

# Receiving the Armadillo's Song – Oneiric Knowledge Transmission between an Armadillo and a Wise Woman in Sokorpa, a Yukpa territory in Northern Colombia<sup>1</sup>

<https://doi.org/10.25058/20112742.n36.11>

ANNE GOLETZ<sup>2</sup>

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7984-7989>

*Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany*

[anne.goletz@uni-marburg.de](mailto:anne.goletz@uni-marburg.de)

How to cite this article: Goletz, A. (2020). Receiving the Armadillo's Song – Oneiric Knowledge Transmission between an Armadillo and a Wise Woman in Sokorpa, a Yukpa territory in Northern Colombia. *Tabula Rasa*, 36, 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.25058/20112742.n36.11>

Received: March 05, 2020

Accepted: May 05, 2020

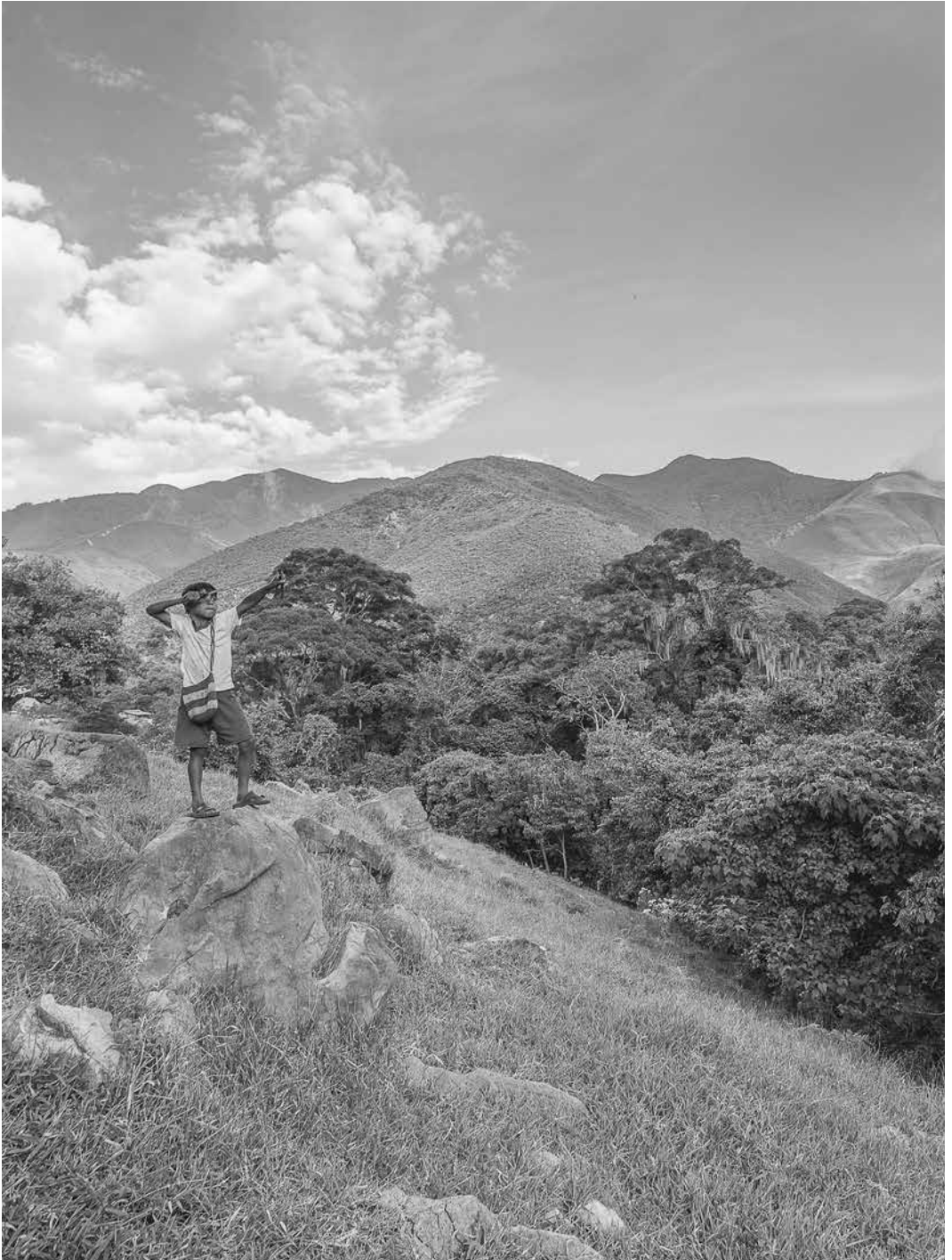
## *Abstract:*

This paper examines the oneiric knowledge transmission/reception between the armadillo *Kamashrhush* and the wise woman Diocelina as a specific and highly individual human-animal relationship. In the context of an Anthropology of Dreaming dominated by the notion of soul-travels, this paper discusses the passive and embodied manner of Sokorpa dream experiences shaped by the visit from the other-than-human realm into the dreamer's everyday life. Furthermore, it highlights the cooperative nature of the relationship between Diocelina and *Kamashrhush* against the backdrop of armadillo-human practices based on (respectful) hunting and avoidance. It proposes ontological similarization as a means for social interactions with other-than-human beings that go without transformation and ontological boundary crossing, elements considered as the core components of interspecies communication in Amazonian anthropological theories.

*Keywords:* anthropology of dreaming; animal-human relation; knowledge transmission; Yukpa, Colombia.

<sup>1</sup> This article presents partial results of the research project "Contextualizing Yukpa Language and Myths: The Linguistic and Ethnological Position of an Outsider in the Cariban Language Family and the Northern Andean Lowlands" (HA 5957/11-1), funded by DFG (German Research Council) and the doctoral thesis in progress about transhuman communication among the Sokorpa Yukpa in the Serranía de Perijá, Colombia, financed by a Ph.D. grant from Evangelisches Studienwerk Villigst.

<sup>2</sup> Doctoral student and research associate at the Department for Social and Cultural Anthropology.



**2016 - Hunting birds in the Serranía de Perijá, Chris Schmetz**  
*Chris Schmetz*

## Recibiendo el canto del armadillo: transmisión onírica de saberes entre un armadillo y una mujer sabia en Sokorpa, territorio yukpa al norte de Colombia

### Resumen:

Este artículo analiza la transmisión y recepción onírica de saberes entre el armadillo *Kamashrbush* y la mujer sabia Diocelina como una relación humano-animal específica y altamente individual. En el contexto de una antropología del sueño dominada por la noción de viajes del alma, este artículo expone la manera pasiva y encarnada de las experiencias oníricas en Sokorpa configurada por la visita del ámbito no-humano en la vida cotidiana de las personas que están soñando. Además, destaca la naturaleza cooperativa de la relación entre Diocelina y *Kamashrbush* contra el trasfondo de las prácticas armadillo-humano basadas en la caza (respetuosa) y la evasión. Propone la similarización ontológica como medio para las interacciones sociales con seres no-humanos que suceden sin transformación o cruce de límites ontológicos, elementos que se consideran esenciales de la comunicación entre especies en las teorías antropológicas amazónicas.

*Palabras clave:* antropología del sueño, relación animal-humano, transmisión de saberes, yukpa, Colombia.

## Receber o canto do tatú: transmissão onírica do conhecimento entre um tatú e uma mulher sabia em Sokorpa, um território Yukpa no norte da Colômbia

### Resumo:

Esse artigo pesquisa a transmissão/ recepção onírica do conhecimento entre o tatú *Kamashrbush* e a mulher sabedora Diocelina, como uma relação específica e muito individual entre o ser humano e o animal. Na perspectiva de uma antropologia do sonho, dominada pela noção de viagens da alma, esse artigo trata as formas passivas e encarnadas das experiências oníricas em Sokorpa, que se formam com uma visita desde o domínio não humano à vida cotidiana dos sonhadores. Além disso, sublinha a natureza colaboradora da relação entre Diocelina e *Kamashrbush* no contexto das práticas entre tatús e humanos, baseadas na caça respeitosa e na tentativa de evitá-la. Igualmente, propõe uma semelhança ontológica como médio para as interações sociais com seres distintos dos humanos, que passam sem a transformação e cruzamento de fronteiras ontológicas, elementos considerados como componentes básicos da comunicação entre espécies nas teorias antropológicas amazônicas.

*Palavras-chave:* antropologia do sonho, relação humano-animal, transmissão de conhecimento, yukpa, Colombia.

It is March 2016 when I first hear about the oneiric encounter between the armadillo Kamashrhush and Diocelina, an elderly wise woman with whom I spend much of my time in Sokorpa. Since Diocelina can no longer walk well, she spends most of the time in her house, sitting next to the fireplace. During my visits, she tells me about the time when the world was still in its formation and the time when the non-Yukpa people came into their territory. She also reports the latest news about the villagers, most of whom are her nieces, nephews, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As always during my visits, fathers and mothers enter with their sick children. Diocelina blows on the children's bodies, spits in her hands and rubs them over the affected areas. In between, she sings:

*mmh mhm abaha hab ena nepa  
oh ah ah ah ah yukpa shi kewe  
yayeno amo  
metapo amorh  
anipapi  
ona shi kachash  
yin nopa sayak  
emashik ona*

*mmh mhm abaha hab we are here  
oh ah ah ah ah you Yukpa people,  
if you are really  
listening/understanding,  
forever  
on the children  
you put this,  
your hands.*

Diocelina explains, that this is the song the armadillo Kamashrhush has transmitted to her during a nocturnal visit. The lyrics speak from Kamashrhush's perspective and advise her to listen in order to receive the knowledge to cure sick children by the laying on of her hands. Diocelina reports that she quickly memorized the song by repeating it several times. From then on, Kamashrhush started to visit her regularly in her dreams.<sup>3</sup>

Sokorpa is a Yukpa territory in the Serranía de Perijá, a mountain chain in the Colombian and Venezuelan border area.<sup>4</sup> The people in Sokorpa generally avoid interaction with other-than-human beings. However, there are individuals characterized as *tuwancha*, literally meaning 'one who knows a lot/has plenty of knowledge'<sup>5</sup> that are skilled in dealing with the other-than-human realm. Previous introduction to a specific knowledge area notwithstanding, the call by other-than-human beings that equip the specialists-to-be with the necessary knowledge repertoire, is the decisive factor in the vocation of a specialist. This paper examines

<sup>3</sup> I dedicate this article to Diocelina Restrepo, who impressed me with her tremendous wealth of knowledge. I am grateful for her contribution to my research, for her efforts to teach me as much as possible, and to make sure that I record everything on my recording device.

<sup>4</sup> The Serranía de Perijá is habitat for about 17-18,000 Yukpa people. On Colombian territory, there are six self-administered Yukpa territorial units: Sokorpa, Iroka, Menkwe, El Koso, Caño Padilla, and El Rosario. Sokorpa belongs to the municipality of Becerril, Department of Cesar. I want to thank the official representative Esneda Saavedra Restrepo and all inhabitants of Sokorpa for the support of my research.

<sup>5</sup> The word consists of the impersonal possessive prefix *t-*, the superlative suffix *-cha* and the radical *wano*, which is commonly translated to knowledge/wisdom.

the oneiric knowledge transmission/reception between the armadillo Kamashrhush and the *tuwancha* Diocelina as a specific and highly individual human-animal relationship. In the context of an Anthropology of Dreaming dominated by the notion of soul-travels, this paper discusses the passive and embodied manner of Sokorpa dream experiences shaped by the visit from the other-than-human realm into the dreamer's everyday life. Furthermore, it highlights the cooperative nature of the relationship between Diocelina and Kamashrhush against the backdrop of armadillo-human practices based on (respectful) hunting and avoidance. It proposes ontological similarization as a means for social interactions with other-than-human beings that go without transformation and ontological boundary crossing, elements considered as the core components of interspecies communication in Amazonian anthropological theories.

In South American Anthropology, dreams are regarded as a «privileged mode of communication» (Kohn, 2007b, p. 12) between humans and other-than-human beings (e.g., Orobítg Canal y Pitarch, 2017, p. 15; Perrin, 1990b, p. 8). Furthermore, they are considered as «sources of knowledge» (Peluso, 2004, p. 108), as «vehicle[s] of shamanic power» (Kracke, 1990, p. 145, my translation) and as «means of acquiring power» (Idoyaga Molina, 1990, p. 207, my translation) from the other-than-human realm. Anthropological studies account for extensive knowledge acquired while dreaming, such as expertise in ritual and ceremony practices, healing techniques, names, careers and political decisions etc. (Kilborne, 1981; Spaulding, 1981). Songs seem to be among the most popular oneirically acquired goods (e.g., Graham, 1995; Townsley, 1993). Many ethnographies account for the link between specialists and the phenomena of dreaming as an enactment of specialized knowledge and/or as a source of such. In these accounts dreaming is often described as soul-travel, which is probably the most dominant theory in the Anthropology of Dreaming (e.g., Lohmann, 2003, pp. 2–6; 2007, p. 43; Perrin, 1990b, pp. 7–8) and also the subject of many dream studies in South American indigenous anthropology (e.g., Orobítg Canal y Pitarch, 2017; Perrin, 1990a). The soul-travel theory implies that the soul leaves the dreamer's body and travels to other realms where it encounters and interacts with the souls of other-than-human beings. The concept of dreaming as a soul-journey goes back to Tylor (1871) and his theory of animism as a 'doctrine of the soul and of spiritual beings'. Tylor's evolutionistic perspective has been widely criticized by later anthropologists, but the centrality of the soul remains in contemporary anthropological engagements with indigenous socio-cosmologies (Swancutt y Mazard, 2018, p. 8; Pedersen y Willerslev, 2012, p. 465). This is also the case with the widely adopted theories of Descola's New Animism (1992, 2013) and Viveiros de Castro's Amazonian Perspectivism/Multinaturalism (1998, 2004). As the «subjective aspect of being» (Viveiros de Castro, 2004, p. 466) associated with consciousness, intentionality and social

agency, the soul is regarded as the common ground of the continuity between humans and other-than-human beings. Sharing a similar interiority (soul), it is the physicality – «the body as a bundle of affects and capacities» (Viveiros de Castro, 2004, p. 475) – that makes up the ontological differences between the species of the socio-cosmos. Interspecies communication and other forms of social interaction are associated with certain circumstances (e.g., rituals, trances, dreams) and specialized knowledge. Specialists (often denoted as shamans) have «the power to transcend at will the discontinuity of forms» (Descola, 2013, p. 127), and are able to «cross ontological boundaries deliberately and to adopt the perspective of nonhuman subjectivities» (Viveiros de Castro 2004, p. 468). In this context, oneiric encounters and knowledge acquisition from the other-than-human realm are considered to be induced and controlled activities experienced by the dreamers' souls in an otherworld.

But, how does oneiric knowledge acquisition take place when the role of the dreamer/specialist is rather passive and subject to visits from the other-than-human realm rather than soul-journeys into other worlds? And, what do encounters between human dreamers and other-than-human visitors look like when the dreamer's soul does not leave the body or crosses ontological boundaries? To answer these questions, I examine the oneiric knowledge transmission/reception between the armadillo Kamashrhush and the wise woman Diocelina. In my first step, I concentrate on Diocelina's dream experiences and examine Kamashrhush's nocturnal visits and the conditions of knowledge transmission/reception. In my second step, I discuss the relationship between Diocelina and Kamashrhush in the context of other human-armadillo practices. In both steps, I start with a summary rendition of firsthand- and secondhand dream accounts by Diocelina and her kin before analyzing them.<sup>6</sup> In terms of good traceability, I use the term 'Kamashrhush' (sok.<sup>7</sup> for 'armadillo') when referring to the personalized armadillo that Diocelina encounters and the term 'armadillos' when referring to the entire armadillo population.

### Receiving Knowledge in a Dream

The same day that I hear the armadillo's song for the first time, Diocelina and her kin tell me how she received it. The oneiric encounter took place about 15 years ago when Diocelina was already an elderly woman. Her sister remembers

<sup>6</sup> The extracts of firsthand and secondhand dream accounts, informal conversations, narratives, songs, and field notes come from my fieldwork in the Sokorpa territory and surroundings between 2014 and 2019. Many thanks to Tintin, whose Spanish name is Diomedes de Jesús Bernal Fernández, for the translations from Yukpa to Spanish and for illuminating discussions and helpful concepts such as the shoulder bag. Furthermore, I would like to thank Ernst Halbmayr, Michaela Meurer, Silvana Saturno, Stefanie Schien, Wilson Largo and two anonymous reviewers for comments and suggestions.

<sup>7</sup> The abbreviation sok. marks Yukpa terms of the language variant spoken in Sokorpa. Sp. marks Spanish terms. The term 'kamashrhush' denotes the big armadillo in contrast to the small armadillo (sok. *norhi*).

that Diocelina had been very attentive since her childhood, had a particular quick grasp and therefore had a wealth of knowledge that grew over the years. She was skilled in telling the stories about the formation of the world, in singing animal songs or the songs of deceased kin, in healing with medicinal plants and in supervising the cultivation and harvesting of maize while maintaining a spiritual bond with the master of maize. Until the moment she received the armadillo's song, however, she had never encountered the armadillo Kamashrhush. Let me summarize the dream accounts.

Diocelina and her husband live just outside the community. She is home alone with her grandchildren that night. Suddenly they hear a song. They are amazed to hear anyone outside so late at night, but guess that it is their distant neighbor on his way home. Before falling asleep, Diocelina's grandson asks her to sing the song. Since she had the ability to memorize things quickly, she is able to reproduce the song and repeats it several times until she falls asleep. In her dream, a human-like being appears to Diocelina and professes to be the armadillo Kamashrhush. He states that he wants to come to her house to eat the worms that have gathered on the humid floor. «Our food, the worm, is among you,» he states and continues, «we are suffering because everything is burned.» As it is clearing time, the armadillos are suffering a food shortage. However, the dogs and cats outside the house frighten Kamashrhush and so he ran away. Diocelina and her grandchildren heard the mewing of the cats in the evening. Now they realize that the singing visitor in the evening was not their neighbor, but Kamashrhush. He wanted to appear as a person in her house and proposes that Diocelina should, «Give the cat to another one, so that you get to know me, so that I can appear to you in your house.» As Diocelina does not agree, Kamashrhush invites her to come to a place next to the family's cassava field, «Go around six o'clock in the morning to the water canyon. I will talk to you.» Diocelina wants to follow the invitation, but her husband and children, who return at night, hold her back. It has rained at night and is cold outside and thus the way is too dangerous for an old and fragile woman. The next day, her son and her daughter-in-law go to get cassava. They return excitedly and report that the earth at the water canyon has tilted just as Kamashrhush announced before «If you do not pay attention to me, the earth will tilt.» A few days after, Diocelina's grandson comes to convince her about the authenticity of her dream experience. He too was visited by Kamashrhush and says, «Well grandmother, that is not a lie.»

In the oneiric visit, Kamashrhush tells Diocelina why he approaches her, «I came to you so that you know how to cure children, so that you will heal children forever.» He explains that she will heal children from colds, diarrhea, fever and vomiting by laying on of her hands. «You will always put on your hands,» Kamashrhush says. He promises to help Diocelina to fulfill her duty saying, «you

will keep on [healing], but we are going to help you.» Additionally, Kamashrhush gives her the ability to shoo clouds and thus to influence the weather. He says «If you really listen to us, we will be with you. You only do like this [arm movement] to calm the wind or thunder. This [knowledge to appease] will stay with you forever.» Since then, Diocelina has used her knowledge. On some days, she cures five or more sick children. Whenever there is a strong wind and a storm, Diocelina raises her hands and shoos away the clouds.



*Diocelina and her great-grandson, Sokorpa 2016. Anne Goletz*

### ***Be Visited Surprisingly***

Let us have a closer look at the following aspects: Kamashrhush's oneiric visit surprises Diocelina and initially causes uncertainty. To assuage her doubts, Kamashrhush offers to prove his authenticity. He acts as the driving force of the oneiric encounter and knowledge transmission, while Diocelina's role is rather passive and receptive.

In Sokorpa, people often start sharing their dream experiences by saying «*Wosütü nin...* (sok. for 'my dream was...').»<sup>8</sup> Whereas their Chibchan-speaking neighbors, the Ette emphasize the dreamer's active involvement in dream practice, people in Sokorpa do not practice dreaming, rather they have dreams.<sup>9</sup> They do not induce dreams. Therefore, dream events are usually unexpected, they surprise the dreamer and initially cause uncertainty, as was the case with Diocelina. Let me quote Diocelina's account about how she shared her dream with her son and grandson after the first oneiric visit by Kamashrhush.

<sup>8</sup> People usually share their dreams with their immediate family and if these dreams are significant for the community, they also share them with a larger audience. However, dream sharing and interpretation are not at center of social life, as it is the case with the Ette (Niño Vargas (2007, p. 137) or the Wayuu (Perrin (1997, ©1995).

<sup>9</sup> Niño Vargas (2007, p. 156) reports that the Ette share their dream experiences with the verb construction 'to have dreamed' but cannot pronounce the noun-phrase 'I have had a dream'. In Yukpa language, dreaming is expressed by a noun phrase. The word '*wosütü*' is the first person possessive prefixed word for dream and '*nin*' the past tense form of the auxiliary verb 'to be'.



Well, I was singing this [Kamashrhus's song. My grandson] woke up «Oh, that you won't forget it.» [My son] came in the morning. I was singing, «But what is it, mother?» «You don't, you don't know [what happened to me]. I do not know, in my dream came a person that said [...] I don't know...I'm going to...» «What mother?» he said. «I don't know...I'm going to...when a child is sick...I don't know...I'm going to recuperate it,» I told [my grandson]. «Really grandmother?» [he said] «Yes.»

The Kamashrhus's first visit leaves Diocelina with a certain speechlessness. She is uncertain about the visitor's authenticity and his explanations about her new duty and repeats his words with doubt emphasizing her lack of certainty. She reports the questions that initially went through her mind, «I don't know who it is. What might that be that comes in my dreams, at night and sometimes during daytime?» Many expectant specialists report on their initial doubts about the visitor's authenticity, who in other cases, may be a deceased *tuwancha*, the creator god *Aponto* or the bringer of maize *Unano*. The dreamers are afraid that the oneiric appearance is a trap by a wicked being (e.g., a bad spirit or the devil *Tiaprho*<sup>10</sup>) or merely fear a negative outcome. Equally dominant is the image of the hazardous encounters with animal owners and spirits of dead ancestors. Therefore, the visitors must create trust and ease the dreamer's doubts. Many specialists report that their oneiric visitors invite them to a lonely place where they reveal themselves in human-like guise or manifest their agency in weather or other environmental phenomena. Kamashrhus tells Diocelina of his intention to appear to her in human-like guise, «If you could only see us,» he says. The intended proof seems complicated, but Kamashrhus is persistent. He finally succeeds to create trust by causing a landslide and by appearing to Diocelina's grandson in an extra-dream experience. The dream experiences are marked by Kamashrhus's activities. He is the driving force of the dream events while Diocelina's role is rather passive and receptive: he visits – she is visited, he talks – she listens, he transmits – she receives, he instructs – she executes. This role allocation between a passive dreamer and an active oneiric visitor reflects what Lohmann (2007, p. 43) summarizes in his visitation theory:

Dreams represent spiritual visitations to a stationary dreamer [... T]he special and meaningful identity of the people encountered in dreams is the focus, as in the sense of oneself as a passive recipient of the dream rather than an active agent. The model calls attention to the immobile nature of the sleeping bodies, explaining dream images as coming from somewhere or someone else.

<sup>10</sup> In narrative practice, people present the devil *Tiaprho* as the antagonist of the creator god *Aponto*. In his denomination ('*Tiaprho*' is an abbreviation of the Spanish word for devil '*diablo*') and his role as the opponent of a creator god with positive connotations, he resembles the image of the devil in Christianity.

Whereas dream events that correspond to the notion of soul-travel focus on the dreamer's active engagement with the other-world, visitation dreams center on the oneiric visitors (and the possible message they bring) while the dreamer's active potential is limited. Niño Vargas (2007) argues that the dreamer's passive or active mode in dream experiences are not mutually exclusive. He describes how the Ette report active dream experiences associated with extracorporeal soul-travel and rarer but more meaningful – passive dream experiences related to the delivery of messages by ancestors, deities or other supernatural entities. The presence of both is also reported for the Maya Quichés of Momostenago in Guatemala (Tedlock, 1997). In Sokorpa, the passive mode is predominant in almost all dream experiences. This also applies to dreams in which the dreamers receive specific information that they had hoped for (e.g., medication, song). The dream accounts point to a revelation rather than to an active search for information. A man reported for example that in his dream a deceased person revealed to him the correct mixture of medicinal plants and the respective healing method in order to heal a currently ill person. Again, the focus is on the oneiric visitor and the information he reveals rather than on the dreamer's active engagement with the other-than-human domain. The dreamers are attentive and expectant of the dream contents, however, I have not observed any particular practices to induce these dream experiences.<sup>11</sup> The dreamer's role in Sokorpa is observant and receptive. This role assignment is also evident on a linguistic level cf. for the Ette (Niño Vargas, 2007, 168). In dream accounts, people use transitive verb constructions in which the oneiric visitor holds the subject position and the dreamer the object position. For example, «So in my dream he told me (sok. *orba tūwoset sb[a]ikarhi*)» or «*Aponto* showed me everything (sok. *towarha sha nipomo aponto*).» The frequent use of the directional *sha* (sok. for 'towards') emphasizes the notion that the activities are directed to the dreamers rather than emanating from them.

### ***Hang Knowledge On***

Let me turn to another aspect; the oneiric knowledge transmission/reception<sup>12</sup> is embedded in Diocelina's everyday life. It is intertwined with her ordinary waking-state practices, involves her habitual environment and is subject to embodied experiences.

<sup>11</sup> Also Hallmayer (1998, pp. 246–247) and Wilbert (1960, pp. 132–133) who report on people who receive songs in their dreams, do not mention any specific preparation or dream inducing practices. However, there are practices to avoid certain dream events. In Sokorpa people use specific plants to protect themselves from unwanted oneiric visits by ancestor spirits.

<sup>12</sup> Though 'dream learning' is more widely used in literature (e.g., Devereux 1975; Kilborne 1981, p. 173). I decided to use oneiric knowledge transmission/reception which is more appropriate to the passive mode of dream experiences. In Goletz (2020) I have compared the oneiric transmission with Descola's (2013, pp. 329–335) transmission as a hierarchical and univocal mode of relation based on temporal connection.

Diocelina and her grandchildren hear Kamashrhus's song, which they initially ascribe to their far neighbor before they go to bed and fall asleep. Her grandson and daughter-in-law see the landslide caused by Kamashrhus in the morning after the first oneiric encounter. Another grandson even encounters Kamashrhus in human-like guise in an extra-dream experience. Furthermore, Diocelina applies the received knowledge, sings, heals children and appeases storms during her waking state. The oneiric encounter between Diocelina and Kamashrhus is not detached from Diocelina's everyday life or limited to a specific dreamscape, but intertwined with her waking states. This is also true for other dream events that are not subject to knowledge transmission. A quite common though unpopular dream experience is the encounter with an animal owner when hunters overexploit a specific species or area. Several men in Sokorpa report dream experiences in which an animal owner warns them and in the final instance punishes them for their excessive hunting practices.<sup>13</sup> These owners appear to them, often in human-like conditions, admonish them and finally punish them for their misbehavior. While most encounters take place in dream experiences, they are accompanied by visionary and fainting experiences as well as lasting consequences for the hunters such as hunting failures and physical discomfort. The continuity between waking and oneiric experience is one of the central topics in recent volumes on Amerindian dreaming (Orobitg Canal y Pitarch, 2017) and cross-cultural dream studies (Glaskin y Chenhall, 2013). In Sokorpa, dream experiences commonly take place in the dreamer's habitual surrounding and not in «dreamlands» (Orobitg Canal, 2002, p. 405, my translation) or distant foreign places (Niño Vargas, 2007, 303, 312) as stated for soul-travel dreams. «For this we have come to you,» says Kamashrhus, as reported by Diocelina. In Diocelina's dream experience the settings are her house, the forecourt and the family's cassava field. Kamashrhus visits these areas, influences them (e.g., cat meows) and leaves his traces (e.g., landslide).

«The soul leaves the body during dreams» writes Rivière (1998, p. 142) in his well-known article on soul-concepts among Cariban-speakers in the Guianas. Many Cariban-speakers, especially in the Guianas, have multiple souls located in different parts of their body or even outside their body that may go on a journey and act as a person's double, mirror or shadow (Basso, 1977, p. 16; Halbmayr, 2010, p. 586). In Sokorpa, people have just one *yokarh* (sok. for 'vital essence, soul')<sup>14</sup> that does

<sup>13</sup> Similar figures that represent and protect a specific animal species or a specific area are discussed in the ethnographic literature as animal masters or owners (e.g. Fausto 2012; Kohn 2007). In Sokorpa there are different kinds of animal representatives. Many animals, in addition to or instead of a chief (sok. *yowatpū*) of their specific species, are protected by an owner (sok. *yosarh*) of their habitat. While the former - in addition to its human-like condition - is primarily conceptualized in its animal condition, the latter is conceptualized as a deceased Yukpa person.

<sup>14</sup> The term *yokarh* is marked by the third person possessive prefix *y-* and the possessive suffix *-hū*. In contrast, *Okato*, the collective of spirits of the dead, is impersonal and marked by the plural suffix *-to*. See Halbmayr (2010, p. 537) and Rivière (1998) for cognate forms in Cariban languages.

not detach voluntarily nor temporally. When a person's *yokarb* leaves its owner's body this usually implies the end of its human existence or death. While alive, *yokarb* is an integral part of a person and is rarely materialized as independent matter. Dream experiences are not associated with the soul. Hence, theories that build on soul-detachments during a person's lifetime (e.g., dreaming as soul-travel, shamanism as shape-shifting) and define the dream images as «experiences and perceptions of the dreamer's soul» (Lohmann, 2007, p. 43) are of limited use in conceptualizing them. In Sokorpa, dreaming is an embodied experience that involves the dreamer's whole condition of being. Since the dreamer's role is rather passive, it is the activity of the oneiric visitor that affects the dreamer and may even inscribe (in)to the dreamer's condition of being. Often these consequences are negative and restrictive for the dreamer (e.g., headaches, unpleasant persistent smell, lame legs and arms or bruises). Knowledge transmission dreams, in contrast, also have beneficial consequences as they equip the dreamer with specific knowledge and the respective tools to apply it. In Diocelina's case, Kamashrhush transmits the knowledge of how to appease heavy rain and storms and to heal children by means of an arm movement, a song and effective hands.<sup>15</sup> The dream accounts show that the conceptualization of the transmission/reception of the knowledge resembles the handling of a good (sometimes even materialized), passed from the oneiric visitor's hand/possession to the dreamer. It is grabbed and memorized by and hanged and attached (in)to the dreamer.

Let me cite Diocelina reporting Kamashrhush's words, «The weather is in **our hands**. This is what you are asking for. Will you **place** it [knowledge to influence weather] **in your hands** (sok. *owaya nan ima otūs, marh itukani motüt, amu chap imash tan s-aya-s ma kanu psk*)?» In Yukpa language, people use the term 'hand' supplemented by an auxiliary verb, to express material and non-material possession.<sup>16</sup> The question whether Diocelina was to receive this knowledge contains the verb to put/place (sok. *aya*). In his secondhand account, Diocelina's grandson uses the verb to give (sok. *to*), «Then he **gave** these [plants] to grandmother (sok. *onich rhat wat orh [wicha] chuchich na yo-to-mak*).» People use these words frequently in everyday language to describe spatial or possessive relocations of objects. Further examples focus on knowledge reception, one of the few moments when Diocelina becomes the actor of the dream event. Diocelina's grandson states, «And then my grandmother **grabbed** it [knowledge] in her dream (sok. *onich rhat chuchich tüwosütü n-apoya-k*).» He uses the word '*apoy*' a common verb that people use

<sup>15</sup> I have defined this knowledge as incorporated, as it enables the specialists to influence the other-than-human realm directly and individually through the use of their hands, their voice, and their breath. There are also specialists that receive verbal knowledge (e.g., mythical and divine teachings) whose implementation requires collective actions (e.g., dances, sermons); see Goletz (2020).

<sup>16</sup> The phrase '*owaya nan ima*' means 'weather is in our hands' respectively 'weather is in our possession' or 'we own/have weather.' See Largo (2011 (revised 2014), pp. 98–99) on possessive constructions.

to express the (temporary) appropriation of tangible things (e.g., to grab/catch/embrace sb. or sth.) and intangible things (e.g., to memorize a song). It is striking that none of these examples pronounces the transmitted and received 'object' as knowledge. Diocelina and her kin use a demonstrative pronoun or name the domain that the specific knowledge concerns: *owaya* (sok. weather) stands for the knowledge to influence weather. In another example, *wicha* (sok. for plant, leaf) stands for the knowledge to heal children. Although Diocelina heals by laying on her hands and using her breath and saliva, she has a great deal of knowledge about medicinal plants and uses them too. The grandson refers to the plants as an allegory for her healing knowledge. Other examples show that the knowledge is not just given and received, but is in a way attached, solidified and hung in/on Diocelina. «This **will stick** to you forever (sok. *amorh wat anipap op pip-chasi*)», as Diocelina remembers Kamashrhus's words. The term '*pip(i)*' means sticky and points to the attachment of the knowledge. However, this attachment requires an active occupation with the knowledge. When Diocelina receives Kamashrhus's song, she sings it repeatedly following Kamashrhus's order to memorize it/have it in her mouth, «Oh Yukpa, you better have it [song] **inside** [the mouth] (sok. *yukpa shi amo karharh otana yayi*)». Similarly, Kamashrhus's use of the word '*ita*' points to an active engagement with the received knowledge as the term refers both to listen and to understand, «If you are really **listening/understanding** (sok. *yayeno amo m-eta-po amorh*)». Furthermore, the dream accounts describe a strategy to solidify the knowledge by means of a treatment with smoke of specific plants. A few days after Kamashrhus's first visit, Diocelina's grandson treats her with smoke and comments, «He [Kamashrhus] **hung it [knowledge] in/on** my grandmother (sok. *chuchich arhita-n nayak*)». The term '*arhita*' may be translated as the adjective 'hanging'. People use it to refer to an animal 'hanging' in the trees, a person 'hanging' on the arm of their partner or a shoulder bag hanging over someone's body. A local expert helping me to grasp the concept of knowledge transmission/reception explains that it might be thought of as the hanging of a shoulder bag (sok. *mayush*) filled with the specific knowledge on someone's body. It is important to note that in Sokorpa as well as in other Yukpa communities, shoulder bags in addition to their function as containers for carrying goods, are an integral part of a person's condition of being and – as Halbmayr (2018, p. 188; my translation) explains – «an extension and a part of the person and share the spirit of their owner». Shoulder bags not only retain those items relevant to a person's everyday life (e.g., pipe, tobacco, money, identity card), but play an important part in the communication with the other-than-human realm as the pattern of the handle contains messages legible to other-than-human beings (Halbmayr, 2018, p. 188). Similar to the shoulder bag, the knowledge is conceptualized as both a (materialized) object (e.g., weather, plants) and a personal quality (e.g., knowledge to influence weather or to heal children). Its transmission/reception is subject to diverse activities (e.g., to place, give, grab,

stick, memorize, listen/understand, hang) that involve the dreamer's embodied experience and thereby undermine the body-soul-distinction so dominant in the Anthropology of Dreaming.

### **Maintaining a Cooperative People-Armadillo-Relationship**

When I first hear about the relationship between Diocelina and Kamashrhus, I am surprised. So far, people have told me about unpleasant oneiric visits by punishing animal owners. The cooperative relationship is a peculiarity in the context of other people-animal/people-armadillo practices. This aspect is also raised in the dream accounts.

«Yes me. It is us. You really love us. It is true that you respect us,» says Kamashrhus, as reported by Diocelina. By this, he probably refers to the fact that she does not eat armadillos. Her sister adds that the Yukpa people did not eat armadillos as «before they were alive these armadillos, just like a person, and spoke,» but that they have adopted the custom of hunting armadillo from non-Yukpa people. In the oneiric encounter, Kamashrhus informs Diocelina about the decrease in the armadillo population. «Almost our whole being has diminished,» he says and begs, «they should stop killing, there are just a few [armadillos] left.» Kamashrhus further recalls a past encounter with a Yukpa person he indicates as Diocelina's older brother (sok. *arhush*). «This one, your older brother who spread this [clouds].» He recalls the time when the world was still in its formation (sok. *owaya tamorhiya*)<sup>17</sup> and this Yukpa person visited the armadillos. «The Yukpa man has harmed us. He asked us for this [clouds] without pity,» as Diocelina reports Kamashrhus's reproachful words. The Yukpa person took the calabash, in which the clouds were stored, and carried it to his community. Kamashrhus censures the Yukpa person's ingratitude since he broke the command to not speak about their encounter, which the armadillos had asked him for and forgot about them. «We could not find him. I think he abandoned us,» states Kamashrhus. With regard to the harming and ignorant treatment by other Yukpa people, Kamashrhus highlights Diocelina's collaborative attitude. «You listen to me,» and «you do believe me,» and «you have already grabbed everything,» says Kamashrhus, as reported by Diocelina. In contrast to Kamashrhus's memories, Diocelina and her kin emphasize the great service the armadillos have done to the Yukpa people. Thanks to the armadillos, the Yukpa people today have cloudy skies and the switch between day and night. On another occasion, during the time of the flood, the armadillos found the water fountain, caused the water to drain and thereby saved the Yukpa people. Diocelina and her kin associate these past events with the present oneiric encounter and the

<sup>17</sup> *Owaya* refers to space, time and weather phenomena and depending on its context may be translated to world, place, firmament, weather, thunder, etc. *Tamorhiya* expresses the notion of newly/freshly or developing/beginning and refers to processes of development, transformation and formation.

knowledge transmission. «This [knowledge] is not new. This is also from the old [times] when the armadillo was here, when it saved us,» explains her grandson. He continues, «and so Kamashrhush gave this [knowledge] to my grandmother,» relating the knowledge the armadillo used to save the Yukpa people in the past to the knowledge Kamashrhush transmitted to Diocelina.

### *Similarize the Other*

Let me consider another aspect: unlike other Yukpa people that ascribe the armadillo's human-like condition to the past, Diocelina emphasizes the present human-like condition of Kamashrhush and the other armadillos. She similarizes Kamashrhush to her own human condition and thereby enables a cooperative relationship with his species.

When people in Sokorpa talk about *owaya tamorhiya* they present the armadillo in a human-like condition, walking and speaking just as people do. This past human-like condition is not exclusive to armadillos. People in Sokorpa often refer to a generalized human-like condition of many beings that are nowadays considered part of the animal kingdom. The human-like condition got lost due to transformative processes. People tell how in *owaya tamorhiya* these human-like beings consumed maize beer, got drunk and misbehaved. The creator god Aponto finally decided to transform them into animals. He equipped the troublemakers with species-specific physical attributes (e.g., wings, claws) and threw them into the woods. They dispersed according to their species-specific needs and since then they lead an animal existence.<sup>18</sup> People recall the armadillo's past-human existence when telling about the origin of the night or about the rescue from the flood.<sup>19</sup> However, they rarely project this human-like condition on the armadillos they encounter in their everyday life. Let me quote Diocelina's sister recalling a moment in her childhood:

I remember that the nuns<sup>20</sup> were already living here. That day, my brother was telling me the story about the time when the armadillo was a person. I believed him, as he was not eating armadillo. Then we saw an armadillo and I told him, «You say that they were...» «No, but formerly,» he said.

<sup>18</sup> Similar stories on the differentiation of humans and animals are common in South America and also form an important component in Amazonian anthropological theory (e.g., Viveiros de Castro, 2004, p.464).

<sup>19</sup> See Armato (1988, pp. 39-40), Medina (2003, pp. 64-65), and Vannini and Armato (2001, pp. 13-15) for different versions on the transformation of the first human-like beings to animals. This initial transformation is not the sole origin of what people conceive of today as the animal kingdom. Other stories report individual misconduct causing transformation. Another central story is the competition between the creator god Aponto and the devil *Tiaphro* (resp. *Umakshu*) creating domesticated and wild animals. The armadillo's achievements are remembered in the stories on the origin of the night and the times of the flood (Lira Barboza 1999, pp.66-67; Wilbert 1974, p.78).

<sup>20</sup> Since 1960, there has been a mission station in the Sokorpa community that was established by the friars of the Catholic order Capuchins and taken over shortly afterwards by the Catholic order Lauritas.

When talking about *owaya tamorhiya*, Diocelina's brother recalls the armadillo's human-like condition. When seeing an armadillo shortly after and hearing his sister refer to its human-like condition, he vehemently repeats that the armadillo's human-like condition is a matter of the past. His sister further comments on a third practice, his refrain from eating armadillos, that points to another version of the armadillo in which his human-like condition is emergent. As this example shows, and here I am referring to Law and Lien's (2013, p. 366; my supplement) empirical ontology, «the [armadillo] is not general but specific» and depends on the practice in which people relate to armadillos. Different practices (e.g., storytelling, categorizing, hunting) relate to different versions of the armadillo (with past human-like, animal or emergent human-like conditions). These practices and the different armadillo versions can complement and relate to each other and thereby mediate textures of human-armadillo relations. The human-like condition of the armadillo is one available texture. However, not every practice and not every person in Sokorpa relates to this human-like condition and if even if they do, it can be in quite different ways.

Many people today hunt armadillos. I could find no evidence that they see a difference between hunting armadillos and other game animals. There are almost no hunt-related practices that address an animal's human-like condition. The practices that proactively establish contact with the animal owners are not very dominant and also do not establish a social relationship with the hunted animals. Neither are there strategies to de-subjectify prey (Fausto, 2007) «making animals [that are persons] into food» (Costa, 2012, p. 96) as argued for Amazonian hunting and consumption practices. People hunt game animals as game animals (and not as beings with a human-like condition). The animals' past human-like condition – at the center of narrative practices – and their emergent human-like condition are not addressed in ordinary hunting circumstances. However, when the limits of ordinary hunting behavior are exceeded, the emergent animal's human-like condition becomes crucial. Hunters report of oneiric visits by animal owners, often in human-like guise, that warn and ultimately punish them. Respectful hunting obviates the emergence of the animal's human-like condition and permits the hunting of animals without these encounters. The punishment practice seems like an inversion of hunting practice and a mechanism to remind those hunters who ignore the animal's human-like condition of its possible emergence. The case of the armadillo (and possibly of other animals as well) is a little more complex. People emphasize that the Yukpa people did not eat armadillos before (cf. Ruddle, 1970, p. 42). A local expert explains. «Here, well, they always kept much respect for armadillos; today not anymore. [Before] one kept much [respect]» He bases this protective behavior pattern on the armadillo's expertise in finding and attracting springs and rainwater, whereas Diocelina's sister bases it on the armadillo's former human-like condition. Her eating practice underlines her emphasis on the armadillo's human-



like condition; like Diocelina and her kin, she refrains from eating armadillo. «It is true that you respect us,» says Kamashrhush, as reported by Diocelina. In the oneiric conversation, Kamashrhush repeatedly points to Diocelina's respectful behavior and contrasts it with the disrespectful and harmful behavior experienced by others. Divergent from common hunting practices, in the oneiric encounter between Diocelina and Kamashrhush the benchmark of 'respectful' shifts from 'not to overexploit' to 'not to kill at all'. Diocelina does not eat armadillos and in the times when she was still hunting – a peculiarity in the commonly male-dominated hunting business – she did not hunt armadillos. Unlike others, Diocelina's encounter with a human-like armadillo (Kamashrhush) is not a consequence of disrespectful behavior, but results from Diocelina's extraordinarily respectful behavior that is due to her emphasis on the human-like condition of Kamashrhush and his species.

«The armadillos are like Yukpa/persons (sok. *yukpi-rb nay kamashrhush*),» states Diocelina's grandson. This human-like condition *yukpi* or *yukpapi* is not a static attribute, but a conditional quality. The word *yukpapi* consists of the term '*yukpa*' used as an endo- and exonym today and the word *pi*. The etymology of the term '*yukpa*' is not clear, but probably means 'those with the same physicality' (*yu-* a prefix frequently used for body parts; *-pa* expressing the notion of «those of one kind», see Cariage, 1980, p. 15; Halbmayr, 1998, p. 62). Best explained by the concept 'we', the precise reference frame is conditioned by those from whom the speakers demarcate (Halbmayr, 1998, pp. 62–68). The use of the suffix *pi* that expresses the notion that «something is similar or with attributes similar to something» (Largo, 2011 (revised 2014), pp. 79–80) reinforces this conditional quality. Rather than saying that Kamashrhush and the armadillo species are humans, Diocelina and her kin state that the armadillos are like those of their kind. This identification is not limited to physical attributes but includes all kind of social attributes; Kamashrhush speaks, sings, admonishes and shows affects such as fear, disappointment and joy. Characterizing the armadillos as *yukpapi*, in the Spanish language as '*como uno*' (sp. for 'like one'), the speakers similarize the armadillos to their own condition of being and cause their human-like condition to emerge. This similarization, however, implies no sameness. Just as people describe the human-like beings of *owaya tamorhiya* with features corresponding to the species to which they were transformed, Diocelina and her kin describe Kamashrhush with armadillo-specific features, eating worms, being scared of cats and dogs and digging in the ground. Let me quote how Diocelina tells her son about the waking-state encounter between Kamashrhush and her grandson:

He [Kamashrhush] took him [your nephew] to Mericas [neighboring community]. Did you know this about your nephew ...? [Kamashrhush] grabbed your nephew [and he told me] «Grandmother, he is small. He is not big. He has this shell, but he is like this [human-like] as they existed here.»

In his description, Diocelina's grandson refers to both Kamashrhush's armadillo-specific characteristics (as small, with a shell) and his human-like characteristics (as in his past human-like existence). Neither Diocelina's grandson nor Kamashrhush transform or cross ontological boundaries, as suggested by theoretical approaches to interspecies communication in Amazonian Anthropology. In the social interaction between Kamashrhush and Diocelina's grandson or Diocelina, the dream and extra-dream experience is subjected to ontological similarization, which becomes manifest in the armadillo's human-like condition.

### ***Represent One's Species***

Diocelina and Kamashrhush are considered representatives of their species. This representational function builds a bridge between the individual encounter and past, present and future practices between Yukpa people and armadillos.

As with other specialists and their knowledge transmitters, the relationship between Diocelina and Kamashrhush is highly individual and dependent on their individual characteristics and their involvement in maintaining the collaborative relationship. Nevertheless, it also goes beyond the individual level and concerns the species that Diocelina and Kamashrhush belong to, namely humans/Yukpa people and armadillos. In the reported oneiric conversation (e.g., me, you, your – we, ours, us) and in the dream sharing (e.g., he – they) there is a constant change between personal and generalized references. Diocelina repeats Kamashrhush's words, «Yes me. It is us,» that sound like a greeting from an old friend who one has not seen for a long time. Indeed, Kamashrhush's sudden visit surprises Diocelina and initially causes uncertainty. However, she becomes convinced about Kamashrhush's authenticity and recognizes him as belonging to those armadillos that her ancestors encountered in the past. Diocelina remembers these past events through her knowledge of the ancestors' stories about *owaya tamorhiya*. When recalling previous encounters between Yukpa people and armadillos, the dream accounts speak about the «ancient Yukpa (sok. *kasinopano yukpa*)» or the «old Yukpa (sok. *yukpa penano*)», those who belong to a past time and do not live anymore. «This one, your older brother who distributed [clouds] and disappeared [died], as the Yukpa do,» says Kamashrhush in the oneiric conversation. He emphasizes the Yukpa people's mortality and the consequence that the Yukpa person he encountered in the past does not live anymore. Consequently, Kamashrhush addresses Diocelina as the ancient Yukpa person's younger sister creating a genealogical continuity between the ancient Yukpa people and Diocelina. Diocelina and her kin also highlight this genealogical continuity identifying the Yukpa people that the armadillos have encountered in former times as their ancestors. This seems different in the case of Kamashrhush who recalls the past encounters from a first-person plural perspective. Let me quote Diocelina remembering his words:

The ancient Yukpa person came. And he asked us for this [clouds]. This was ours. We are the first to walk in this [clouds] ... Then the Yukpa person harmed us. He asked us for this [clouds] without pity ... And then we gave it to him. «Do not announce us,» we said. And then he went straight.

In Kamashrhush's description, it seems as if he himself had been part of this past encounter. Furthermore, his description implies the merging of his position as an individual (as the one visiting Diocelina) and as collective (as part of the whole armadillo species). This junction also applies to current human-armadillo practices, the individual relationship with Diocelina, e.g., «It is true that you [sing.] respect us... since you [sing.] already sing our song,» and the pluralized relationship with those who hunt armadillos, e.g., «They have killed us all.» In his representational role that crosses time and different practices, Kamashrhush resembles a «magnified singularity», a «singular image of a collectivity» as Fausto (2012, p. 32) formulated for the owner/master of the animals in Amazonia.

Diocelina and Kamashrhush function as representatives of their species and negotiate past, present and future practices between Yukpa people and armadillos, thereby mediating textures of human-armadillo relations. Their role as representatives becomes particularly clear in view of the (hoped-for) consequences of the oneiric encounter and the knowledge transmission. Kamashrhush does not just complain about past and present practices, but he asks for a change in people's behavior. He asks Diocelina to stop the Yukpa people from killing armadillos. «They should stop killing,» he says. In return, Kamashrhush transmits her the knowledge to appease rain and storms in order to prevent the Yukpa people from a further flood, and the knowledge to cure children from cold, flu, diarrhea and other sicknesses in order to prevent the children from suffering and death. However, this knowledge transmission is not exclusively for Diocelina or limited to her lifetime, but has a broader field of recipients. The song addresses the Yukpa people in general and announces an eternal validity:

*mmh mhm abaha hah ena nepa  
oh ah ah ah ah **yukpa** shi kewe  
yayeno amo  
metapo amorh  
**anipapi**  
ona shi kachash  
yin nopa sayak  
emashik ona*

*mmh mhm abaha hah we are here  
oh ah ah ah ah you as **Yukpa people**,  
if you are really  
listening/understanding,  
**forever**  
on the children  
you put this,  
your hands.*

Diocelina died on December 24, 2016. A few months later, I visit her grandson. He tells me once more about the night when Kamashrhush visited Diocelina for the first time, how he transmitted knowledge to her and how she applied it. Then he tells me that Kamashrhush has started to visit him. «I also dreamed with this [Kamashrhush] (sok. *awürh ipayi wosütü mak orb*),» he says and continues, «My grandmother has gone/died. And it [knowledge] has remained with me. Here is the song...» and he starts to sing Kamashrhush's song.

## Conclusion

The image of a proactive shaman that travels by means of soul-journeys in transformed or shifted shape to other worlds dominates South American indigenous anthropology and dream analysis. Sokorpa dream experiences, including those of specialists in transhuman communication, do not fit into this picture. Taking the oneiric knowledge transmission between the armadillo Kamashrhush and the wise woman Diocelina as an example, I make a case for dream experiences that take place without soul-detachments and interspecies communication that is not subject to metamorphosis and ontological boundary crossing. Let me summarize my main findings in two arguments.

1) Sokorpa dream experiences are characterized by visits from other-than-human beings that act as the driving force of the dream events. They approach the dreamer, permeate their everyday life and influence their ordinary habitat and their condition of being. In contrast to the hazardous visits by animal owners that punish hunters for unrespectful hunting practices, the visits by knowledge transmitters are beneficial for the dreamers to become specialists. Taking up the explanation of a local expert, I have illustrated the transmission/reception of knowledge with the hanging of a shoulder bag that involves both the acquisition of an (abstract) object and the extension of a person's condition of being. The dream event, though characterized by the dreamer's rather passive and receptive role, involves their whole condition of being and undermines the body-soul dichotomy so dominant in the Anthropology of Dreaming.

2) In Sokorpa, the modality to enter a cooperative relationship with the armadillo Kamashrhush is not subject to transformation, but to a process that I have termed ontological similarization. This process needs to be understood in the context of different practices and of different versions of armadillo that people relate to in their practices. Unlike other people who accentuate the armadillo's human-like condition with respect to the past (e.g., in storytelling practice), but in their everyday practices ignore or obviate the (potential) emergence of the armadillo's human-like condition (e.g., ordinary hunting and classifying practice), Diocelina emphasizes and respects the armadillos'/Kamashrhush's human-like condition. She refrains from eating armadillo, creates continuity between the past human-like

armadillos and Kamashrhush and listens to and believes Kamashrhush. Diocelina relates to Kamashrhush's/the armadillos' human-like condition as she similarizes him/them with her own condition of being and (as she is human) causes his/their human-like condition to emerge, without ignoring his/their armadillo characteristics (e.g., eating worms, having a shell). Ontological similarization, does not imply sameness or becoming the Other, but provides a basis for the communication between different beings and for the mediation of textures of specific human-other-than-human relations. These textures allow people to create a certain continuity between past, present and future practices while at the same time renegotiating and adapting these textures with each practice. The small insights into the textures of people-armadillo practices in Sokorpa that we get through the oneiric relationship between Diocelina and Kamashrhush point to their multiplicity (e.g., storytelling, hunting practice, knowledge transmission) and flexibility. They comment on changes in the armadillo's condition (from human-like condition to animal/armadillo existence), shifts in hunting practices (from hunting taboo to respectful hunting) and a decrease in the armadillo population. In addition, Diocelina's death and the presumable assumption of her role by her grandson will shed new light on the texture of people-armadillo practices in Sokorpa.

Fundamental to both arguments is the notion of a condition of being that undermines a body-soul separation and a focus on practices in analyzing the people-armadillo relations. This focus follows the move of empirical studies of ontology that «the character of objects (and animals) has no shape or form outside practices and their relations» (Law y Lien, 2014, p. 329). In this tenor, I consider theories and concepts ascribed to a specific 'Amerindian ontology' as tools for anthropologists (and not as generalizable assumptions of people's sense of being). In my example, their applicability, however, is very limited.

With regard to Sokorpa oneiric knowledge transmission, it remains to be asked whether and to what extent the process of ontological similarization also accounts for the social interactions between dreamers and other-than-armadillo visitors such as the creator god Aponto or the maize bringer Unano. And, how other practices such as praying, honoring and gardening relate to, interact with or constrain this process. It is also worth asking whether ontological similarization is a process that applies to dream experiences outside the Sokorpa example and whether there are further processes that account for interspecies relations beyond shamanic soul-travel and transformations.

## References

- Armato, J. (1988). *Lo que cuentan los yukpa*. Maracaibo: Comisión Presidencial para el Bicentenario del Natalicio del General Rafael Urdaneta.
- Basso, E. B. (Ed.). (1977). *Anthropological papers of the University of Arizona: Vol. 28. Carib-speaking Indians: Culture, society and language*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Cariage, P. (1980). Guerre et guerre entre familles chez les Yuko. *Bulletin Société suisse des Américanistes*, 44, 13–26. [https://www.sag-ssa.ch/bssa/pdf/bssa44\\_05.pdf](https://www.sag-ssa.ch/bssa/pdf/bssa44_05.pdf)
- Costa, L. (2012). Making animals into food among the Kanamari of Western Amazonia. En M. Brightman, V. E. Grotti & O. Ulturgasheva (Eds.). *Animism in rainforest and tundra: Personhood, animals, plants and things in contemporary Amazonia and Siberia* (pp.96–112). New York: Berghahn Books.
- Descola, P. (2013). *Beyond nature and culture*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Descola, P. (1992). Societies of nature and the nature of society. En A. Kuper (Ed.). *European Association of Social Anthropologists. Conceptualizing society* (pp.107–126). London: Routledge.
- Devereux, G. (1957). Dream learning and individual ritual differences in Mohave shamanism. *American Anthropologist*, 59(6), 1036–1045. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/666463>
- Fausto, C. (2012). Too many owners: Mastery and ownership in Amazonia. En M. Brightman, V. E. Grotti & O. Ulturgasheva (Eds.). *Animism in rainforest and tundra: Personhood, animals, plants and things in contemporary Amazonia and Siberia* (pp.29–47). New York: Berghahn Books.
- Fausto, C. (2007). Feasting on people: Eating animals and humans in Amazonia. *Current Anthropology*, 48(4), 497–530. <https://doi.org/10.1086/518298>
- Glaskin, K. & Chenhall, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Sleep around the world: Anthropological perspectives. Culture, mind, and society*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Goletz, A. (2020). Tuwancha, “the one who knows”: Specialists and specialized knowledge in transhuman communication among the Sokorpa Yukpa of the Serranía del Perijá, Colombia. En E. Halbmayer (Ed.), *Amerindian Socio-Cosmologies between the Andes, Amazonia and Mesoamerica: Toward an anthropological understanding of the Isthmo-Colombian Area*, (pp. 205-233). London, New York: Routledge.
- Graham, L. R. (1995). *Performing dreams. Discourses of immortality among the Xavante of Central Brazil*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Halbmayer, E. (2018). Los escritos de los objetos: hacia una textualidad material entre los yukpa. *Mundo Amazónico*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.15446/ma.v9n1.64361>
- Halbmayer, E. (2010). *Kosmos und Kommunikation: Weltkonzeptionen in der südamerikanischen Sprachfamilie der Cariben*. Wien: Facultas.

- Halbmayer, E. (1998). *Kannibalistische Sonne, Schwiegervater Mond und die Yukpa*. Frankfurt am Main: Brandes & Apsel.
- Idoyaga Molina, A. (1990). Experiencia onírica entre los pilaga. En M. Perrin (Ed.). *Colección 500 años. Antropología y experiencias del sueño* (pp.195–214). Quito, Roma: Abya-Yala.
- Kilborne, B. (1981). Pattern, Structure, and Style in Anthropological Studies of Dreams. *Ethos*, 9(2), 165–185. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/640080>
- Kohn, E. (2007a). Animal Masters and the Ecological Embedding of History among the Avila Runa of Ecuador. En C. Fausto & M. Heckenberger (Eds.). *Time and memory in indigenous Amazonia: Anthropological perspectives* (pp.106–132). Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- Kohn, E. (2007b). How dogs dream: Amazonian natures and the politics of transspecies engagement. *American ethnologist: a journal of the American Ethnological Society*, 34(1), 3–24. <https://www.humanities.uci.edu/critical/pdf/kohn.pdf>
- Kracke, W. (1990). El sueño como vehículo del poder shamánico: interpretaciones culturales y significados personales de los sueños entre los parintintin. En M. Perrin (Ed.). *Colección 500 años. Antropología y experiencias del sueño* (pp.144–158). Quito, Roma: Abya-Yala.
- Largo, W. (2011 [revised 2014]). *Una gramática del yukpa Colombia. Variantes yukpa zona norte y centro, notas para zona sur*. [http://www.lengamer.org/admin/language\\_folders/yukpa/user\\_uploaded\\_files/links/File/Gramatica11rev.pdf](http://www.lengamer.org/admin/language_folders/yukpa/user_uploaded_files/links/File/Gramatica11rev.pdf)
- Law, J. & Lien, M. E. (2014). Animal architectures. En P. Harvey, E. C. Casella, G. Evans, H. Knox, C. McLean, E. B. Silva, ... K. Woodward (Eds.). *CRESC. Objects and Materials. A Routledge Companion* (pp.329–337). Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Law, J. & Lien, M. E. (2013). Slippery: Field notes in empirical ontology. *Social Studies of Science*, 43(3), 363–378. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306312712456947>
- Lira Barbazo, J. R. (1999). *En la Sierra de Perijá. Introducción al conocimiento zoológico de los aborígenes de la Sierra de Perijá*. Maracaibo: Dirección de Cultura, Gobernación del estado Zulia.
- Lohmann, R. I. (2007). Dreams and Ethnography. En D. Barrett y P. McNamara (Eds.). *The new science of dreaming / ed. by Deirdre Leigh Barrett and Patrick McNamara: vol. 3. Cultural and theoretical perspectives* (pp.35–69). Westport, Conn.: Praeger.
- Lohmann, R. I. (Ed.). (2003). *Dream travelers: Sleep experiences and culture in the western Pacific*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Medina, R. (2003). *Relatos en la lengua Yukpa*. Maracaibo: Fundación Zumaque.
- Niño Vargas, J. C. (2007). *Ooyoriyasa: Cosmología e interpretación onírica entre los ette del norte de Colombia*. Colección Prometeo. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes.

Orobitg Canal, G. (2002). Soñar para vivir. Memoria, olvido y experiencia entre los indígenas Pumé (Venezuela). En R. Piqué y M. Ventura i Oller (Eds.), *América Latina: historia y sociedad: una visión interdisciplinaria: cinco años de Aula Oberta en la UAB* (pp.397–410). Barcelona: Institut Català de Cooperació Iberoamericana.

Orobitg Canal, G. & Pitarch, P. (2017). Los laberintos del sueño: nuevas posibles vías para una antropología del sueño amerindio. *EntreDiversidades. Revista de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades*, 5(9), 9–20. <https://doi.org/10.31644/ED.9.2017.p01>

Pedersen, M. A. & Willerslev, R. (2012). “The soul of the soul is the body”: Rethinking the concept of soul through North Asian ethnography: Symposium: Fuzzy Studies, Part 3. *Common Knowledge*, 18(3), 464–486. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/485826/pdf>

Peluso, D. M. (2004). “That which i dream is true”: Dream narratives in an Amazonian community. *Dreaming*, 14(2-3), 107–119.

Perrin, M. (1997, ©1995). *Los practicantes del sueño: el chamanismo wayuu* (1. ed. en M.A). *Estudios. Serie Antropología*. Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores Latinoamericana.

Perrin, M. (Ed.). (1990a). *Colección 500 años. Antropología y experiencias del sueño*. Quito, Roma: Abya-Yala.

Perrin, M. (1990b). Introducción. Pensar el sueño... y utilizarlo. En M. Perrin (Ed.), *Colección 500 años. Antropología y experiencias del sueño* (pp.5–20). Quito, Roma: Abya-Yala.

Rivière, P. (1997). Carib soul matters - Since fock. *JASO*, 28(2), 139–148. [https://www.anthro.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/anthro/documents/media/jaso28\\_2\\_1997\\_139\\_148.pdf](https://www.anthro.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/anthro/documents/media/jaso28_2_1997_139_148.pdf)

Ruddle, K. (1970). The hunting technology of the Maracá Indians. *Antropológica*, 25, 21–63.

Spaulding, J. (1981). The dream in other cultures: Anthropological studies of dreams and dreaming. *Dreamworks*, 1(4), 330–342.

Swancutt, K. & Mazard, M. (2018). Introduction: Anthropological knowledge making, the reflexive feedback loop, and conceptualizations of the soul. En K. Swancutt y M. Mazard (Eds.). *Studies in social analysis: Volume 6. Animism beyond the soul. Ontology, reflexivity, and the making of anthropological knowledge*, (pp. 1-17). New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Tedlock, B. (1997). Zuni and Quiché dream sharing and interpreting. En B. Tedlock (Ed.), *School of American research advanced seminar series. Dreaming: Anthropological and Psychological interpretations*. 2a Ed., (pp.105–131). Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.

Townsley, G. (1993). Song paths the ways and means of Yaminahua shamanic knowledge. *L'Homme*, 33(126-128), 449–468. [https://www.persee.fr/doc/hom\\_0439-4216\\_1993\\_num\\_33\\_126\\_369649](https://www.persee.fr/doc/hom_0439-4216_1993_num_33_126_369649)

Tylor, E. B. (1871). *Primitive culture: Researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, art, and custom*. London: Murray.



Vannini, M. & Armato, J. (2001). *El mundo mágico de los yukpa*. Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores Latinoamericana.

Viveiros de Castro, E. B. (2004). Exchanging perspectives. The transformation of objects into subjects in Amerindian ontologies. *Common Knowledge*, 10(3), 463–484. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/171397>

Viveiros de Castro, E. (1998). Cosmological deixis and Amerindian perspectivism. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 4(3), 469–488. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3034157>

Wilbert, J. (1974). *Yupa Folktales*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Wilbert, J. (1960). Zur Kenntnis der Parirí. *Archiv für Völkerkunde*, 15, 80–153.