

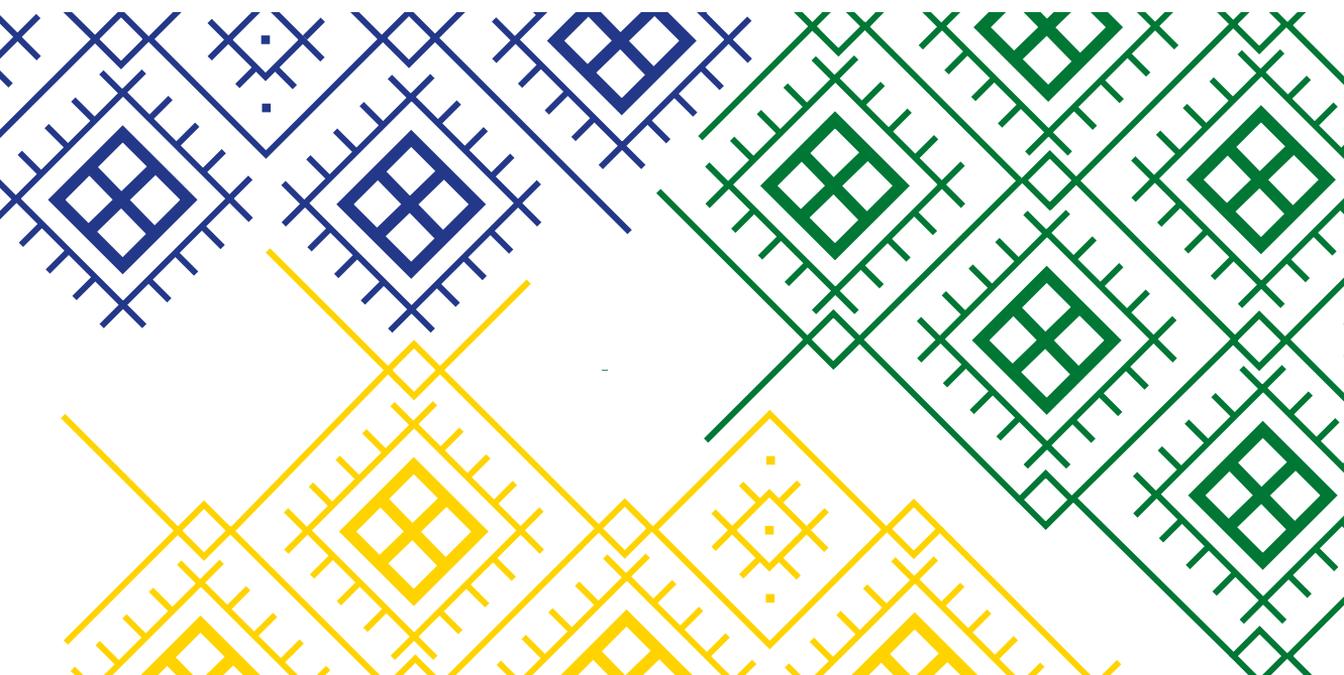
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Gessiane Lobato Picanço
Justino Sarmento Rezende Tuyuka Dúpó
Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen

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Smell and smoke of ceremonial tobacco: Articulating and disarticulating the actions of cosmic beings

Justino Sarmiento Rezende Tuyuka Dupó
Federal University of Amazonas

Abstract

This article addresses the ceremonial use of tobacco among the Utāpinopona (Tuyuka) people of the Upper Rio Negro region, in northwest Amazonia. In the Tuyuka ceremonials, the kumua (specialists) manage their mental powers with mūrōrō (tobacco), patu (coca leaves powder, ipadu), uhpé (rosin), and pērusiti (a fermented manioc drink called caxiri), which are the foods of cosmic beings: the Pamūrimahsã, Waimahsã, Yukūmahsã, Omemahsã, and Būpoamahsã. Through the smells and tastes of ceremonial materials, as well as ancestral words and codes, the kumua negotiate with cosmic beings to ensure their well-being, well-feeling, well-acting, protection, and reassurance from aggression. Ceremonial materials exist in their smells and tastes, which connect the beings that form the central parts of their existence and their powers to act in the world.

Keywords:

Cosmic beings, Tuyuka, cosmo-experience, ceremonial plants, senses, communication

Munoro wanoãriro mena puhti bahtoko, diarigere koã diyoko, añurepere nekame monekore

Justino Sarmiento Rezende Tuyuka Dupó
Universidade Federal do Amazonas

Wede kaksore

Utãpinopona, Ahkõ Ñiriya dihta wahtoa nirã, kuã munó, bahsa burekorire hu tirere wedea anó hoaturige. Bahsa burekorire Kumua bayiro birere wedesera, munó hu, pátu yá, uhpé buhsé, peyuru sihtire bahsé tiya añuro peyuru pamuarõ hirã. Tiera nirõ tia ahti páti mahkãra kuã yaré, kuã niya aniã Pamuribahsoka, Waibahsoka, Yukubahsoka, Omebahsoka, Buhpoábahsoka. Atiyé suhtiañure mena, uhsare mena, wedesere mena, bahsere mena, wedese tihirã añurere buaya, añuro tugeñare, añuro padeware, añuro tugeña ware, añuro diarige wanoã tiya. Atiyé añuro suhsure wahtoa, añuro uhsare wahtoa nirõtia tuhtuare kuã mahsirã bahse sãrige, tebire nihirõ mari dohka niri pátipu, mari sohtoa niri pátipu, mari niri pátipu sodewaku tie, bahsesãrige.

Bayiro-wedesere:

ahtiyé pátiri kahtiribahsoka, Utãpinopona, ahtibureko niretire, pátu, muno bahsawi makañe, tugeñare, wedesere

Introduction

Tuyuka knowledge is transmitted orally and practically, and as a Tuyuka (U̇tãpinopona), I have learned by seeing and listening. I have learned by practicing in everyday life with my grandparents, parents, and relatives. The beginning of my learning took place in the village of Yai-ñiriya (Jaguar River), in northwest Amazonia. Throughout my life, I lived with other Indigenous peoples of the eastern Tukano linguistic family. The first stages of my learning were enriched and expanded by my participation in everyday ceremonies and festivities. The documentation of such knowledge gives continuity to the lives of my oldest relatives, who have already crossed over to the other levels of existence because academic writing can help secure the continuity, visibility, and validity of diverse ancestral knowledge. For me, my academic method is based on our cosmo-experience, and as Indigenous academics we use this method to describe what we learn by listening, seeing, and participating in the daily and festive cultural practices of our relatives. Tuyuka children and grandchildren, as well as other people, acquire knowledge through coexistence. Eduardo, my father, who died in 1996, explained to me that lived knowledge must be transmitted, listened to, memorized, and practiced.

From the age of five years old, my grandfather, Higino, used to take me to the fields to collect coca leaves to prepare *patu* (*ipadu*, or coca powder), and I also saw his small plantations of tobacco. My grandfather and other elders managed the plants with great care, clearing them of weeds, which would have prevented them from growing properly, removing caterpillars from the ground, which would eat the tobacco plants and kill them, and killing any grasshoppers or bees that had landed on the tobacco leaves to feed on them.

Brüzzi (1977, 207–208) described what he saw among the Indigenous people of the eastern Tukano linguistic family in the 1970s: “*ipadú* is the product of *coca*, from the *Erythroxylaceae* family (*Eritbróxilon coca*, Lin.), which is easily picked up from a branch.” He continued: “currently, the plantations of *mõ’ rō tobacco* (*Uaupés mõ’ nõ*) (*Nicotiana tabácum*) are small and rare, and almost only in villages and longhouses with little or no relationship with the outsiders” (Brüzzi 1977, 204). Today, the tobacco is planted by the Indigenous people themselves in some villages but also purchased to prepare cigars. The use of tobacco is not specific only to the Tuyuka people, but to all Indigenous peoples of the Eastern Tukano linguistic family in the northwestern Amazon region. Tobacco is used as snuff and in other ways, depending on the practices of each Indigenous people.

When my grandfather saw that the tobacco leaves were ripe, he would place them in a small *aturá* (basket made of vines), and I would carry them myself since they were light. After resting at home, my grandfather would make a fire and place the tobacco in a ceramic bowl to dry. Since the leaves were green, it would take time for them to dry. They gradually softened, and a liquid came out of the leaves, which then became a wet mass. Inside the house, we could feel the smell of the tobacco. After this process, my grandfather would place the tobacco in another larger bowl. Finally, he would take a piece of wood and prepare slices of the tobacco leaves; he would place the softened tobacco leaves on the wood and place them to dry in the sun. Then, he would bring them home and hang them over a fire. In this way, the tobacco would become very dry and could be used as cigars for everyday and ceremonial consumption purposes. Brüzzi (1977, 204) also described what he observed:

“*They [the Tukano] prepare it in the following way: the men collect the leaves with the stem, reduce everything to small pieces and put them on the fire in a very hot*

pan, stirring the contents until it becomes a dark mass, then compress the dough into small, rounded shapes. Under the action of the sun and smoke, these tobacco loaves harden. When they want to prepare the traditional festive cigar, they crumble the tobacco and roll it in thin sheets of tauari or banana leaves, resulting in the large utikaro cigar, 15 to 20 cm long.”

I saw this type of preparation in the village where I was born, so I am writing about what I saw because I am the son of a Tuyuka father and a Tukano mother. This article addresses the ceremonial use of tobacco among the Ƨtāpinopona (Tuyuka) people of the Upper Rio Negro region, in northwest Amazonia.

Tobacco ceremony

The tobacco ceremony serves to protect people, reassure them, and cure illnesses. In tobacco ceremonies, such positive effects are introduced by a tobacco specialist, who blows the tobacco smoke at them, which the ceremony participants, human people, and cosmic people, all receive by inhaling the smell of the tobacco smoke. The circulation of smoke with the smell does not remain hostage to the ceremonial space: it spreads outwards, transmitting good effects to all cosmic beings. In some places, tobacco powder is also used, which is also known as *rapé* snuff; it is mostly blown into men’s nostrils so that they can assimilate the revitalizing forces that the *kumu* (shaman) or another specialist has inserted into the snuff. In the most basic understanding of the practice, it is done so the person remains awake and does not fall asleep.

Since I was a child, I saw my grandfather Higino singing and dancing to the rhythms of the ceremonial songs at the ritual festivities held in our village. My oldest brother, Henrique, and youngest brother, Francisco, accompanied my grandfather from the first moments of the protection ceremonies, which were carried out by

using *m#rorō* (tobacco), *patu* (coca leaves powder), *uhpé* (rosin), and a drink called *péusiti* (*caxiri*, a fermented manioc substance, or *péru*). All the separate materials have specific smells and flavors. *Ipadu* has a flavor that is a mixture of sweet and bitter, while tobacco has bitter flavor and has a strong smell, white rosin is an enzyme that comes out of a certain tree, forming a hardened mass that is used because of its very pleasant odor, and *caxiri* has a soft, citrusy, sweet smell. Each material has an important meaning in the lives of our people, but it relates particularly to the person who knows each plantation. *Ipadu* and tobacco are planted by men in the fields. It is the same space where the women plant the cassava that will be used to make white and yellow flour. The *caxiri* drink is made from the cassava product; it is the women’s specialty.

Regarding the planting of *patu* (coca), Azevedo (2021, 198) has said the following about the relationship between plants and the types of land:

“The soil needs to be well known when choosing its type in order to prevent future damage. For the purpose of paātu añuse piriāto (to grow and develop well), it is necessary to know how to choose the types of di’ita (land/soil). It grows añusep#ta (well), ñata añusep#ta (beautifully), añuse p#ri buhuse (with branches full of leaves), añuro dobesse (solid stems), añuro p#ri yasase (green leaves) in di’ta ñiro (black earth), and in di’ta soāro (red earth). In addition to knowing how to choose the type of land, the patu ba’ag# has the responsibility of taking care of his plantation to avoid its decline and not be at a disadvantage when collecting.”

Diakara (2021, 233) has described the *caxiri* drink as follows:

“Desana women have the power of wehta niārōpeosis, to inject the effect into drinks, and also of wehta k#odiose, to neutralize the effect of fermented drinks. Kumua men (shaman specialists) use another language,

which is often functional, and which we call pehru numipohse (drink manager). That's why nowadays the rosin and cigar smoke ceremonies are done before planting cassava trees in the fields, in order to perform the rite of connection between Abe (the Sun) and Yeba (the Earth) so that the fields bring the abundance of plantations. The women are experts and knowledgeable about the plants cultivated in cassava, they follow a specific calendar to control the cassava planting season, selecting each type of plant, which can be cultivated in each type of land: dihta ñirō (terra preta), dihta wahro (sandy), and dihta wiitārō (clay)."

Through inhaling the smell of rosin, the taste of the tobacco, and caxiri, cosmic beings become connected to each other. Before the dances started and during the breaks, the men gave speeches and crafted narratives based on the stories of our origins and the current situations they were experiencing. Their wives, grandmothers, and daughters formed dancing pairs during ceremonial feasts. Today, I see my older brothers and my younger brother, from the Upper Tiquié River region in the municipality of São Gabriel da Cachoeira, narrating the origin stories, carrying out ceremonial dialogues with their own intonations, moving their arms up and down, to the right and to the left, and moving their head forward while lifting it. The kumua settled within the *basawi* (community house or ceremonial house), protecting their relatives against diseases and introducing protective effects via ipadu, tobacco (cigars), and rosin. Whoever eats the ipadu and smells the smoke from the ceremonial elements acquires a sense of well-being.

My kumu specialist relatives continue to conduct ceremonies of protection, healing, defense and appeasement even today, to rid people of dangers, among other things, inside the *basawi*. Each of them sits on a bench in the ceremonial house, where they call upon three different powers: kumu, who

is the ceremonial master, bayá, who is master of songs/dances, and yaí, who is a master at diagnosing illnesses. Armed with these powers, they sit for several hours, producing reflections, as they are confronted by the countless illnesses that arise and affect all cosmic beings, not just those considered "people." According to Tuyuka understanding, cosmic beings are *mahsã* – people. The kumua perform the ceremony to protect people by activating the protective powers in the *muno* (tobacco), *patu* (coca), beeswax (or rosin), and fermented manioc drink. *Muno* and *ipadu* form important pairs in the fruit festival and other ceremonial festivals. They are necessary instruments for the specialties of kumu and bayá to function; for songs and dances; and for speeches and rest. They are elements that originate in music, songs, dances, and ceremonial repertoires. Therefore, these elements will appear several times in this study, and their explanations are found in the narratives themselves.

Tobacco makes up the core set of ceremonial materials, appearing, for example, in the *ipadu*, the *caxiri*, the rosin, the *kapi* (ayahuasca), the *maraca*, the water, the rhythm sticks, and the rattles that the kumu and the bayá use. But the materials are more than that: they are in fact, and deep down, activators of the very particles or molecules that protect the house, the village, the countryside, the forest, the birds, the rivers, and the constellations (Rezende 2021, 42–43).

Ceremonial protection deeply affects the cosmic beings as well, for instance when they eat *ipadu* with its sweet and bitter flavor, when they smoke tobacco, when they swallow the smoke, when they inhale the smoke during the smoking with beeswax process, and when they drink the *caxiri* drink. The kumua are people who can activate effects through the power of their mind; they can navigate their way through many places on three levels (underground, our level, and the level above), where they

look for the good things that have escaped from each person, the village, and each people. He brings it back to this level to give back to people so that they feel calm, in tune, and focused on their life projects: caring for the family, working in the fields, fishing, hunting, and getting along with relatives. He can detect/diagnose what might harm the lives of people, villages, and other groups through the strength of his mind, preventing these harmful realities from affecting people and their daily and festive surroundings.

Reached by the good energies activated by the kumu in the tobacco, ipadu, rosin, caxiri inside the ceremonial house (maloca), the beautiful headdresses adorned with appealing plumes and feathers of macaws, herons, japus, toucans, parrots, and harpy hawks are placed on the heads of the *bayaroá* (dance masters and singers). The headdresses sway with the movement of the dance masters, and as they move their heads forward and upwards, the headdresses embellish the dance rhythms. The positive forces activated by the tobacco spread among the people participating in the party, as well as people who are far away and beings who live on other cosmic levels. As I noted earlier, the tobacco has a ritualistic or shamanistic use (Rezende 2021, 63):

“Generally, they smoke, expel the air with their mouth and release a puff of tobacco on the part of the body affected by the pain. Gesturing with both arms, with their left hand holding the cigar lighter, with their mouth they release the puff, and with their right arm they are making a gesture and throwing the causers of the disease very far away.”

My relatives have always incorporated birds from the northwestern Amazon into the ceremonies, and these birds move through the Tuyuka body and the Tuyuka fly according to the movement of the feathers: the brightly colored yellow, red, green, and white feathers. Ropes of rattles are tied to the dancers’ right ankles; with

strong steps, the rattles emit both heavy and light sounds, making the dances very rhythmic. In some dances, dance masters use appropriate hollow sticks (*bastões*), hold them with their right hand, and hit the ground according to the melody of the music, sometimes hitting the ground with more force and other times more lightly, as percussion instruments. In this way, the tree people dance with the Pamurimahsã (people from the Eastern Tukano linguistic family); their rhythms, beats, and rattle noises are the way they sing and dance with humans. The Waimahsã (people of water, land, fish, insects, and so forth), Yukumahsã (people-forests), Omemahsã (people-clouds, air, wind), and Bupoamahsã (people-thunder, constellations) are beings that dance to the same rhythms as the Pamurimahsã, with their voices and sounds occupying the space of basawi and beyond, resonating through the forests, in the depths of the underground spaces, and in the homes of the constellations.

From generation to generation, my bayaroá brothers and relatives have continued narrating their ancestral stories about the places of emergence and transformation, places where protection ceremonies take place, where they can dialogue with other cosmic people, places to transmit and implement singing practices and dances. It is those stories and places that guarantee sustainability and provide motivation and inspiration for the current dance masters singing and dancing on the basawi’s dance floor. The dance floor represents the Utãpino –Stone serpentine route. Like the Stone serpentine movement, the women-mothers-grandmothers line up, offer péru (caxiri, fermented drink) to the participants, and dance in pairs with the bayaroá.

The Pamurimahsã, Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã interact in time and space

The Utãpino (Tuyuka) consider themselves to be the Pamurimahsã, which literally means the “people who emerged from the waters” (people of fermentation). It corresponds to the term “human.” The Pamurimahsã are beings that were led by Utãpino, the Stone Serpent. Utãpino is also known as Pino yokosoro (Canoe Serpent). Before its arrival, the territories of northwestern Amazon were already inhabited by the Waimahsã (aquatic beings: e.g., serpents, dolphins, fish, ants, worms, mineral resources); the Yukumahsã (diversity of plants, vegetation, bird animals, those who live in the forest); the Omemahsã (wind beings, clouds, fights, air, oxygen); and the Bupoamasa (e.g., thunder, lightning, clouds, rain, stars, moon, sun). Traditionally, they have been understood in the following way:

The starting point of kшти ukuse is the existence of two primordial worlds, umuse (upper) and wamudiã pati (lower). Between them, there is an empty space, where a central column (yaigu) was erected, separating the two worlds. In the center of this column a small disc was supported, from which the terrestrial platform (ati pati) originated. In it the earth, the forest, the springs and watercourses and all their inhabitants were except for the human beings, who appeared later, although this world had been the main objective of the creators of the cosmos. All this was done through the Bahsese by the demiurges Yepaoãkũ and Yepalio, direct descendants of Bũhpó. (...). Bũhpó is the first and most important character in the Tukano pantheon. Also known as Umũko Ñekũ, “Grandfather of the Universe,” he is an uncreated being and has always been a resident of Umũko wi, the “primordial world.” (Barreto 2018, 26–27)

The relationship between the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã is vertical and horizontal. I say this because I lead the Waimahsã at the underground level, the Yukumahsã at the middle level, and the Omemahsã and Bupoamahsã at the upper level. The Pamurimahsã are beings that came from far away and entered the territories of the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã. Utãpino, who led the Pamurimahsã, knew that the territories were inhabited by the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã. The Pamurimahsã introduced themselves to the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã as follows: *nikũ paramerã* (“grandchildren of the same ancestral grandfather”) and *nikũporã nisa mari* (“we are children of the same ancestral father”). By understanding these discourses, we Pamurimahsã begin to enter the family of Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã. The request to be recognized as a grandson and son of the same grandfather/grandmother and ancestral father/mother is not an easy task. It needs specialized interlocutors to achieve for us our belonging within the cosmic family.

The kumua use tobacco to activate the powers necessary to engage in dialogue with people from other levels and gain us access to the good things they have on those levels: health, joy, enthusiasm, concentration, tranquility, and balance in the face of life’s challenges. The kumua transform the levels into a single *maloca* (community house) and people from all levels into residents of the same *maloca*. Tobacco thus not only represents visible and sensitive materiality. The tobacco used by Indigenous peoples activates the invisible but existential immaterial powers, affecting humans and other beings through its smell and flavor. Its smoke does not just reside in the immediate space: it reaches various cosmic levels and their inhabitants.

The great ambassador responsible for negotiating good relations among all the cosmic beings is the Utãpino himself.

Although he comes from far away in the northwestern Amazon, he is part of the Waimahsã, as he is a serpent. Therefore, he is a distant relative of the Waimahsã in the northwestern Amazon territories. They are endowed with similar capabilities as the Pamurimahsã: for instance, knowledge, intelligence, emotion, will. The Utãpino transmitted this understanding to his children and grandchildren, Utãpinopona (Tuyuka), kumua, bayaroá, and yaiá. These specialists promote good relations through ceremonies: respectful dialogues between the Pamurimahsã themselves and with the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã. When the Pamurimahsã disrespect the spaces (houses/agencies) and times of the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã, their agents initiate attacks with their weapons and cause illnesses and deaths among the Pamurimahsã. This understanding shows that they do not tolerate disrespect, they become angry, even revolted by the invasion of their territories, but they allow entry into the territory when people manage to communicate well with them. When the climate of coexistence is not good, though, Pamurimahsã specialists conduct ceremonies to re-establish a healthy coexistence between people and other cosmic people. The request for permission to enter the territories of the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã is made through kumua ceremonies using tobacco, patu (ipadu), and uhpé (rosin). They are materials that have specific smells and flavors, and people and all cosmic people feed on them: people in a visible way and other people on an immaterial level. This understanding is ancestral to the Indigenous peoples of the eastern Tukano linguistic family, as reported by Barreto (2018, 46):

Once the terrestrial world was completed, Yepaoãkũ and Yepalio lived a long period of concentration, eating only ipadu and smoking tobacco to discover the most

appropriate way to make humans appear on the terrestrial platform.

This understanding began with the emergence of the Pamurimahsã. However, no chronological estimate exists for when it happened. It was only with the arrival of Europeans in this region that time has been marked according to months and years. The life of the Pamurimahsã also went through a gestation period, from biological development in the womb of the Utãpino (Stone Serpent) to feeding on Opekõ (Milk) and water from the rivers through which the Utãpino moved (Atlantic Ocean, Amazon River, Rio Negro, Uaupés River and its tributaries). The Pamurimahsã do not tell how long the Utãpino's journey lasted. The tobacco, ipadu, and other ceremonial materials were inside them already. Tobacco is the most commonly used material in all ceremonies, as it is easier to make use of all its resources: lighting it, producing smoke, releasing the forces of reassurance and protection, requesting permission, and leaving and spreading the tobacco smoke.

Each river along which the Utãpino traveled is known as Opekõdia – Rivers of Milk. Different colored water (transparent, reddish, dark, muddy, greenish) was drunk by the Pamurimahsã in the process of their transformation and growth. The Utãpino's journey alternates between traveling along the bottom of the river, stopping to emerge from the water, and ultimately heading towards land. While staying on Earth, he performed a specific ceremony. It is also not possible to say how long they remained out of the water. In the history of the Pamurimahsã, the original stops are part of the ceremonial narratives. The basawi represents the Utãpino and the stop he made in different places.

The dance movement with singing is an expression of the trajectory of the Utãpino together with the Pamurimahsã. The bayaroá sing and dance while moving around the dance floor, mimicking the

movements of the Utãpino at the bottom of the river. The dancers move like a large serpent, moving to the left and turning around at the door to mark the setting sun and then dancing on the right side of the ceremonial space. More dancers participate, with the scene looking much like a large serpent moving around. The bayaroá go three times around the dance floor and then they stop. This moment means it is time for the women and men to serve caxiri and kapi to the bayaroá. The kumua give m̄unoro (tobacco) and patu waga (coca bowl) to them. They take the opportunity to rest and joke with each other. The smell of tobacco circulating inside the *basawi* gives focus to the rhythm of the dance, inspiring the men and women to sing and energizing the various musicians to begin blowing on wind instruments (e.g., cariçu, jaguar bone, snail shell) during the dances. At each bayaroá stop, the kumua approach them to offer tobacco and ipadu. A ceremony cannot take place without the use of tobacco and ipadu, as they carry with them the motivation to dance, energy to move the body, inspiration to remember the songs, and joy to find grace in the effort.

The narratives that the kumua and bayaroá tell about the history of the journey help us to understand that at each stage of the transformation, the Pamurimahsã listened to and memorized the teachings of the Utãpino. He taught them by showing them through ceremonial practice. Each stopping place is called Pamuriwi (House of Transformation) – the place where we emerged from the water. When the sons and daughters of the Pamurimahsã are born, they receive names related to those places: the names of fish, birds, and fruits from each *basawi*. Birthplaces (where the names are given) are filled with smoke and the smell of tobacco to make them a good space, helping to calm beings that could harm the health of the child being born and the mother giving birth.

The kumu then guarantees the health and well-being of the child (boy or girl), the

well-being of their speech, and the well-being of the Pamurimahsã. The place of birth is related to the ceremonial place *pamuri wi* – the primordial place of emergence. When children and adults become ill, the kumu returns to that place to diagnose the cause and type of illness and selects a formula to cure it. Once again, tobacco comes into play in the shamanic actions taken to promote healing powers on behalf of the sick person. When the ceremony deals with a child or a seriously ill adult, someone else smokes the cigar and blows smoke onto the person's body: this act can occur more than once. Therefore, a kumu must master knowledge about the origin stories of the Pamurimahsã.

The Utãpino was aware of the existence of the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã in the northwestern Amazonian territories. By entering the rivers running through other people's territories, he ran the risk of being attacked and killed. The narratives of the Utãpino's journey show the persecution that he suffered as he sought to continue his journey upriver. He adopted the strategy of entering other river channels (Paranás), holes, and paths. With ceremony, using tobacco and blowing its smoke or breath over the river and the forest, he calmed the anger of the owners of the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã territories. When he sensed a risk to his life and that of his children, he stopped, moved onto land, and performed more ceremonies to protect his journey, himself, and his children. While the tobacco activated protective powers, it also remained inside the Transformation Canoe and released a puff of smoke that travelled from people's heads to their feet. The same smoke reached other beings, who were also affected by its tranquilizing powers.

He took good care of the Pamurimahsã in this way, preventing them from becoming victims of diseases and dying before reaching their place of origin. As stated before, the ceremonial materials are m̄uno

(tobacco), patu (coca), kapi (ayahuasca), and uhpé (rosin). By performing the ceremonies, the Utápio would persuade other beings to join him, telling them that we are all brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, in-laws, sons-in-law, cousins, sisters-in-law, and brothers-in-law. The muno (tobacco) is smoked by all cosmic beings, making them grandchildren of the same ancestral father. Through smelling the rosin smoke/beeswax, all cosmic people became members of the same cosmic family. Nowadays, the ceremonies have the same original meaning, therefore it is very important that in many basawi houses, these ceremonies are held to guarantee the balance of the cosmos and its people.

Smell and tobacco smoke articulate and disarticulate the actions of the Pamurimahsã, Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã

The current anthropological approach of the Tuyuka is shared with the Arapaso, Barasana (Bará), Desana, Hupda, Kubeu, Makuna, Miriritapuia, Piratapuia, Tariana, Tukano, Wanana, and others. The specialists (kumua, bayaroá, yuamua and yaiwa) ensure well-being and coexistence among different peoples and different cosmic people. They include the “Waimahsã, superhuman beings, owners and protectors of places and their ‘pets,’ the Nukurimahsã, creatures that move in the forest, and the *Yokumahsã*, animals that live in different spaces, on the ground, underground, in the trees and in the air” (Barreto 2018, 73).

The ceremonies performed by them activate the powers of healing, protection, reassurance, dialogue and consensus among all cosmic people. Their ceremonial materials include tobacco, ipadu, and rosin/beeswax. Specialists use both ancestral and contemporary words to discuss the Pamurimahsã, Waimahsã,

Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã. To talk about these people, I distinguish between humans and non-humans and humans and cosmic beings. In this article, I use the concepts Pamurimahsã, Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã, which are located on their levels and influence the existence of all beings on other levels. Faced with this complex world, the Tuyuka ancestors understood that ceremonial powers are transmitted and received through the smell and taste of tobacco. Immateriality is the diverse knowledge that is incorporated into materiality. There are visible and tangible people and invisible people who support such visible people. They are connected to one another through shared interests. Experts communicate through ceremonies. Tobacco, its smell and flavor, is an instrument of communication recognized by cosmic beings, which creates a connection between the worldview, cosmopolitics, and cosmo-techniques of various specialists.

The Tuyuka use *bureko watotire* (the year’s seasons) to refer to the cosmic calendar, based on categories they have all agreed upon. One of the perspectives is about certain positions of the constellations, which cause rain, floods, and the ebb and flow of rivers, the appearance of certain types of fish, insects, and various caterpillars, termites, ants, tanajuras, leafhoppers, and hunting animals, and the flowering and growth of fruits. My relatives carried out their research based on their understanding of traditional Tuyuka knowledge.

The Pamurimahsã, Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã know about the functioning of different life cycles. There are internal risks related to the group itself and with people from other groups. The original peoples that make up the Pamurimahsã are afraid of some groups and feel more comfortable with other groups. All Pamurimahsã groups express their fears regarding the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã,

Omemaḥsã, and Bupoamaḥsã. Such a situation also includes the *bahsesé* (activation of healing powers, appeasement) of the kumua and the bahsase of the bayaroá and the kamotase of the yaiwa. Barreto (2018, 63) says the following about the specialist's knowledge:

“Bahsero is the ability of a specialist to evoke and put into action the sensitive qualities (e.g., bitterness, sweetness, acidity) that produce a soothing effect on pain or illness, the elements, and the healing principles of different types of plants and animals.”

The Pamurimaḥsã call the constellations of diverse animals and rivers by the same names. Rainy weather and floods also have the same names. The Pamurimaḥsã understand that there is a connection between the Omemaḥsã and Bupoamaḥsã (the higher level) and the Waimaḥsã and Yukumaḥsã. This interconnection comprises many good and dangerous realities (see Cabalzar 2016, 31–34).

For the Pamaurimaḥsã, understanding the life cycles of the cosmic beings is a fundamental condition for establishing a good cosmic coexistence. For the Pamurimaḥsã's part, the kumua, bayaroá, and yaiwa become the main interlocutors at all levels with the people who form the Pamurimaḥsã and with the individuals and groups that form the Waimaḥsã, Yukumaḥsã, Omemaḥsã, and Bupoamaḥsã. Pamurimaḥsã specialists seek to transmit the knowledge organized by their ancestors in everyday life and at festivals, and they use it in ceremonies as well.

Nowadays, amidst rapid and profound transformations, Pamurimaḥsã specialists are amazed at the disorder of the life cycle. Although observing continuous climate change, which affects the Pamurimaḥsã, Waimaḥsã, Yukumaḥsã, Omemaḥsã, and Bupoamaḥsã, experts use the formulas for dialogue between the Pamurimaḥsã, Waimaḥsã, Yukumaḥsã, Omemaḥsã, and Bupoamaḥsã beings. The Pamurimaḥsã

assimilated the knowledge of other peoples, and it generated new ways of thinking about the constitution of the cosmos and its inhabitants. Western sciences have motivated Pamurimaḥsã specialists to expand the various codes for activating the shamanic powers of the Pamurimaḥsã, Waimaḥsã, Yukumaḥsã, Omemaḥsã, and Bupoamaḥsã.

Understandings of the interconnection between the constellations and different realities of the Pamurimaḥsã, Waimaḥsã, Yukumaḥsã, Omemaḥsã, and Bupoamaḥsã beings cannot be separated from Western science, as each presents knowledge resulting from reflection, research, and verification. The work of the kumua, bayaroá, and yaiwa is valuable, as they seek to order and ensure the well-being of all cosmic people, not by using great technologies but with their immaterial codes to establish the functioning order of cosmic lives. Specialist ceremonies do not take place peacefully; they take place amidst heated disputes, negotiations, forms of persuasion, dialogue, disagreements, and strategies until a basic consensus is reached between the cosmic beings to establish a positive coexistence. The kumua reassure everyone of such a peaceful coexistence, as Cayón (2013, 425), who lived with the Makuna people in Colombia, says:

“The healing of the world is an agreement of reciprocity between humans and other beings that inhabit the universe. This occurs because it guarantees fertile processes and the continuity of wild fruits, pecans and animals, which in turn will become the food that humans depend on. This is to guarantee the survival of all forms of life and reflect on their interdependence.”

Many Anthropology researchers working among the people of the eastern Tukano linguistic family, in the northwest Amazon, wrote about the ceremonies they had performed and continued to perform in many communities.

My kumua and bayaróá relatives speak of *diarige wanoarē*, and I best translate this expression as the “cleaning of all beings from diseases.” When the kumua deal with *diarige wanoarē*, their ceremony provides protection against diseases and the cleaning of all that can be bad for a festival (e.g., fights, poisoning, death); calming the beings of the cosmos so that they do not become angry with the participants at the party; making all beings in the cosmos, including humans, participate in the same party, drink the same caxiri, smoke the same tobacco, drink the same kapi, and sing and dance to the same songs. Tenório (2009, 17), a relative of mine, has referred to *Diarige wanoarē* as follows:

“For protection, they use tobacco/cigars, ipadu, genipap paint and white rosin. With the pepper ceremony, they protect the kapi, the peyuru [caxiri], the people who drank the kapi, those who sang and danced using the feathers. They kill the bacteria of the basawi when the construction is finished. Protection ceremonies are linked to the cycles of human life and the constellations. Our ancestors sang and danced after the construction of basawi. They protected people, eliminated sadness, and prevented diseases caused by beings that appear in all cycles of life. Protection ceremonies accompany the cycles of life.”

At the time of their ceremonies, the kumua concentrate deeply, in such a way that, if someone passes in front of them, they do not lose concentration but instead remain focused on their ceremony and ensuring a healthy coexistence. They keep their eyes fixed on other places, other levels, and their own people. They speak softly. They talk to themselves, they are dialoguing, tranquilizing, appeasing, and calming the bravery of other beings in favor of basawi and in favor of all participants in the ritual ceremony. All the benefits achieved through the agreements and negotiations with other cosmic beings benefit everyone, especially the Pamurimahsā, who are the main participants in the ceremony. The

kumua blow protective effects onto the ceremonial materials: tobacco, ipadu, bees wax (wete), kapi, and caxiri. Then, the kumua give the ceremonial materials to the person in charge of that part of the ceremony so that he can pass them on to the participants, inviting them to smoke tobacco and blow the smoke onto their bodies and other adults, including men, women, young people, teenagers, and the children of the mothers who are smoking and blowing out the tobacco smoke.

In the case of beeswax, the kumu prepares the embers and puts rosin on top of the embers, which produces smoke. Then, he passes by the participants, waving the fan to spread the smoke to them and the basawi space. After another hour, he offers the ceremonial tobacco (cigar) and lights up a cigar; he smokes it and blows the smoke onto his own body. Then, he invites everyone to do the same thing, blowing smoking onto their own bodies. All the participants must smoke from the same cigar and blow the smoke onto their bodies. After another hour, the ipadu gourd is given to the participants in the ceremony, and they must eat (lick) some of it. There is also a moment when the caxiri dough, made to add ceremonial effects to the drink, is handed over to the ceremonial party. The person in charge of the ceremony gives women a handful of caxiri dough to place in a trough or caxiri pot. To understand their meanings, it is necessary to directly participate in ritual ceremonies and feel how it affects the entirety of our being: rational, emotional, and behavioral.

The food and drinks of the Pamurimahsā become the food and drinks of the Waimahsā, Yukumahsā, Omemahsā, and Bupoamahsā. In this way, the kumua make the beings much like members of the same family. Therefore, in a traditional ritual, all Pamurimahsā, Waimahsā, Yukumahsā, Omemahsā, and Bupoamahsā are participants – some are the hosts and others are the visitors. Inside the ceremonial house, everyone participates in the same

ritual ceremony, smokes from the same cigar, takes ipadu from the same gourd, drinks caxiri from the same bowls, and drinks the same kapi (ayahuasca). They sing the same song and dance together. In this way, due to the positive ceremonial effects, everyone feels happy, talks, sings, and dialogues with each other. The kumua experts can eliminate feelings of envy, anger, and foolish bravery; they instead activate the ability to establish good dialogue and create esteem, affinity, respect, and cordiality. These benefits result from the ceremonial forces of the kumua, as they dialogue and negotiate with and seek to convince the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, and Bupoamahsã of the goods that the Pamurimahsã need. The benefits they obtain also return to the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã.

According to my Tuyuka relatives, the ceremonial materials (tobacco, ipadu, beeswax, caxiri, and ayahuasca) are considered the pillars, bases, foundations, and beams of the cosmos. They are considered by the Tuyuka to form the entirety of Waikõari, the supporting bone structure of the cosmos. The kumu protects people from various situations and actors that can cause illness to the Pamurimahsã, Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã through ceremonies. He desires the Pamurimahsã women and wishes for everything connected with them (e.g., music, dance, work). He calms the ferocity, annoyance, and anger of the Pamurimahsã, Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã, which can arise among and towards other beings. *Waikõari* is a word that describes the motivation of someone who is about to eat or drink something to acquire health, strength, energy, joy, or enthusiasm. Only those who know how to conduct a proper blessing likewise know its meaning and effects. To describe it would be to reduce what the word means to the kumua and the healers.

The kumu, in the ceremony, leaves the *jararaca* snakes calm and peaceful in their houses, but he does not leave them unattended, offering them food for sustenance and to give rise to positive feelings. The foods include frogs, such as *omã*, *turoa*, *sukukua*, *yukorã*, *tarokua*, and rats. The kumu guarantees them the fertility to have many offspring, but he leaves them inside their houses to feed on the ceremonial materials: tobacco, ipadu, caxiri, and ayahuasca. The kumu, through the ceremony, incorporates the bodies of the Pamurimahsã within the bodies of the Waimahsã, Yukumahsã, Omemahsã, and Bupoamahsã and, vice versa. The bodies of the Pamurimahsã (men and women), among others, are incorporated within Bupoamasa: the body of clouds, wind and air, sunlight and moonlight, cold and heat.

Opening perspectives

For the Indigenous peoples of the Upper Rio Negro region, where the Tuyuka people live, the theme that I have presented here carries with it several practical and shamanic meanings. When dealing with the smell and smoke of tobacco, I wanted to think about myself and the trajectory of my life, which began in following the footsteps of my grandparents, in learning how to activate the powers that promote good living and well-being among all people and the cosmic beings. The ceremonial forces activated by the experts of the past and of today continue to exist but complemented with contemporary observations about such transformations. In this way, in my academic work with song and dance ceremonies, I have also placed tobacco, ipadu, rosin, and ceremonial drinks at the center. They are derived from plants that contain bitter, unpleasant, sweet, and sour flavors, from the specific smells of tobacco and white rosin. They are ceremonial forces of protection, appeasement, and tranquilization, healing the physical and psychological pain (e.g., sadness,

discouragement) that penetrate us (humans) and other people (e.g., plants, birds, animals, water, air, wind, stone, clay, insects, fish) through their smells and flavors. ♦

Tukano Yupuri, Associação das Comunidades Indígenas do Médio Tiquié.

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Guest editors

Gessiane Lobato Picanço, gpicanco@ufpa.br

Justino Sarmiento Rezende Tuyuka Dupó, justinosdb@yahoo.com.br

Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen, pirjo.virtanen@helsinki.fi

Editor

Maiju Saijets, maiju.saijets@ulapland.fi

Editorial Board

Marja-Liisa Olthuis, marja-liisa.olthuis@oulu.fi

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Irja Seurujärvi-Kari, irja.seurujarvi@gmail.com

Pigga Keskitalo, pigga.keskitalo@ulapland.fi

Kimberli Mäkäräinen, kimberli.makarainen@helsinki.fi

Berit-Ellen Juuso, beritej@samas.no

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Alkuperäiskansatutkimus PL 24

(Unioninkatu 24)

00014 Helsingin yliopisto, Suomi/Finland

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