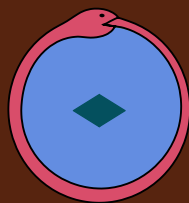
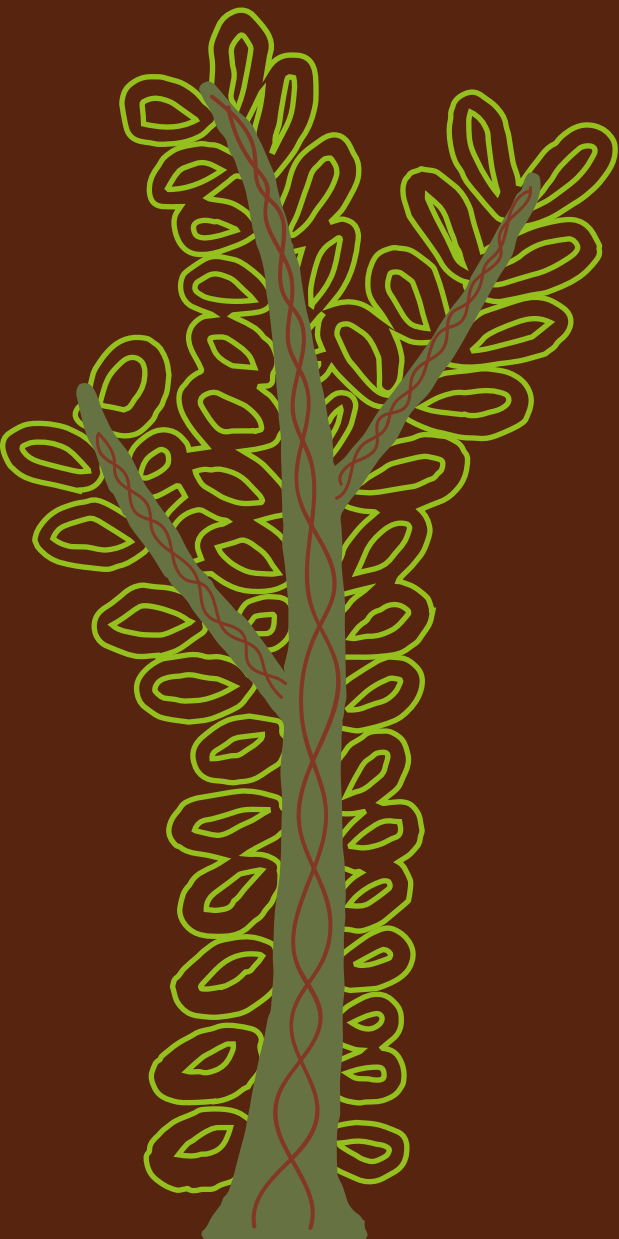


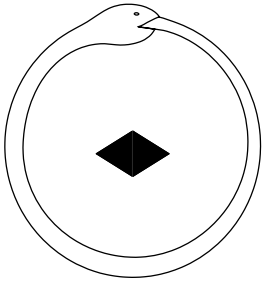


ENTER THE WORLD -
A TALK ABOUT
"TEACHER PLANTS"
Ailton Krenak and Carlos Papá



notebooks
SELVAGEM





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In September 2022, Ailton Krenak and Carlos Papá had a dialogue concerning the relations they keep with tobacco and ayahuasca. From this conversation, the book flap of *Teacher Plants – Tobacco & Ayahuasca* [*Plantas Mestras – Tabaco & Ayahuasca*], written by Jeremy Narby and released by Dantes Publishing House, was born. All Guarani words appearing throughout the transcript below can be found in the glossary at the end of this notebook.

AILTON KRENAK: I feel like a child when someone calls me to talk about plants. It seems that all we humans want from plants is that they take away our pain. And leave us well. To bring us peace.

I was already an adult when I got to know tobacco. During my childhood and youth, there was no proximity to this plant. Perhaps, I even had some prejudice, because it came to me in the most ordinary use. It came to me the wrong way. Until I once went, as an adult, to *Tenonde Porã*, a Guarani village in Parelheiros, and the godfather *xeramõi* José Fernandes told people to give me a *petyngua*. And my friend Karai Mirim gave me the *petyngua*. And I compulsed the *petyngua*. I took it in my hands and they would not stop sweating. Sweating, sweating, transpiring, transpiring. I transpired too much. I took a sweat bath holding the *petyngua*. The first few times I used the *petyngua* I threw up and felt quite sick. Until recently, I would still feel ill. So I kept cleansing. Sweating, sweating, sweating. I coughed so much. A lot came out of me. And then I continued, with difficulty. Until I began to experience the first visions. The first vision that *petyngua* gave me, praying at the *opy*, was of a fire coming out of a stone slab. I was in a state of grace having seen that fire coming out of the stone. Then I told the relatives from the village, from *Tenonde Porã*, that I had this vision of a fire coming out

of a large stone slab. A large stone slab, in a place outside the common living area, as if I were in an isolated place and the fire softly came out of the stone. And it was there, soft, coming out of the stone, catching my attention, my gaze. I told them and they said, “You’re lucky. There are people who stay years and years here and have no visions at all. Right at your first initiation with tobacco, it gave you a vision. For us, that fire coming out of the stone is a very beautiful sight, very special, that you had. That fire is Tupã.” At that moment I was in such a state of happiness and said: “Wow, tobacco gave me that vision.” I began to cultivate the ceremonial use of tobacco, always with the *petyngua*. Without rolling cigarettes, or making other uses. And always minding the origin of the tobacco I was using too. I didn’t take just any tobacco to prepare and put in the *petyngua*. I paid attention and benefited from the recurrent cure due to the use of the *petyngua*. When I attended a ceremony, I used the *petyngua* with everyone. And when I was alone, I used it sparingly. I did not abuse the contact with this plant. Slowly, I got closer and learned to see the plant [of tobacco] itself: the leaves, the blooming, the way it spreads in the environment where it is. I was happy to have once invited it to go to my garden, and it began to sprout near me. I found it so wonderfully beneficial having that huge plant welcome me, accept me. Then it began to appear on my yards. To this day, where I live, it stays close to me. It manages to appear near me, sometimes in a corner of the yard. If I also ask it to go closer to the house’s door, it accepts. This friendship that has matured over the years, perhaps over the last 30 years, is wonderful. And it turned into such a gentle approach, I found a friend who can give me many gifts. When I handle the plant, touch it, learn its texture, the leaf’s sensitivity, prepare it to dry and make it ready for use, this is wonderful too. It is so good that you can win from the plant this gift, and handle it with respect and see how beneficial this is.

Then, on my trips to other regions of Brazil, traveling to Acre and going to other villages, I also saw other ways to manipulate the plant, to work with it. They are ways of preparing the plant to keep it in a humid state, good to be used in six months, a year, without having it dry out. So I carried on seeing the shades of it, understanding it. And it’s wonderful. I really liked to cut the tobacco at the point where it was

already prepared. Cut it thin, placing it on a support and breaking it, releasing the small ties so it is also easier to burn, because it gets looser. In this spontaneous curiosity to manipulate it, I began to realize that it was giving me a new opportunity for knowledge, which was to be able to spread a handful of tobacco on a surface, touch it and wait for it to write something for you. Like an oracle, to reveal something. Without burning it, without setting it on fire. Only the plant, giving you answers to intimate questions. For example: “Am I going to travel tomorrow?” Then in the movement of the broken tobacco strips, a panel began to appear. I saw a panel, an oracle, an image, that led me to conclude if I should do what I was going to do or not, if I should change plans. The experience was around my 50’s, when I started reading it. I learned to do something that I have not heard anyone talk about, which is to read tobacco. I know there are people who read coffee grounds, who read movements in water. But I just tried this thing of reading the message of broken unused tobacco, just watching it show me things. It was very good. It is likely that other people have also lived this experience in other contexts, of tobacco being this voice of health, this active image. It’s not an inert thing, it’s a living thing. Of course whoever makes ritual use of it, the everyday use of it, has other experiences. I was perhaps for almost 20 years interested in these tobacco readings, learning more about what it awakens in our body.

I was also very excited when I met the possibility of using tobacco paste, which our *Uitoto* relatives brought from Colombia. They gave me a little bit of this tobacco paste, and I could, in a ceremony we were together, put it under the tongue and experience the effect of tobacco paste in a meditation, very good.

I don’t make use of *petyngua* nor tobacco paste anymore. I do not read it. Because it excused me. At some point in my life, tobacco gave me a sign: “You can move on. You don’t have to keep using this plant as your apprenticeship.” In the same way that someone starts drinking coffee and quits it some day, I also stopped making use of the various ways to approach tobacco, and stopped using it. I do not carry my bag of medicines with me, which would include carrying my *petyngua*, and the *pet̃y*, the tobacco.

I always hear the stories of tobacco very carefully, because I find them mainly beautiful, above all. Quite beautiful, that's why I listen. The most illustrative of them, which I keep in my heart, is a story that Papá will be able to tell much better than me. It's an ancient narrative of our *Nhandéva* relatives. I think the *Mbya* also have this same information he has, that, in the past, when there were no other peoples disputing territory with our ancestors, families could move through the forest, going from one place to another, opening fields to grow food. And when they came to a new place in the forest, where they would choose the spot to make a clearing, they first opened space for the field, then they built the house inside it. The house was already made inside this garden. Probably, the first construction was indeed the *opy*, to have the place of prayers. Then, the family stopped in that place, cleared the area of the swidden and did not cultivate anything, did not plant anything. They kept waiting until a cultivation appeared in the middle of that glade, that clearing. They kept looking to see if, spontaneously, a tobacco plant would appear. If it appeared spontaneously, sprouting in the middle of the dropped trunks and branches in the clearing, it was because that place was propitious. It was conducive to settle there for a while. The villages, these *tekoa* are ephemeral, they do not last for anyone's whole life. Many families pass from one place to another, and open another place later, another clearing where they will once again cultivate and live. And tobacco goes with them. Or it goes ahead, it is already in that place where the family arrives, welcoming people. I understood that if it does not appear in the clearing, it means that one is not supposed to stay there, one must seek another place to live. This story is so beautiful, because it is a plant that determines the settlement that those families will have for a while. Of course, after the white settlers arrived, they laid siege everywhere and put a lot of pressure, therefore this habit of spending time, a few months or years in one place, is no longer possible. Now land has to be demarcated, one has to stop in the same place, and sometimes one has to settle in the same place for decades. Because the place cannot be changed, because the whites came and took the land. But tobacco is still alive and present in the daily lives of each one of us. Just pay attention and it shows you if you can get closer to it or if you

can change places. Well, now Papá could save me. Papá, have you ever heard of someone who spreads tobacco like this on a surface, on a table, and waits for it to show an image?

CARLOS PAPÁ: As you mentioned the name of Zé Fernandes... I also started to use it with him. Until I was 10 years old, I didn't use tobacco. Later, in my adolescence, I underwent the initiation ritual of passage from child to adult. At the time, I was here at Silveira River, where there was no school. My parents decided, then, to take me to *Tenonde Porã* village to study there, because that was the only place with a school. So I could learn how to write.

They were thinking about necessities, thinking about the future. At the time they said: "you will be the future secretary". The *caciques* [chiefs] didn't know how to read or write. So, they depended a lot on other people to write their statements, to send letters to the non-indigenous chief. So, I was taken there, to study in the village.

Between the ages of 12 and 13, my voice started to change. I was no longer a child, my voice started to crack. That was the moment when I had to undergo the initiation ritual, shifting from child to adult. It was there that, for the first time, they passed me the *petyngua*, that is the smoking pipe, and told me: "From now on, Papá, you will use this pipe. You are not supposed to use it just for the sake of it. You will have the purpose of walking with your essence, you will carry your baggage, with your walk. In the sense of bringing this understanding while you are growing. It will help you not being caught by something bad. Many bad things will now appear, which will want to enchant you. This enchantment is very dangerous. And the balance of this life you will bring to protect yourself from the enchantment is the *petyngua*. The *petyngua* takes the messages directly from *Nhanderu*. And *Nhanderu* will guide you. This smoke you release, it takes from the inside to the outside the thoughts, the feelings. This smoke will hover over the entire universe. It will mix with the wind. It will mix with the scent of the environment. With this, you will become increasingly stronger. But you will understand that better when you have your kids. Now, you won't get a thing, even if we say it, you won't get it. But this wisdom will come little by little, when you have kids".

So I didn't understand it right. I used to smoke a pipe at the *amba*, at the altar, asking for my protection. But no force would come. All that came was a heavy sweat, the chills. Sometimes I purged. But I couldn't feel much beyond myself. I only had dreams. When I dreamed of something, I used to tell it to the late Zé Fernandes: "I had a dream of this, or that...", so he used to say what the dream meant.

And that's how I grew up. Always using my *petyngua*. After I moved to the city, I had a small *petyngua* and always revered at dusk. All of this went for a long time. Then I met Cris. And we kept on walking.

I was apprehensive about going to the prayer house. About the materialized strength the *pajés* [shamans] had. When an illness was harming someone's body, then, sometimes I helped *pajé* Djejoko to take care of the sick person. But until then I had no understanding of spirituality in a relatively deep way.

After Djejoko left, after my mother left, the kids came. One day, my son got sick. And my mother wasn't there anymore, Djejoko wasn't there either. So I started using the *petyngua*. Not in the prayer house, but in my own house. I started using it, practicing the way I saw the *pajés* doing it. With this, I started to practice and my son started to get better due to the things I was doing.

So I started to search for more information. And with this, I don't know how to explain what I felt. But something came. Through the tobacco and smoke, more messages came. Through the inebriation of tobacco, I started to perceive and understand the codes from the smoke as one puffs it. The smoke started to open the codes. I ended up understanding those codes. And ancient words came, words as if great *pajés* were manifesting. I felt huge strength, I felt like a giant. I couldn't feel my feet on the ground anymore. I felt... It seemed as if I had the ability to fly. Thus, I began to realize that the *petyngua* is a healing instrument, that makes you understand all the codes of time. That was also when I understood what we call *teko axy*. *Te ko axy* means imperfect body.

Wind brings and takes away messages. The smoke of *petỹ*, wich is the tobacco, when we think, this smoke takes our thought and hovers, so that the wind can bring answers. I learned that *petyngua* and tobacco are hot. They come here and get released. And they need fire.

The tobacco. Here [pointing the pipe] goes the ember. You have to take the ember and put it here. The ember maintains itself. The temperature comes and cools it down. Smoke comes already cool. You blow it with the temperature of your body. Then, the smoke spreads and brings the information needed that you want to know.

The great *pajés* don't say: "Look, you will have to take a course in order to have this comprehension". They don't say that. Each one has to bring [the comprehension] by their own efforts. You bring this search. But you have to bring this search from the 4 directions. Not all the *xeramõi*, the shamans, come from one single place. It's like this: there is *Karai kuéry*, there is *Jakaira kuéry*, there is *Tupã kuéry*, *Nhamandu kuéry*.

The *Tupã kuéry*, that is, the *pajés* who will pick up the directioning baton of *Tupã kuéry*. So, let's assume that I took the baton of *Tupã kuéry*. This is the baton *Tupã* gave me. So with this, I'll have *Tupã's* strength. *Tupã* is a spirit, it is a being with no restrictions. He can heal any person, including those who are not from his culture. He can. Because he is *Tupã*.

Jakaira is the same. If I take the baton of *Jakaira*, his teachings would have no restrictions. He follows *Tupã*, depends a lot on him, they are conjoined: *Jakaira* and *Tupã*. Why? Because *Tupã* is the one who brings the "new time", and who brings the "old time". He takes the "new time" and also takes the "old time". I revere through the mate herb ritual, when the "new time" begins. Therefore, I have to pay a lot of attention in time to know when *Tupã* is coming. I don't know if the term would be "baptize" or "recognize", I don't know how to say this. Because "baptize" is sort of a christian term. The "new time" is when the flowers in the woods are all blooming. Then, *Tupã* comes blessing it all. But this "blessing" thing is also a christian thing. I don't know how to say this. *Tupã* comes, blows the wind and sends the rain, the lightning. This is the first arrival of the "new time". Then you have to wait a little longer. *Tupã* comes again a second time. [You have to] wait until the flowers all fall, when they are creating the little fruits, growing little fruits. After that, you have to wait again. The third time *Tupã* comes, he comes to wash the already grown fruits. That's when it starts, when the "new time" arrives and is complete. That's when *Jakaira* enters to

reverence this “new time” with mate tea herb during the ceremony. We hold ceremonies until... around December. In the middle of the “new time”, we hold the nomination ceremony. Then we have to wait for the third stage, to wait again for *Tupã* to close the “new time”. He will come again. Once, twice, and at the third time, the “new time” is over. Later, *Tupã* brings the “old time”.

Upon the arrival of the “old time”, we hold another ceremony with the mate tea herb. After we hold the mate tea herb ceremony, the “new time” is over and it starts. Time passes. Everyone quarantines, no one does absolutely nothing. They don’t make a swidden, because the weather is cold. So, the mate herb harvested in the “new time” is used, in order for people to go through the “old time”, until the “new time” arrives again. While it is “new time”, one has to harvest everything they can, so they can be tranquil during the “old time” in the cold. This is how the circle works. I took the baton from *Jakaira*. *Jakaira* is a spirit, the guardian of the mist. Of mountains’ mist. And he is also the guardian of the noon. The spirit that guides me is *Jakaira*.

There are also *pajés* guided by *Karai*. *Karai* is the guardian of a straight line, that starts parallel to the sun. *Karai* is a little demanding. That’s why sometimes we think: “Oh, I don’t know why I went to the prayer house with the *pajé* and the *pajé* didn’t let me in”. Many non-indigenous people already tried to enter a prayer house and they were not let in. That’s because *Karai* is very demanding. He is demanding about everything. If you are not in agreement with him, you cannot even take children. Many children make noise, taking the *pajé* out of concentration. So, that’s why they are much more demanding, the *pajés* guided by *Karai*.

Then, there’s *Nhamandu*. *Nhamandu* is a person of all. He is not very demanding, such as *Tupã* or *Jakaira*. Because *Nhamandu* comes from the light. So, he is not so demanding. However, he is much more sensitive. He doesn’t measure his words. If there’s anything wrong you did in the past, he will say: “you did this and that, and that’s why you are like this”. He’s not a person who keeps secrets. This is *Nhamandu*.

So, those who use the *petyngua* must focus and think of where they came from. Taking that walk with this baton. When we think the

spiritual leaders are all the same, it's not like that, they are not all the same. One came from *Tupã's* place, another came from *Jakaira*, the other came from *Karai*, yet another came from *Nhamandu*. So there are four directions, four origins. So, that's why there is a prayer for each one. The clans are different from each other, in the way they dance, pronounce and use tobacco. How does this person use the *petyngua*? There are those who use it like this [covering up and holding the pipe with the hand on top]. There are people who use it like this [holding the pipe in the palm of the hand]. There are those who use it like this [holding the pipe from the front]. There are people who use it only this way [holding the base of the pipe with the fingers].

So, there is a way people must use it. The great spiritual leaders know. They know who came from there, this other one from there, another one from there, from there [pointing the four directions of origin]. That's why the behavior of the leaders are also different, because they know where they came from. And that's the reason why, when we get together, when several spiritual leaders – let's say, the *pajés* – are gathered in a prayer house, each one respects the other. Because each one has their own way to behave. But it is as if it was the same thing, because everyone is equal before the spirit. But the way they behave is different. The *petyngua* is what reveals this difference. However, there is no shaman better than the other. Therefore, one must respect, because it is the way each spiritual world manifests. We have this comprehension. So, that's how tobacco works.

Aguyjevete!

AILTON KRENAK: Good. I'm flying. I remembered that after an unplanned guard, due to circumstances regarding my own family, my personal life, I had to stay without attending any ritualistic situation where I could have the opportunity to do all these cycles, follow what we call parties. Because it is also beautiful to remember our teachers, to remember some of our masters, it is so good to remember them, it gives us such great joy because when we remember them, they end up letting us intervene on their image. It is so beautiful. I was remembering that our dear [Davi] Kopenawa says that when they are doing *shapori*, when

the *pajés* are working among strange people, curious people, an audience, the *xapiris* complain that those people cannot see, they do not see anything. You don't see their luminescence, you don't see their presence, you don't see their image. Then they say "Oh, I don't want to stay here, I'm leaving". They get sick of us because we're not seeing them. And now when we remember our *xeramõi*, they let their image pass through us so we can see their faces. It's so wonderful, because we could consider that this is also a tobacco gift: to let us see the people we love, feel their presence. And it's also wonderful to remember that they can cross all these portals and bring us their image to dance to us, and sometimes even their own smell. I think that whoever makes the correct use of tobacco over time, following all these guidelines that tobacco itself gives us, does not even need to be making use of this plant; it is already in the person's body. It is with them. This transcendence interests me, because I spent some time away from living with tobacco, until I met the snuff, prepared the way that the great snuff makers make the diets, putting ashes and some other aromatic essences, and tobacco. Then I saw that tobacco had returned to me again, in the form of this use of snuff, which helps me and gives me direction, with the same generosity, with the same kindness. You were looking for a word that could not repeat the concepts of Christianity, such as "bless", "to bless" or "blessing", and I was thinking how we still need to name some feelings, our experiences. I believe what tobacco does for each of its children is: it gives a gift, and it lets us be happy, lets us celebrate.

I like to think of this ritual calendar as a party. It's not a common thing, it's a party. You could say it's a party of the spirit. Because when we get out of this daily life in which we are taking care of concerns, taking care of mundane things, getting by in order to buy things, solving things... Then we get out of it and experience this real party. Which is not only a party of humans, it is also a party of birds, wind, flowers, fruits. It's such a wonderful joy that it doesn't feel like we're living in a world with problems. This world with problems is somewhere else. It's the transit, the journey can make in this wonderful vehicle. I like to think of *petyngua* also as a vehicle, a ship. And those who have this gift of being able to access this vehicle and travel, that's it! They leave

this world full of confusion and go to a wonderful place, to party. People have a hard time imagining that. It is because they are perhaps still quite attached to these old values that have become impregnated in our coexistence with colonization, with domestication – they even use the term “domestication of plants”. It is absurd, humans think they can domesticate plants. I took so many gifts from this wonderful talk you just brought, Papá, that I will dream about them, to learn more. If someone asked me today: “Do you use tobacco?” I would say: “only in snuff”. Or else, I would send them to visit Papá and Cris, then I would meet them and tell them “Oh, I need this *petyngua*.” But I don’t carry it with me. I feel I was excused from carrying the *petyngua* with me.

I also remembered a person from the north of the American continent, from the border of the United States with Canada. A man, a shaman in his culture of the Cree people, had a dream, in his land, the United States, and in this vision he was informed that he had to come to Brazil, in South America. He had never looked this direction. Then his spirit looked over here and saw many forests, many woods. And there in that forest, walking among his relatives, there was an Indigenous man with a red band tied in his hair, as if it were a red cloth tied in his hair, on his forehead. And the vision said to him, “You’re going to have to go there, find this man and give him this *petyngua* of yours, this pipe of yours, this holy *pita* of yours, and you’re going to take the herb that burns it too,” since they have a different tobacco from the one we use here in the south, that they use in a sacred *pita*, the pipe. This man was from a family of medicine men. His father, his grandfather were from the lineage of medicines, but he deviated from it and got lost. This brought some consequences for his family, the family’s house caught fire, and he was warned that if he did not take action, he would suffer from it. Then it occurred to him that he had to come to Brazil to look for this man with the red sash on his head and deliver him his *petyngua*. Then he came to Brazil, his name is Lass, from the Cree people. He came to Brazil carrying a bag of medicines, which was made of buffalo skin, and inside of it there was a beautiful, striking object, which is the sacred *pita* that the American Indigenous Peoples use. They consecrate the four directions, north, east, south, west. It stays in the center, they point to the center,

they make fire, they consecrate the *pita* and then smudge the environment, blowing smoke on the people and such. I didn't know the way they did it, and he showed me when we met. He walked through Brazil, went to Rondônia, went to Xingu, went to Mato Grosso. He walked everywhere, visited relatives in various places, went to some parties, looking for this person he saw in a dream image. He didn't find him. When he was leaving Brazil, a friend of ours told him, "Oh, I wanted you to meet a guy who's my friend. He works for the indigenous movement in Brazil". Then this relative of ours from the north said: "Well, I did not find who I came looking for. So, since I'm leaving, let's get to know this politician". He thought I was a politician, that the indigenous movement was made by politicians. And he didn't want to meet a politician, he wanted to meet that person from the dream. Then I went there, in the house where he was staying, and when I arrived at the gate the owner of the house was busy and asked him to open the door. When he opened the door, he got really disoriented and began: "The man arrived, the indigenous man arrived!". When he saw me, he was euphoric because I was the guy he had seen in the dream, the guy he had to deliver his pipe to. Then I was worried about it, I was impressed. Because I had never thought about being gifted a bag of medicines like that. Then he told a beautiful story about his trip, about his family, and said that I was the person who should have that medicine bag. I looked like a child again, I took that fantastic object and I kept looking at it: "Wow, I won a prize!". After the ritual was finished, he left for the United States, I kept my medicine bag and it was forgotten somewhere at home. Because it wasn't an object I knew. I didn't know how to manipulate it, so I decided I wasn't going to be messing with it. Well, someone else came by the house one day and saw that object. He was fascinated, it looked like he had seen a treasure. I realized he really wanted that object. I asked, "Do you want it for yourself?" and he replied, "I would love it, it would be my great joy!". And I gave him that object. Over time, I learned that that relative had brought that object to get rid of that hard path he was traveling, that he was even in danger of dying, of setting fire to his house. He needed to deliver to someone who would end that cycle. As I did not do the task of ending this cycle, another person passed, picked up, and took it to

him. Many things happened to that person later. Then I finally understood how these objects burn in the hand. When it falls into a person's hand, if the person does not know what it is, it burns in the person's hand. It burns a lot.

This last part of the story is kind of tragic, but I could not miss the opportunity to tell you. When a person becomes very curious, wanting a *petyngua* that is not his, the person can make a dangerous choice. It can take with it an object of power that he does not know how to deal with. This is not a fable. This was a hard experience I went through and I saw other people also having to learn to deal with plants, to deal with the instruments that these plants use to communicate with us, to teach us. That's why they call them master plants, because they teach.

The approach that tobacco made to my world was so wonderful, it helped me in a period of my life. That was between 30 something years old an 50 years old. Then I was excused. I even want to check with Papá if he knows the story of any relative who was released from tobacco, who was told: "you can move on, you do not have to work with this plant in this way, with such discipline". I found it very interesting that I felt full liberation. It would be like your doctor telling you, "You no longer need to wear a covid mask." Then I took off the covid mask. Papá, have you ever heard of any non-indigenous or indigenous person that tobacco has excused, that could keep walking and did not need to uphold the discipline of tobacco anymore?

CARLOS PAPÁ: Not so far, no. I haven't witnessed people who have been excused like that. Out there in Paraná, some relatives used to say: "I used the *petyngua* a long time ago, the pipe. For a long time. But today I don't use it anymore". And I ask them why. The person answers: "Because I became an evangelical". That's very common. But not for being excused.

AILTON KRENAK: So, haven't you ever heard anyone say that the essence of tobacco excused a person from regular use? Now you have a person who has told you this.

CARLOS PAPÁ: So it is.

AILTON KRENAK: So, you were saying that the batons that each one gets come from different directions. Some are more liberal, others are stricter. And yet, there is one that doesn't let anyone get close.

CARLOS PAPÁ: That's it.

AILTON KRENAK: I find this explanation interesting. I could also add that there was a time when I drank bottles of *ayahuasca*. Not a little bit, no. Whole bottles! When I used to walk with *pajé* Agostinho, in the forest, I used to walk alongside him and say: "Will you give me a little?". Then he would give me a bottle. I would take the bottle and drink it. I would gargle with the bottle of *ayahuasca*. And swallow it. And it was so wonderful in my body. The feeling was so wonderful! It did not provoke any vision, did not provoke any experience of suffering, nothing. It only gave me joy. So it was like I got drunk from so much joy.

I didn't purge, I didn't feel bad. And the person next to me would take a little something like this, a little cap, and they would throw up, and they would go through a very rough time. I looked and thought "How can they feel bad drinking such a delicious drink?". And Agostinho liked to see me gargle and swallow it, because he said: "People are so afraid to drink this. And you take it, turn the bottle like that and gargle". And I said: "I look like a child of so much joy, of being able to have this drink near me". And when I stayed until dawn, where they would cook the vine, beat the vine, prepare it... Just by being in that atmosphere where the drink was brewed, I was totally in a state of pure vision. I had visions all the time, with its aroma cooking in the pot. I liked to put the ladle in the pot, take the ladle and drink it like *garapa* [sugar-cane juice]. I did that and the people went crazy. They would say: "Wow, this Krenakinho has no sense! Look how much drink he is taking, he will go crazy". I didn't have that concern and I didn't do it as disrespect. I wasn't joking. I really thought it was tasty.

Now they are bottling *ayahuasca*, as they bottle coca-cola or *guaraná*. You can do whatever you want, but I want to see if it will talk to them. Just as one can use tobacco in the most inadvertent way and the only thing one will get is lung disease.

The same plants that heal, they also kill. People have to stop being silly and think they can go eating any plant, like it's lettuce. I keep seeing this movement around me with caution. Now I can spend a whole year without attending any *ayahuasca* ritual. And maybe from now on, I can spend my whole life without taking it. That's why I do not understand why there are people who consume tobacco, *ayahuasca*, or any other plant as if it were a habit, as if it were not a true encounter. Because the true encounter ends in itself. No need to think about it. I have learned this from the fairies. They visit me, fill me with gifts, play with me, dance with me. They encourage me to sing, play, and then they leave.

Aguyjevete!

CARLOS PAPÁ: About the *ayahuasca* medicine, my experience transcended the understanding of fear. I overcame my fear. Because until then I used tobacco, but something was telling me that there was a key that should be turned. A door should be opened. And there were many other doors. But someday I should have the courage to open one of these doors, because the doors were all closed. And the medicine gave me the courage to open the door, one of these doors.

I think the medicine gives people the encouragement to enter the world, to enter their own being, that they are still working on. If it was only with tobacco, I still wouldn't understand the spiritual world precisely. Because, until then, I only saw the things from the spiritual world when I was sleeping, when I was in the dream. And this medicine brought up to me that what I was dreaming is real. With this I learned, I mean, understood, that in one of these doors there is comprehension. When I opened this door, I saw nothing. I heard nothing. So, I asked myself how come I didn't see anything, why I didn't see anything. I was seeing nothing, I was feeling nothing, wasn't sensing scents, I wasn't seeing life.

From the moment you open and enter through this door, that's when I realized that the door that was closed, among these several doors, was myself. It was my interior, that had nothing in yet, and it was necessary to decorate this environment. So, when the light entered through the door gap, I realized that there were thousands of things around.

Including insects. From that moment on I understood that in my interior there are many things, including insects. That all of this is in my “self”. When I felt that there was nothing, I began to fill in the things that were missing. In the dark, when I could see nothing, things started to transcend inside this dark universe. In one of these transcendences, in the middle of the dark, I also felt like an insect. I was turning into an insect, turning into a falling leaf, turning also into an earthworm. Into a huge earthworm. So, I mean, I am all of this.

From this moment on I began to use my pipe in another way. That is not only the use for tobacco. Because using only tobacco, I would become a little... How to say that? A little selfish. It would be as if only I would know things, only I would know, only me and no one else. And since I knew this other medicine, I knew that this form of learning has to be passed on to all the people who may want to follow it. But, of course, not everyone can. Only the one who is prepared, who opens the door. From the moment you can open the door, and feel yourself in it, then you stop becoming selfish. You even become an insect.

So, I think that’s about it. I learned that with the medicine.

Aguyjevete!

GLOSSARY OF TERMS IN GUARANI MBYA

Aguyjevete: term used as an acknowledgement

Amba: altar located in the prayer house. Also indicates the originary divine place.

Axy: imperfect.

Jakaira: one of the deities of the Guarani Mbya pantheon.

Karai: one of the deities of the Guarani Mbya pantheon.

Kuéry: suffix used for pluralization.

Nhamandu: one of the deities of the Guarani Mbya pantheon.

Nhanderu: one of the deities of the Guarani Mbya pantheon.

Opý: prayer house.

Petỹ: tobacco

Petyngua: Guarani Mbya's sacred pipe.

Teko axy: imperfect body or imperfect life.

Teko: life; way of being.

Tekoa: village, it would be literally “the place where we carry out our way of being and living”.

Tupã: one of the deities of the Guarani Mbya pantheon.

Xeramõi: term used to designate the shaman or spiritual leader.

AILTON KRENAK

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Carlos Papá Mirim is an indigenous leader and filmmaker of the Guarani Mbya people. He has worked for more than 20 years with audiovisual productions, with the aim of strengthening and valuing the Guarani Mbya culture by producing documentaries, films and cultural workshops for young people. He also is a spiritual leader in his community. He lives in the village of Silveira River, where he takes part in collective decisions and helps his community to find ways to live better. He is a counselor at the Maracá Institute and a representative by the north coast of the state of São Paulo in the Guarani Yvyrupa commission (CGY).

The editorial production work of the Selvagem Notebooks is carried out collectively with the Selvagem community. The editorial coordination is by Mariana Rotili and the design by Isabelle Passos. The editorial coordinator of English translations is Marina Matheus.

More information at selvagemciclo.com.br

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