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Ukuo and *Täbotü* between the Piaroa of the Matavén Rainforest in the Colombian Orinoquia

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Abstract

The Piaroa (*Uwotjija*; ‘Masters of the Jungle’) confer great value to the power of the word. According to the cosmological rhetoric of the Piaroa, the word goes on a long journey, which begins in its first dwelling, travelling to the interior of each person where, given the conditions, it blossoms. The *tämü* are the council of wise men, the word of the *tämü* is the *uku*, “respect and sacredness” which is lived through the *täbotü*, “to give advice or counsel”. But, what happens when the sounds of the outside worlds do not allow people listen to their environment or the words of the *tämü*? Nowadays, with the arrival of schools, health centers, religious doctrines, and foreign political systems, the *uku* has been fractured and the young people are losing the horizon of the world *Uwotjija*. And now the Piaroa see, in the construction of their own ethnoeducational project, an opportunity to reconstruct the relations of the *uku* that are currently fractured.

“Before everything was *Anämäi*, after all will be *Anämäi*, being ethereal, disembodied; wind, air, breath that goes all, power of the Word. *Anämäi* designed the world as we know it and *Wjäri*, our creator, was appointed to be its materializer.

Our *tämü* say that their words of wisdom travel on their breath, they are the air that passes in our mountains, our forests and our savannahs and this path opens the way for *Uwotjija*, to live in *uku* in a continuous dialogue with nature.”

-Héctor Fuentes, knower and Piaroa leader

Introduction

The Piaroa, *Uwotjija* ‘Masters of the Jungle’ are a people of thinkers. Through the use of sacred plants, they have visions of the future that should be constructed and this construction is only possible by means of the hard work of thought. The Piaroa world is founded on the relations established through the word and listening, these relations are based on the *uku* whose nearest English translation is “respect”; *uku* is the word of *tämü*, the council of wise men, and is a sacred word that lives through the *täbotü*, “to give advice or counsel.” The ability to communicate, through weaving words and relationships is an alchemic act that has the capacity to transmute and transform; the word is then the linking axis through which material substances and immaterial substances constitute people, both human and non-human, and the world they inhabit.

The Piaroa belong to the linguistic family of the Sáliba-Piaroa (Monsonyi, 2002). Originally, they are from Guyana and according to the latest census of indigenous peoples from Venezuela, their population is approximately 14.500; 773 are in Colombia (Arango and Sánchez 2004, Freire and Zent, 2007) distributed among thirteen communities. Twelve of these communities are located in the Resguardo Unificado Selva de Matavén¹ (Unified Reserve of the Matavén Rainforest), which constitutes 1, 849, 613 hectares in the eastern part of Colombia, in the south-eastern region of the department Vichada (See Figure 1). The reservation is inhabited by 14, 000 indigenous populations belonging to six different ethnic groups: Sikuaní, Cubeo, Curripaco, Piapoco, Piaroa, and Puinave. All are represented by the Asociación de Cabildos y Autoridades Tradicionales

Indígenas de la Selva de Matavén (Association of Town Councils and Traditional Indigenous Authorities from the Matavén Rainforest - ACATISEMA).

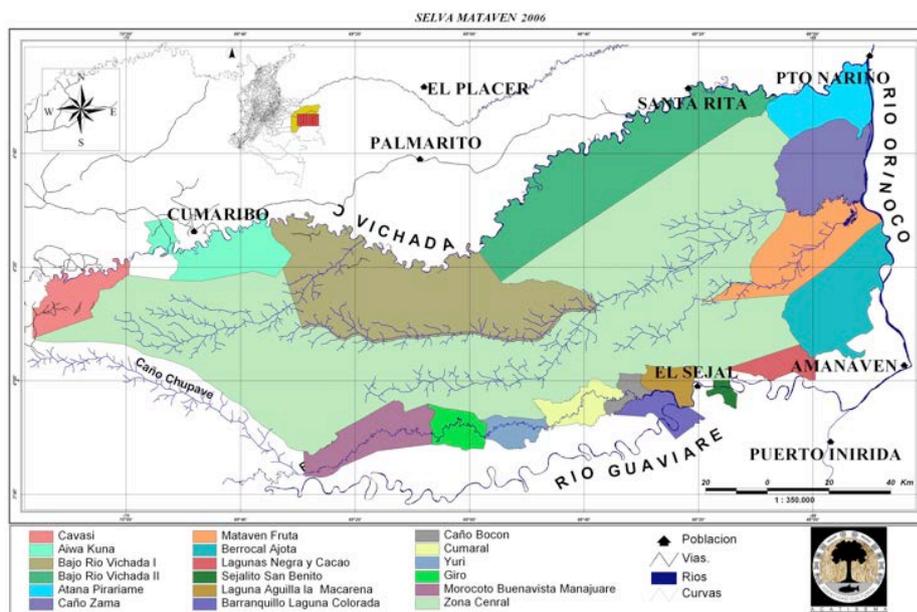


Figure 1. Resguardo Unificado Selva de Matavén

The Piaroa of the Matavén Rainforest live mostly in the region of the Middle Orinoco in the sections Atana-Pirariame, Caño Zama and Matavén-Fruta. The Matavén-Fruta section contains the community of Sarrapia, which is somewhat larger in terms of a 350-strong population and otherwise, is a typical Matavén-Fruta community. Sarrapia (See Figure 2) is divided into 5 neighbourhoods, and there is a Boarding School Kuawai from preschool to ninth grade.

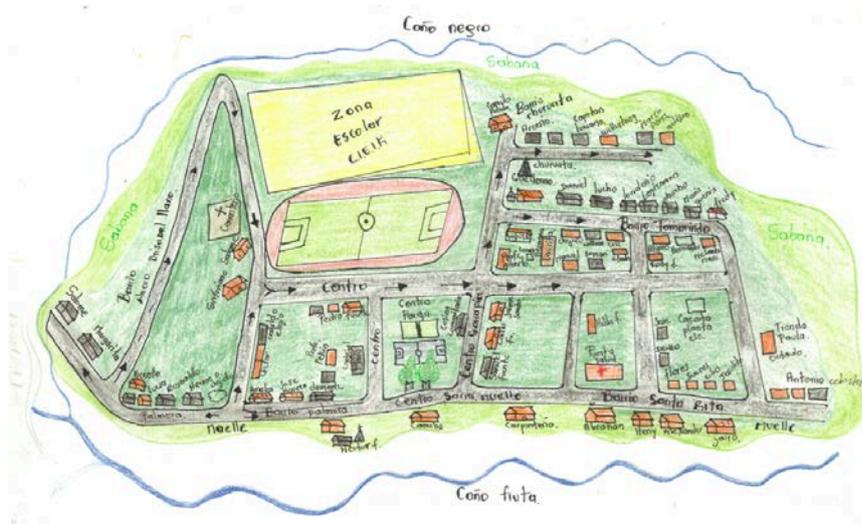


Figure 2. Sarrapia (Map drawn by Macedonian García - Young Piaroa)

Sarrapia community revolves around the process of ethnoeducation, the efforts of which began with a small school in the early 1950's and years later it became the Kuawai School for children belonging to the different indigenous populations as well as mestizo children. The process was led by the late Chief Roberto Pulido, and the joint collaboration of the first Piaroa teachers as well as ex-alumni, many of whom are today teachers. The history of its emergence is conflictive and is indicative of the Piaroa concerns and their ideas of their present and their future.

People of Word

The Piaroa people confer great value to the power of the word and they think that its flow has historically been interrupted. This process of interruption is now more evident because they are living in an era of accelerated environmental and social changes, especially in the Orinoquia region of Colombia, which is considered a strategic area in the national development agenda. The ethnoeducation process allows us to think through the tensions that are witnessed when, according to the Piaroa people: “We are not listened to anymore because of the chaos of the worlds from the outside which we see that comes in, blinding our own memory”. However, simultaneously the Piaroa think that the ethnoeducation process is the way to reconcile their world with the outside world and rebuild the flow of the word.

The following was the text selected by the Piaroa of the Matavén Rainforest to begin a document addressed to the Ministry of Education of Colombia in which they present their ethnoeducational project:

“Our word is accompanied by the knowledge of the spirits, the roads in which the word travels are the teachings that since ancient times has been woven by our oldest members and are still being woven into our present. In each of us, a different knowledge is woven which opens us to our words and to words that surround us, each moment of our everyday life is accompanied by these words; words that we transmit in our myths, which are the origin of who we are, people of the rainforest, owners of the rainforest: *Uwojjuja*²
(*Täbotü* proyecto etnoeducativo comunitario *Uwojjuja* - Piaroa, written by Gran Consejo de los *tämü* del pueblo *Uwojjuja*- 2015).

After hours, days, weeks, or even months of deliberation, the Piaroa are able to confer a value to the word that is agreed upon by all. During this time, individual Piaroa opinions are taken into account because as the text above mentions, every person has woven a distinct piece of knowledge and the community weave is not complete until all its parts have been expressed, shared, and combined in the most harmonious way possible.

Because it is an egalitarian society (Overing 1975-1989), the spoken word of each inhabitant is important. Even children’s spoken words, as well as foreigners’ are taken into account. The Piaroa confer great power to knowledge, which is acquired and expressed through the council as well as the actions that weave together individual life histories. In this sense, in order to hand down the lore that accompanies puberty, the parents of the Piaroa girl will seek an old lady from the community who in her life has been an example of wisdom, who has a good *conuco* (traditional agricultural plot) and a sweet word, essentially: a beautiful old woman. In this case, the spoken word is beneficial for the young woman who will follow the advice of the old lady and will follow instruction to weave mats, have a great *conuco*, and ultimately, live a good life.

The spoken word can also have negative effects. The Piaroa say that when a chief has too much charismatic power, he cannot say anything bad, not even in jest, because his words can hurt others. This is why power is only conferred to people with a calm temperament. When they were young, chiefs Roberto Pulido and José Herrera wanted to receive different teachings, but these were only handed down to Roberto who had a well-balanced character and constant cheery mood. Herrera still knows some healing prayers and with that he protects the community of *Sarrapia*; however, he did not receive the power, which is why his words are just words and are not as powerful.

In this context, the word of the *tämü*, the council of wise men (old knowledgeable men), is of great value – and is alchemic in its core. According to the Piaroa;

“Their voice is the memory that teaches us to be here on our land, they are the ones that maintain the fire of ancestral knowledge of our community and they are the ones that mediate with the spirits and owners of nature and the knowledge that the *Uwojjuja* have for us to become one with the land”.

For the Piaroa, the word is the axis around which life revolves. In their myths, the word is a metaphor of the force of *Anämäi*, which is the origin and the end of all

things that is then made real by *Wajäri*, a demiurge creator of the Piaroa. In his doctoral dissertation, Mansutti observes the importance of the word in the context of the Piaroa:

“The word precedes and gives form to all the other orders of reality. Without the word, which refers to form, the nature and power of the elements that will be part of a world designed in the visions of *Anämäin*, we would not be able to materialize in the real world” (Mansutti 2002:35).

The importance of the word is not a new case for the Piaroa. Various authors have documented its importance in different cultures in the lowlands of South America (Clastres 1974; 1980; Santos Granero 1986; Descola 1988; Londoño 2004, Echeverri and Roman-Jitdutjan 2013). However, in the case of the Piaroa, the word has such deep meaning that it is the basis on which the notion of a person is constructed.

In Piaroa, word is *wene* and its owner is *Mereyä Anämäi* (main god of the Piaroa). Both the word and the *Anämäi* are represented by wind and breath, which are the beginning and the end of all things. According to the cosmological rhetoric of the Piaroa, the word goes on a long journey, which begins in its first dwelling (The place of *Anämäi*), travelling to the interior of each person where, given the right conditions, it can blossom. It is in that possibility, or lack of it, that the act of blooming is a moral project—that is, morality as defined by Londoño:

“Morality I define at this point, incipiently, as people’s evaluative perceptions, reactions, understandings, and claims concerning subjectivities, actions, person’s, qualities, and ways of life, in terms of whether these were admirable, despicable, unremarkable, or otherwise distinct in worth” (Londoño, 2012:3).

The cradle of the word is in the heavens, where the *Mereyä Anämäi* lives. There the word is the main word, *morojã ivene*, which lives in the vacuum of eternity, *i’ko morojã*. At this point, the word is thought, vision, and intention expressed by the word of the cosmos *deiyu ivene*. The word continues its journey to the territory of the Piaroa, which is a reflection of the universe and a place where, according to the Piaroa, we only come to see the day and night.

In the territory of the Piaroa, *tierümü*, or the earth that is inhabited, the word is expressed in different forms: it is breath, it is strength, it is myth, and it is a song. It also becomes a word of prayer, *ivene isopja*, and it is sowed in the heart, *kuamiso’kei*, of each Piaroa. In order for the word to be sown, each person must learn to listen, *ivene ajuiki*. If a Piaroa person really knows how to listen, they can say: my word of breath, *tivene isopja*, and this will be their guide according to their gender and role in society. The word of women is of administration, she controls, whereas the word of men is of projection, he executes.

For the Piaroa, the emphasis is placed on the word, which is the one that travels and is in constant transformation. It materialises as different substances that can be eaten, drunk, smeared or inhaled, all of which contribute to generating the ideal conditions that allow the word to continue its journey. In this way, the word continues to weave (*püjju*) the world. One of the substances linked to the word is water, *ajya*. Through prayer, water becomes impregnated with the force of the word and it transforms into prayed-over water, *meñeja*, which is then kept in a jar, *karepu’kejünü*. Later it is given to drink, *däepu aju*. The word has entered the body through breath and the prayed-over water finds its place in each Piaroa. It is thus believed that the word for praying, *ivene isopja*, and the prayed-over water, *meñeja*, are sowed in the heart. *Tabo wene kejünü* or in other words when the prayed water is given to drink to a young Piaroa, his heart is stained by the word (*tãdetüawene kuamiso’keinã*). The word that has been sown can remain latent for many years, and the person that has drunk the water may never become a knowledgeable person. This explains why the Piaroa say that a person can be old in years yet a child in terms of knowledge, *pjoätü*; or on the contrary, he may be young yet a *buo*, a wise person. Every Piaroa can drink prayed-over water in different life situations so that through it the word has the ability to transform and be transformed; in this way the word cures, gives strength and provides protection. The prayed-over water can be drunk at different places and times, in an everyday family home or in the *churuata* (a traditional house) in ritual context such as those associated with puberty.

Honey is another substance the Piaroa use in a similar manner as water. According to Héctor Fuentes, bees have travelled throughout the territory and have met all the flowers of the forest to create honey, for that reason honey is a remedy that transforms poison into sweet foodstuff. Therefore, honey sweetens the word, hence prayed-over honey manages to impregnate the word indelibly in the heart of each Piaroa. Honey is highly appreciated for use in rituals associated with puberty.

Ukuo and Täbotü

The word of the *tämü* is the *ukuo*, “respect and sacredness” which is lived through the *täbotü*, “to give advice or counsel”. This is at the core of the Piaroa’s way of thinking. The *täbotü* is a concept that relates education, knowledge, teaching, tradition, and the way to transmit knowledge. Only through the *täbotü* can personal growth take place. If someone does not listen or disobeys, the *ukuo* does not flow and the process of teaching that allows the person to become a woman or a man is interrupted *Uwojjuja*. When asking Camilio, a young Piaroa from Sarrapia, what community meant for them, he thought about it and said *ukuo*. If the *täbotü* is missing, the *ukuo* cannot be taught or listened and the community simply ceases to exist.

The *täbotü* is composed of two interrelated aspects, the *jiän* and the *roepü*. The *jiän* is communication among all that exists (people, non-humans, the universe, dreams, rains). It refers to explaining, oral stories, the message, the warning, and social control. The *roepü* is a council of prohibition that is given by nature indicating forbidden areas and actions.

The ultimate purpose of the Piaroa people is to be free, *käkuäwä ukuo*, and this can be achieved only through the blossoming of the word *kjakuawä wene ’karäçbaa*, in each person. This is why it is asserted that freedom is cultivated by each Piaroa according to their gender, office and duty. If the sowed word is of government (to become a leader), the Piaroa that carries it must listen, paying attention to become a *rumo wene*, an owner of the word of authority, owner of the *churnata*, *isode rua*, and finally the owner of the song of government *kjakuäwä wene raraipüma*, as well as bearer of the torch of wisdom, *käkuäwä tejäwe*, which represents the values that guide the Piaroa society: self-control, self-governing, humility, and being calm.

For the Piaroa, to be free is to be wise, and to be wise is to be happy. The moral goal is to reach the point where a person can listen to their own thoughts, the voice of his shadow (*kuä’kuäjuä wene*), and be able to understand it, communicate and leave his mark by the life they lead. Every Piaroa must be the owner of their knowledge, *kuamunäpajatü amukuädü*, and guide to their soul, *kuä’kuä wene*.

This way, society lives within the word of respect, *ukuo kjäkuäwä*. It is said that a person is wise, *buo*, when the drop of wisdom has blossomed and has revealed itself to them thus allowing their word to journey between the worlds along with the power to understand the language of the cosmos. This is because the word that has bloomed in the person is the same word of the cosmos, thus it is able to synchronically vibrate according to the same harmonious rhythms. The soul of the *buo* has been educated, it has learned to listen, understand, and communicate. At the end of the journey, the drop of the word has transformed into a root of wisdom, *kuä’kuä taboweme*, and has found the chair of the *ukuo*, the freedom. When wise people die, they become one with eternity (*i’ko käkuäwäwä*).

According to Overing (1975), the Piaroa are reluctant to any attempt to physically intervene or impose norms since they confer a great value to personal freedom. Many years since Overing made this observation, we still find that in the community of Sarrapia, the Piaroa, continue to be reluctant. Older people do not hit or physically dissuade a child because in doing so, they will kill his spirit. The older person ‘hits’ with an exhale, with the word, and that blow sets the child on his journey and strengthens his spirit.

But this freedom does not lead to a chaotic or anarchistic society, and nothing could be further from the Piaroa mind. Personal freedom involves an exercise of continuous responsibility, the agreement to honour with life and good example the relation of the *ukuo* taught by the *tämü*. According to the Piaroa;

“Each person is responsible for his territory, of taking care of the food that is in their *conuco*, of listening and teaching the word that is given in the *churuata*, and of weaving the threads of knowledge in each one of their arts”.

The *ukuo* is reflected in the daily activities of the Piaroa from the Matavén Rainforest. There are words for counsel or advice for a wide range of activities and life in general, and this recalls Alain Gheerbrant description of the Piaroa that lived in the Fruta brook in 1949: “The piaroas are Indians and perhaps the people most deeply impregnated by religion, which is woven in their lives, that I have ever met” (1952: 92). The *ukuo* is found in the stories that weave the different elements of material culture such as *esteras* (mats) and baskets. The basis is respect for nature, man, and all the living beings that inhabit their land. The *tāmii* are the ones who transmit and maintain this knowledge. For the Piaroa, it is very important to know how to listen to the sounds of their environment. Their prayers are sung and through these songs, they are able to travel the roads of the territory and the world is cured.

Yet, what happens when the sounds of the outside worlds do not allow the people to listen to their environment or the words of the *tāmii*? In 1949, when Alain Gheerbrant visited the Fruta brook, the leader’s (General Capitan) name was Mario. Gheerbrant describes Mario wearing a colonial helmet he was proud of, and a shirt and trousers. In exchange for two iron knives that a white man had taken from his town, Mario was able to learn Spanish and acquire linen and other artefacts. These knives were used to care for the gum (rubber) trees (*Hevea*) in the rainforest, and collect the rubber into jars, and then they would load the material onto riverboats for export. However, this same man knew and participated in the celebration of Warime (the most important traditional ritual for the Piaroa people) (Gheerbrant, 1952). Joanna Overing’s doctoral dissertation (1975), which was carried out in Venezuela in the late 1970s, shows the Piaroa to be a traditional indigenous group that is organized according to kinship relations and cut off from the market economy. Contrary to the panorama presented by Overing (1975), subsequent studies show the Piaroa in a direct or indirect relationship with the market economy (Zent, 1992; Luque, 2000; Freire, 2007, Freire y Zent, 2007). According to Zent (1992), the greatest impacts of colonization on the Piaroa can be attributed to these three issues: illness, ecological changes, and technical changes, all of which have influenced the modern forms of settlement and organization.

Sixty-five years have passed since Gheerbrant visited the Piaroa and more than forty years since Overing’s fieldwork in Venezuela. At least three generations have passed since Mario arrived in his seemingly strange attire and since then Piaroa now have access to televisions, MP3 players, and mobile phones, among other things. Beginning with the exploitation of gum trees (*Hevea*) there have been other activities such as the sale of fish for consumption or the sale of ornamental fish, and recently the selling of carbon offset credits. During community meetings, they are told that today everything is reversed, that they are paid for not doing anything, for preservation, for not touching the rainforest. The Piaroa find this to be a highly suspicious tactic and the translators have problems explaining this concept to the elders, who only speak Piaroa. The elders wonder what a carbon offset credit even is and how can you sell “air”? This problem is huge especially when realizing that the main god of the Piaroa is *Māreyä Anāmāi*, an invisible being that does not have a beginning or end is considered to be the air itself.

In this context the Piaroa fear to lose their freedom, having sold their god and their territory. Héctor Fuentes, asserts that each Piaroa must think about where they rest, where and how they walk, and where they eat. If everything is owned, can they even speak of freedom? Fuentes says that before the existence of the school, the children went to nearby cities in Venezuela and Colombia for education and they returned “with a different form of thinking”. Today, most of the people of Sarrapia see the Kuawai School as a possibility to reconcile their world with other worlds that forget what it is to be Piaroa.

Living the *ukuo* through the *tābotū* used to make the Piaroa feel that they were part of a shared history and part of a community. Nowadays, with the arrival of the schools, the health centres, religious doctrines, and the foreign political systems, the *ukuo* has been fractured and the young people are losing the horizon of the world, *Ujwotjuyä*.

The fractures in the flux of the *ukuo* started when the names of the territories were changed. For the Piaroa, the *ukuo* starts with the act of naming. This way each place can have its corresponding prayer, which allows for mediation between the spirit of that

space and what moves within it. Naming is not arbitrary; it is way of weaving the body itself to a territory and the ancestral voices' and healing songs that come with the territory. This is the only way to listen and to be listened to, this is used to establish a valid conversation. When the merchants and missionaries arrived with other languages and named territories with their words, that lacked meaning, they began to fracture the *ukuo*, and silence the *täbotü*.

The fracturing has continued, the transmission of the word is constantly changing in time. In past times, when nightfall arrived, it meant it was time to sit around the mat of knowledge and listen to the *tämü* tell stories. It was a ritual that united the people who timelessly live in the presence of the myth. Now, when nightfall arrives, people turn on their generators and get together to watch television on one of the five televisions in Sarrapia. Through access with the outside world the people of Sarrapia now have new urges and needs based on the images and language of other worlds. How do you satisfy these new needs? People resort to the sale of environmental resources: *Bocón* fish (*Brycon* sp.), ornamental fish, turtles, or wood. In doing this one must ignore the words of the *tämü*, who nevertheless never get tired of pointing out the dangers of this excessive use of limited resources.

According to the *tämü*, young people now walk listening to their music players; they do not hear the environment talking to them anymore. If they go fishing or hunting, they do not pay attention to the singing birds warning them of danger or good luck symbols that can be found on the path. They do not read the footprints of the animals due to their eagerness to hunt them. Nor do they know how to set traps or how to pray with those who maintained the relations of the *ukuo*. Furthermore, the oil and gasoline pollute the river and contaminate fisheries, food, and other natural resources.

The *tämü* and the teachers affirm that the loneliness associated with living alone rather than among the community makes the transmission of the word difficult. This lifestyle fractures the relations of the *ukuo* and encourages self-conceit, as everyone thinks only of getting their own food, many times forgetting others who live faraway. Finally, foreign medicine plays an important role in forgetting the prayers as well as the indigenous knowledge of the botany of healing plants. The health centers have brought pills, bandage, injections, and other objects to cure the bodies of the sick (Täbotü Community ethno educational project *Uwotjuyä* - Piaroa, written by Grand Council of the *tämü* of *Uwotjuyä* people - 2015). Many times they are inefficient because the illnesses are endemic both to the territory as well as the peoples; they can only be cured through the knowledge of the *tämü*, which is gradually disappearing. In sum, the spaces for sharing the word are being silenced and the Piaroa see in the construction of their own ethno-educational project an opportunity to reconstruct the relations of the *ukuo* that are currently fractured.

One of the principal results of the ethno-educational Piaroa Project is the inclusion of the traditional ecological calendar as an integral part of *Kuawai* Boarding School curriculum. This has allowed harmonizing school times with different stages of the calendar.

Each stage of the traditional ecological calendar is associated with a myth and has its own word of advice, for example in May, a time of great abundance of fish, the word of *ukuo* is aimed toward self-control and sharing. The young fisherman must then refrain from overindulgence and instead share his catch with his family. The knowledge of the different stages of the calendar and the specific lessons associated with them, allows new generations to begin to restore *ukuo* relations.

Currently the Piaroa aim to go one step further in its ethno-educational process and therefore submitted to the Ministry of National Education of Colombia, the *täbotü* as an educational model, according to this model they suggest listening to the *täbotü* as a teaching guideline for living as Piaroa people (Täbotü Community ethnoeducational project *Uwotjuyä* - Piaroa, written by Grand Council of the *tämü* of *Uwotjuyä* people - 2015).

Conclusion

The ethnoeducational process of the Colombian Piaroa from the middle Orinoco has become the space par excellence for their auto-articulation within the modern nation-state. In this context the choice of *täbotü* as an educational model is the result of a long

process of communitarian reflection led by the *tāmü* and teachers from Kuawai Boarding School. According to the reading of the *tābotü* (Tābotü communitarian ethnoeducational project *Uwoŋjuja* - Piaroa, written by Grand Council of the *tāmü* of *Uwoŋjuja* people - 2015) and on the basis of ethnographic data collected during an extensive field work³ this article presents the fundamental importance of the *ukeuo*, word of the *tāmü* that exists through the *tābotü*, in the construction of being human.

Echeverri says the *rafue* in the Uitoto context “does not mean ‘myth’” but teaching or ‘Word’” (Echeverri 2001:11) and is a praxis that is played daily in the technical processes of transforming the substances - of both male and female work – and in the reproduction of human bodies constituted by those substances” (Echeverri 2001:16). In similar vein posed by Echeverri, in the case of the Piaroa, the *tābotü* directs the thoughts and life, here the emphasis is on the word; key substances like yage, tobacco, yopo, water, chilies and honey are important as they enable the flow, setting, and flourishing of the word. Héctor Fuentes comments: “Our *tāmü* say that their words of wisdom travel on their breath, they are the air that passes in our mountains, our forests and our savannah and this path opens the way for Piaroa to live in *ukeuo*”.

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Notes

¹ The establishment of the indigenous reserves called *resguardos* in Spanish, which is a collective property title of the land in a legal form that protects both the territory as well as the indigenous cultural and political autonomy, has carried out the policy. The establishment of *resguardos* has great relevance because it recognizes the role of traditional indigenous management systems for the conservation of the environment. This is especially true in the tropical rainforests of the Colombian Amazon region where this policy has most impact. In the Amazon region, more than 20 million hectares are declared *Resguardo Indígena*. (van der Hammen, 2003:7)

² “Nuestra palabra viene acompañada por los saberes de los espíritus, los caminos transitados en la palabra son las enseñanzas que de antiguo han hilado nuestros mayores y se han hilado en nuestro presente. En cada uno de nosotros se teje un conocimiento distinto que nos abre a nuestros mundos y a los mundos que nos rodean, cada momento de nuestra cotidianidad está acompañado por estas palabras; palabras que transmitimos en nuestros mitos, que son el origen de nosotros, gente de la selva, dueños de la selva: *Uwoŋjuja*”.

³ 2003-2004 I worked in developing management plans for natural resource (“Conservation and Sustainable Development of Forest Matavén” - ACATISEMA - ETNOLLANO Foundation Agreement -. FUND FOR THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF). 2004-2007 I counseled ACATISEMA in the construction of land Management Plan (“Strengthening community autonomy regarding life, land and environment in Amazonian subregions - ACATISEMA - AMAZON PROGRAM - Dutch Embassy”). 2012-2013 I conducted fieldwork for realization of my Doctoral thesis in anthropology at the Andes University.

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