Sciurus pyrrhinus / S. spadiceus/ S. igniventris,* as do two tail fragments on the left as well as on the right. One tail on the right belongs to *Saimiri boliviensis,* while the remaining 13 tails belong to the yet unidentified primate species. This row of tails attached to the hem shows symmetry which is applied intentionally judging from the distribution of *Sciurus* tail fragments which are positioned on the two corners of the cloth, half way the hem and onto the seam. Symmetry is also recognized in the vertical division of species. The hood can be divided in four sections, representing from bottom to top alternately faunal and floral elements.

Besides the identification of the species represented on the hood, there is much more to learn from this object. Therefore in this section suggestions are given for further examination of the hood and the world it represents. At the time the object was bought for the museum, little information was passed on from the seller to the museum. Because of this, the exact background information of the object remains uncertain. For this research Dr. Alexander Brust has been contacted and he noted that during the course of the 20th century, there were multiple catholic missions in Peru organized by the Swiss. In order to contribute to the finance of these works, people who worked on the missions were known to trade and sell indigenous goods (Brust, personal communication). It would be interesting to find out more about these events; where were the missions located? What kind of goods were traded? Were objects specifically made or modified to be sold to the European market? This is not the only object with poor documentation. That raises the question to what would be a responsible way of exhibiting it.

Until now the information about the object is acquired through research and documentation done by non-indigenous people. From this research it did not become clear what exact role this object could play in the indigenous society where it was produced. When I started this research and read the museum's documentation, the assumption was that this object was a hood, made by the Ashaninka and used by a Shaman. The analysis of the object and of the individual items attached to it suggests that it has indeed been produced by the Ashaninka, and that it was worn on the head. However, the information received from the Ashaninka as described in chapter 10 shines another light on the object. As described above, the hood as it is now was clearly designed to be worn on the head, but the information received from the Ashaninka made me realize it is possible that the cotton cloth might have been used as a sling before. Moreover, if this object, despite its vertically oriented design features, is seen nowadays by the Ashaninka as a sling, shouldn't we describe is as such? Ethnographic knowledge and truth can differ from the historical truth, but I believe that not only one reality is true. If we were to exclude the Ashaninka's conclusion we would not only exclude their opinion from this research, but we would also discard valuable information. The same would be true vice versa.

In addition, a large body of information of the ethnographic knowledge on the different plant and animal species represented on the hood remains unknown. Therefore it would be valuable to come in contact with Ashaninka again in the future and if they want to share this information it would be a good opportunity to learn about the significance of the species represented on the hood. By interviewing them we will learn more about their worldviews and spiritual practices, as this research has shown. The documentation by the Wereldmuseum in Amsterdam stated that the hood was worn by a shaman

during several rituals, but the Ashaninka we contacted do not think so. Knowledge sharing will help us to better understand the Ashaninka, and is a valuable practice not only in regard to this object, but any ethnographic object that is lacking proper documentation.

There is so much to tell about this object and yet is has been sitting in the collection for most of the time, hidden from the public eye. Of course museums mostly have only a fraction of their collection on display but since this object has come under our attention and an detailed analysis has been carried out, it would be a pity not to share our findings with the wider public. A suggestion for further work on this object includes the design of an activity whereby the hood takes a central position and is used as a medium to share more in depth information about the life of the Ashaninka people from the Ene river valley.

15. Conclusion

At the beginning of this research four research questions were formulated. The analysis preformed in the above chapters generated answers to these questions. In this chapter these answers will be summarized.

> What is the narrative of this Ashaninka hood and how can the understanding of an object's history and context contribute to the decolonisation of a museum's collection?

The documentation provided by the museum revealed a disappointing truth that applies not only for this object. This document did not include the exact time and place of where the object was produced and neither did it explain how it was transferred from the Ashaninka to a European collector. Because of this poor documentation much of the information about the object has been lost. This object was bought in 1986 from a woman named M. van Garrel who's nationality or personality is not known. It is known that she is marked as the vendor of the object by the museum and that her address was in Solothurn, Switzerland. The information to accompany the hood was provided by this woman but the museum has not asked for or done research to secondary information which means it is not possible to verify whether the information provided by M. van Garrel is correct. At this point it is not possible to conclude how this woman came to possess this object nor the reason she sold it to the museum. This research has shown that the museum's documentation was incomplete and at some fronts even incorrect. This research helped to erase errors from the documentation and allows future researches and collection managers to better understand the object.

> What floral and faunal species are represented in the examined ornament, and what is the abundance in which they occur?

The species identification had been one of the core elements of this research. By identifying the different species of plants and animals it was possible to conclude that the species were collected locally. This information has proven valuable for the provenance research since it is now possible to say that the object has been assembled within the Rio Ene Valley. No elements have been bought from or traded with people from different regions and it is most likely that the animals and plants were collected by the Ashaninka. Also the preparation and production of the ornaments was done locally.

> Where do the plants and animals that were used to produce the floral and faunal ornaments on the hood occur, and are these species native to the research area?

As stated above, all the plants and animal species occur in the Rio Ene valley. What is notable is that none of the identified species is endangered, so to produce this object the Ashaninka chose to use species that occur regularly.

What relation is there between the societal function of the plants/ animals used as ornaments?

The plants and animals adjusted to the hood, and also the patterns woven into the cotton, represent the spirits and stories of the forest, river and mountains. They transfer powers to the person who wears

it, and messages to spectators who know how to read them. The objects also tell a more practical story, namely that of production techniques and gender roles. For example the complex societal acts of collecting and working cotton. Societal norms and (spiritual) beliefs are intertwined with the selection of the different materials, with the design of the object and with the collection and production process of the object.

How can understanding this object help to get a better understanding of the Ashaninka?

By understanding this object it is possible to reconstruct certain events in the past. The object is a product of the Ashaninka community. It was shaped based on their worldviews, their history and tradition and their needs. This hood is therefore a part of the Ashaninka culture so to understand this object is to understand part of their culture.

The hood was most likely not assembled at a single point in time, but has been modified somewhere during its life. There are some clues that suggest this assumption. The bundles of Astrocaryum sp. and of Cascabella thevetia are likely to have been produced as ear ornaments, and could have been added to the hood in a later stage. The two strings at the bottom of the hood holding the unidentified seed together with *Canna sp*. seem not to be made for the purpose of decorating the hood since they do not have the same measurements as the width of the hood. Possibly these were necklaces that have been added to the hood. The same can be said for the string with seeds of *Adenanthera pavonina.* Close examination of the cotton stings on these necklaces reveals that the string that holds *Adenanthera pavonina* is more white while the strings holding the unidentified seed and the *Canna sp*. has become yellow. This suggests a difference in time of production, or in use. Seeing this object being assembled out of objects that were used before might suggest that the Ashaninka had other things on their minds during the time this object was produced, which might correspond with the violent actions in their territories during the 1980s.

This research aimed at answering specific provenance related questions and at understanding how an object about which much information was lost functioned in the Ashaninka society. It also looked at the role of museums as places where ethnographic objects are stored, and how this role can be fulfilled in order to benefit societies in an equitable manner. It is important to continue research like this in order to better understand the objects that were collected, the people that produced them, and the role of the museum in managing them.

16. Acknowledgements

First and foremost I want to express my gratitude towards my supervisor, Dr. Caroline Fernandes Caromano. Her kindness, patience and sincerity is admirable and her critical feedback and advice helped me throughout my research. Also my colleagues Walid Dani Kaki and Inez de Ruijter were great sources of inspiration and it was inspiring to exchange thoughts with them. I also want to thank Martin Berger for his critical contributions to this research and for his friendly and motivating attitude. Lastly I want to thank the remaining people that helped me both with my research and in finding motivation to continue it; Prof. Dr. Tinde van Andel, Guido Keijl, Goffe Hoving, Dr. Joanna Sosnowska, Dr. Alexander Brust, Prof. John Koprowski, Dr. Mariana da Campos Francozo, my parents and my girlfriend Cristy. Many thanks.

Abstract. *This thesis is centred around an object from the collection of the Wereldmuseum in Amsterdam; a hood made by the Ashaninka of the Rio Ene valley on the eastern slopes of the Peruvian Andean mountains. The research aims on the one hand to understand the object and its original context, which includes a species identification of the floral and faunal species represented on the object. On the other hand this research aims at understanding the object's museal history and the role of the museum in provenance related questions.*

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(IUCN red list, 2023, December) *https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/6290/47440785*

(IUCN red list, 2023, December) https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/22733724/95063335

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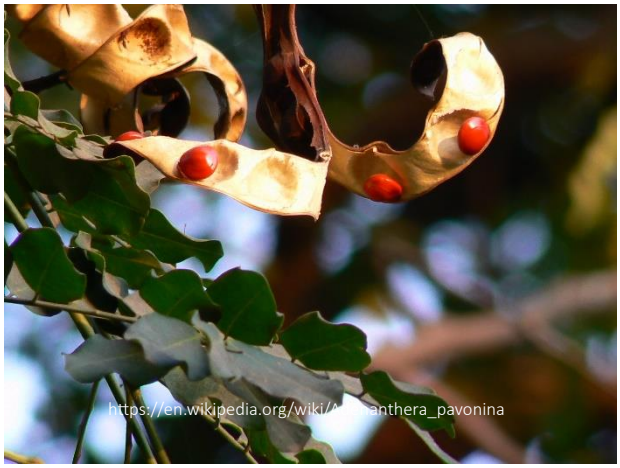
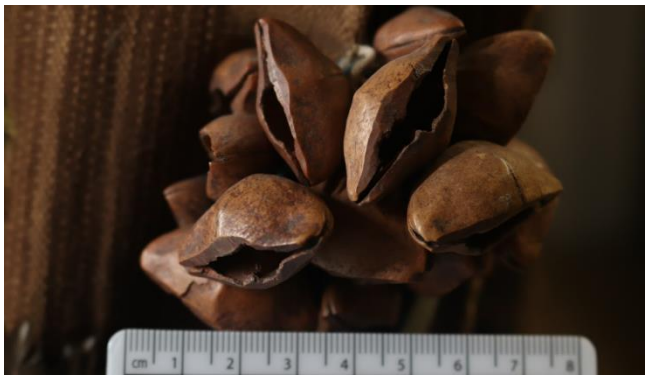
18. Appendix

Astrocaryum sp. **Tiroti**

Adenanthera pavonina



Cascabella thevetia **Tánoki**



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https://www.socfindoconservation.co.id/plant/527?lang=en

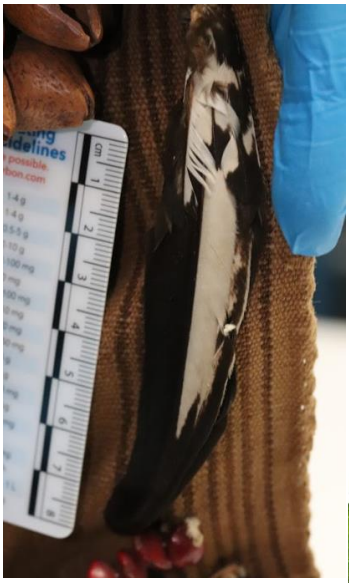
Aiphanes horrida, **Panataroki**

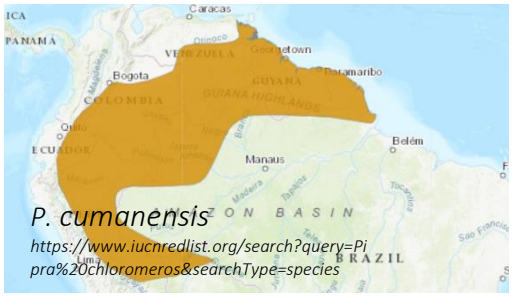
https://twitter.com/jbotanicomed/status/885262416879259648

Canna sp., **Antsíriki**

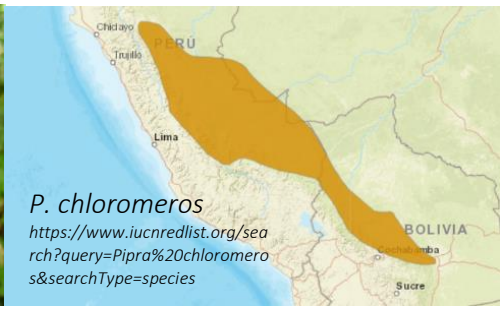
Unidentified seed

Pipile cumanensis, **Kanari**





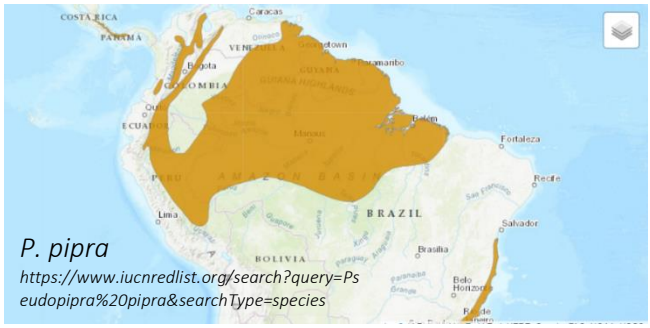
Pipra chloromeros/ Pipra rubrocapilla, **Pitsikemzi**



Pseudopipra pipra

P. pipra ♀

https://www.oiseaux.net/photos/sylvain.uriot/white-crowned.manakin.2.html



P. pipra

https://www.iucnredlist.org/search?query=Pseudopipra%20pipra&searchType=species

Ara macao, **Sari**/ *Ara chloroptea*, **Sahuaho**

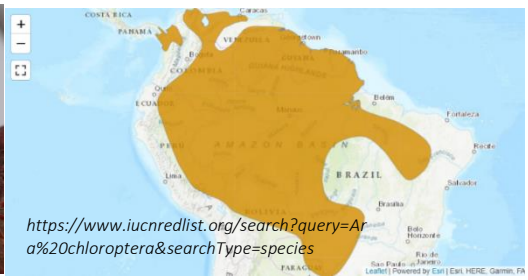
A. Macao

https://stock.adobe.com/nl/images/ara-macao-scarlet-macaw-the-parrot-is-perched-on-the-branch-in-nice-natural-environment-of-costa-rica/302724177

A. chloroptera

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red-and-green_macaw

A. chloroptera



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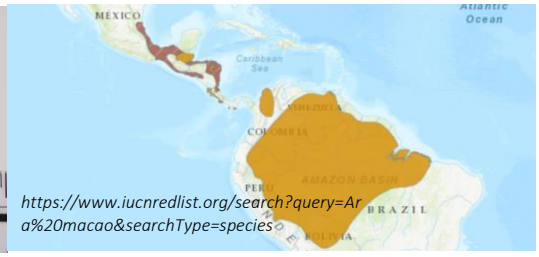
A. Macao



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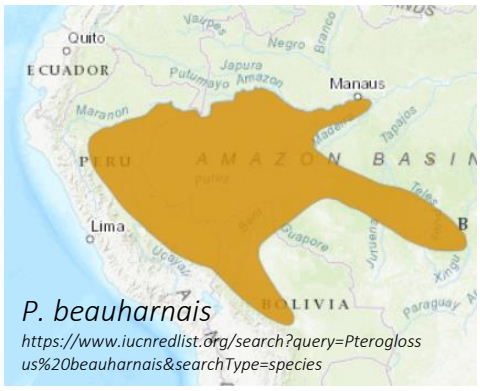
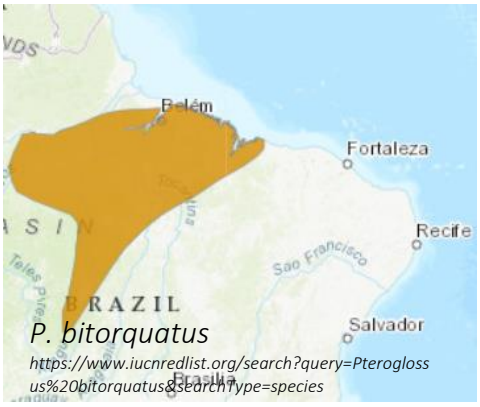
Tityra semifasciata, **Pachakitzi**

Amazona farinosa/ Amazona ochrocephala, **Kintavo**

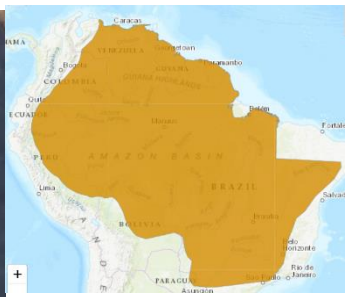
Pteroglossus bitorquatus/ Pteroglossus beauharnais, **Tairinkari**





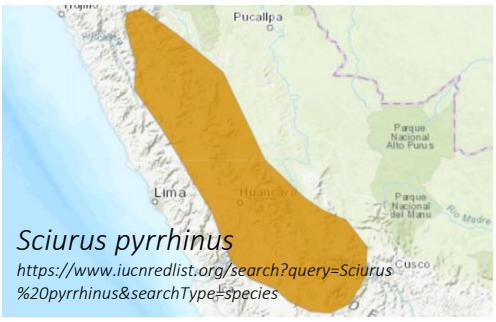
Capito auratus, **Kintyokiri**

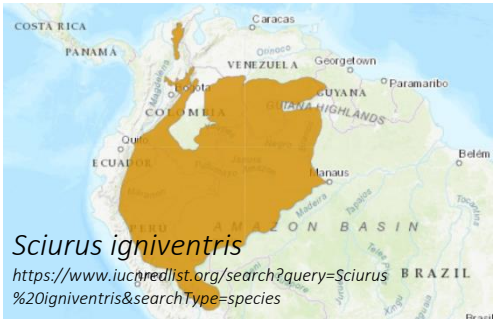
Priodontes maximus/ Cabassous unicinctus / Dasypus novemcinctus **Etzi**



Coendou sp.

Sciurus pyrrhinus/ Sciurus igniventris/ Sciurus spadiceus, **Meiri**

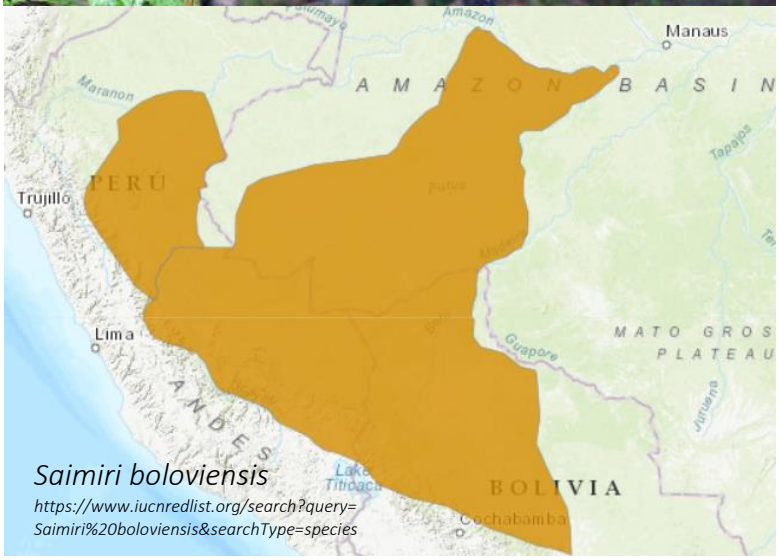




Tapirus terrestris, **Kemari**

Saimiri boloviensis

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black-capped_squirrel_monkey



Saimiri boloviensis
https://www.iucnredlist.org/search?query=Saimiri%20boloviensis&searchType=species