

ŁUKASZ KROKOSZYŃSKI
University of St Andrews

Drunken speech: A glimpse into the backstage of sociality in Western Amazonia

On October afternoon in 2012,¹ N. came to buy *trago*² – popular sugarcane liquor – on a merchant’s boat docked at the bank of Limón Cocha village on the Tapiche River in Eastern Peru. As my fiancée and I had agreed to temporarily guard the boat in its owner’s absence, N. stayed to visit and drink liquor. The monologue and conversation which followed, as recorded in my field notes, have in time turned out to condense the essential threads of many other conversations recorded during that fieldwork. Most importantly, it proved to be an exemplary “drunken speech.” In the later analysis of the content of these speeches, it became clear that N.’s monologue was not a random speech in the state of inebriation, but that it exemplified a well-established “genre,” which offers a privileged vantage point into the very heart of the Capanahua descendants’ sociality.³

¹ I thankfully acknowledge the Wenner-Gren Foundation’s Dissertation Fieldwork Grant and Bourse Lelong from CNRS-Institut des Sciences Humaines et Sociales which made the field research possible. It was conducted between August 2011 and March 2013 in communities Berea (c. 70 inhabitants) on the Buncuya River, and in Limón Cocha (c. 150 inhabitants) on the Tapiche River, mutually parallel tributaries of the Lower Ucayali River. PhD thesis based on this research is currently being prepared for the University of St Andrews in Scotland. I am grateful to Kinga Kokot, Anna Gustaffson, Katarzyna Bylow-Antkowiak, Karolina Kuberska, Chris Hewlett, Mariusz Kairski, Paweł Chyc, Professor Peter Gow and Professor Fernando Santos-Granero for reading drafts of this paper and their detailed comments.

² In Loreto, *trago* stands for liquor. Throughout the text, *italics* mark local Spanish words while underline – Capanahua ones. I use a spelling based on Loos (1969) with minor orthographic modifications. All quotes come from interviews or my field notes, but in this article I have chosen to remove precise references because of the potentially delicate subject they relate. For the same reason, I have replaced all of the surnames with fictitious ones, although preserving the distinction between surnames of Spanish, Loretan or Panoan (drawing from Capanahua historical narrative in Schoolland 1975) provenience, which is relevant for the comments made about them.

³ Capanahua is a South American language from the Panoan family, closely related to Shipibo-Conibo (recent classification defines Capanahua as a dialect of S.-C. (Fleck 2013)). It appears that between the 19th and 20th centuries, when they came to contact with the national society,

In this paper, I present particular, socio-culturally conditioned representations and employment of inebriation (Heath 1987; Dietler 2006), which uses a set of common themes, formulas, or gestures (cf. Harvey 1991). However, it needs to be stressed that my aim is to suggest how the content of such speeches or demonstrations reflects some important aspects of social representations on the Tapiche and Buncuya Rivers. I recognize the “natural” quality of drunken speech production to be rooted in specific ideas about the “nature” of sociality, and make it the main focus of this article. By looking at how Capanahua descendants speak about others who speak inebriated, as well as the content of such speeches, I glance at what this says about their ideas about social life and at its workings. Therefore, instead of engaging in the formal analysis of these speeches as a discursive genre or performance, I look into the “nature” that produces them. This overview may therefore serve as much as a guide to the culturally specific construction and employment of the physical state of inebriation, as a walk through what I understand to be dimensions of Capanahua descendants’ sociality.

The text opens with N.’s example in its entirety, translated and slightly edited from my field notes. It is followed by an overview of the elements of similar speeches which I have witnessed at least a few times a month during my stay, as drinking alcohol accompanies communal work of any kind, making the drunken speech a commonplace occurrence. They were recorded in my field notes. Several examples were recorded when the speakers insisted on conducting recorded interview despite their own inebriation, and a few more were recorded on the occasion of another person’s interview. Additionally, some elements of the speeches were reported to me by the villagers themselves, based on their own lifetime of experiences, and have been documented in recorded interviews or in field notes. This broader presentation is complemented by the mention of specific meanings associated with drunkenness that shed a special light on the content of drunken speeches – namely, its capacity to externalize what is normally concealed. Therefore, because I am most interested in the representations

the ancestors of Capanahua speakers have occupied the area of the upper Tapiche’s tributaries and sources. Many of their descendants live in five native communities on the Buncuya and Tapiche rivers, which total around 400 inhabitants, including persons of non-Capanahua origin. Additionally, over the last several decades many have migrated to the Ucayali or lower Tapiche towns – their number is unknown, but should be considered significant. Both in towns and in the communities, they share a lifestyle common to the Peruvian *mestizo* inhabitants of the tropical forest. The language is in the process of extinction, as there are no monolingual speakers, fluency is mostly found in the elderly generation, middle-aged people usually have largely passive knowledge of the language, younger generation has little if at all, and there are no children who speak or understand it. The Capanahua identity parallels this pattern. I use the designation “Capanahua descendants” not to mark my judgment of authenticity or level of acculturation, but to reflect the local way of speaking about identity. “Capanahua proper” refers most often to the *antiguos* [ancestors], of whom Capanahua descendants say they are *hijos nomás* [only the children] or *ramas* [branches]. Relatively rich linguistic literature exists due to the work of SIL missionaries (1950s-1990s), and it is not matched by ethnographic or historical publications.

of social life revealed by drunken speech, I will close this paper with some final suggestions on how this phenomenon allows a glimpse into the inner workings of the local sociality. More specifically, I find it remarkable and representative for Capanahua descendants' social representations that particular identity affiliations, as well as the Capanahua language, should be "revealed" in few natural contexts outside of the state of inebriation (a principal alternative being an interview with me, the anthropologist interested in the historical categories).

N.'s speech

N. (56) was already relatively drunk with *masato* [fermented manioc beverage]⁴ copiously served on the *minga* [neighbours' work party] from which he had just arrived. He addressed me in *idioma* [the language], proudly stating: "Haskari nukin kaibu tūiti: siripi. Numi'i, kuin kuini, sina sinayama'i. Numi'i, naši'i, uša'i" [This is how "our relatives" work: just fine. They drink happy, peaceful, and unanimous, nobody gets mad. They drink, bathe and go to sleep].

His greeting evolved into an extensive, almost uninterrupted monologue in Spanish, enriched with Capanahua words or sentences. N. started by saying with a spark in his eye: "ʔÁyubu paʔin sta hai! ʔĪa taʔ ʔÁyubu ki!" [The ʔÁyubu⁵ is ostensibly drunk! I am the ʔÁyubu!], and added a Capanahua phrase associated with the ʔÁyubu, which he explained to A. (45), who joined us in the meanwhile: "You know how when you try to pick peach palm (*pijuayo*) fruit with a long pole, and you can't, because it slips away and twists? That's what I am! That's how agile the ʔÁyubu are! You can't catch me!" He then listed the few men in Limón Cocha who were also ʔÁyubu. "But those here," continued N., motioning towards the village, "they are Pechabobakibu,⁶ Niabu,⁷ my mother, my uncles... Yet, it is my father who engendered me (*engendrar*)! My mother, who cast me out into the world (*botar al mundo*) was Niabu, but I am ʔÁyubu!" A. then asked him: "So what am I?" N. thought a while: "You are Na'inbu!"⁸ A. laughed: "That's what my father used to say, but I never knew what to make of it." "The ʔÁyubu is like that: *chah! chah!*" explained N. demonstrating the fighting gestures with

⁴ I insert the English translations or short explications in square brackets, and original expressions in round brackets.

⁵ See section "Claiming 'all that they are'" for explanation of these identities. Eponymy of ʔáyu is uncertain, sometimes associated with ʔaya, *maracana* or *shamiro* [possibly white-eyed parakeet, (*Aratinga leucophthalmus*)], but sometimes with wanin, *pijuayo* [peach palm (*Bactris gasipaes*)].

⁶ Pechabo is a fictitious version of one of the village surnames.

⁷ From nĭa (*trompetero*), most probably pale-winged trumpeter (*Psophia leucoptera*) found in southwestern Amazon rainforest. Some people on the Tapiche suggested that there are two kinds of *trompetero* – one smaller and more gregarious (nĭa), and the other bigger, living in smaller groups (čĭncĭ).

⁸ From na'in (*pelejo*) [three-toed sloth (genus *Bradypus*)].

the imaginary winu.⁹ “And the Na’inbu is like this, lying down,” N. mimicked a scene where the defeated Na’inbu, lying on his back, sticks his leg out to protect himself from the ʔÁyubu, “I am the trunk of the ʔÁyubu, really-real! (*¡tronco de ʔÁyubu! ¡legítimo, legítimo!*)” triumphed N. “I know how things were, how the breed (*generación*) began, who we are and from where! I know all of it! Nukin hui ʔunanaʔi [I know our language] – better than anyone else in here, including my older brother! All the others are ʔiʔbumabu! [lit. “not owners”]. I use that word for those who have no knowledge (*conocimiento*), don’t know a thing, don’t have a family, and don’t have any experience. When I get angry I say: Tsuan mia taʔ kinʔ! ʔiʔbuma! *¡Quien eres tuʔ!* *¡No sabes nada!*” [Who do you think you are?! You know nothing!].

In the narrative reiterations of his legitimacy, N. made a claim that perplexed me: “My father was well *viracuchazo*, like a *gringo*! He had good knowledge, he was *mestizo*!¹⁰ My mother no, she was a *cholita*, *indita*¹¹, but she only threw me out to the world. The others begrudged (*odiaban*) my father, saying that his surname was given to him as a gift (*regalado*) as an ʔinábu [slave, adopted child] when his umbilical cord was cut. But no! Not him! He was truly real (*bien legítimo*) Rojas. And he would say: ‘Why should I be changing my surname?!’ Yet others, yes, they are ʔinábu – like F. [the protoplast of the García line on the Tapiche], who was kidnapped by the *mestizos* when he was little. They claim they are García, but that’s not who they are! They are neither García, nor Rojas [paternal and maternal surnames¹² of the oldest living generation], they are Parayube Huasinahua! [Panoan-sounding (sur)names]. Their mother was ʔinábu as well, raised by others. Did you hear how they speak Spanish? They have an accent, right? And me, I speak well, don’t I? That’s because they are more *cholo* than me! It is only I who is a real Rojas, I am ahead (*adelante*) of them! Also, of J., G. [N.’s mother’s brother’s sons] – they are Pechabo Rojas, but me... I am Rojas Pechabo! They are behind me!”

A. asked: “And your father?” “X. Rojas Mocanahua.” “Mother?” “Y. Pechabo Rojas.” To this A. responded spontaneously: “I, too, am – as you say, *¡bien legítimo!* My folks united among Herreras! My father was Huasinahua Herrera, and my mother Tello Herrera [sic, actually Herrera Tello].” “Is Tello Cocama¹³?”

⁹ *Macana* in Spanish. It is a long, sword-like weapon made from peach palm wood (Tessmann, 1999: 91). The last known examples have been lost some 40 years ago.

¹⁰ In local Spanish, *gringo* refers to an exotic caucasian foreigner; *viracucha* is a Caucasian or a person of “elevated” or foreign origin and culture (note the AUG -zo); *mestizo* can mean a person of mixed origin and/or raised in a Spanish-speaking environment.

¹¹ *Cholo*, *indio* (note DIM -ita) – pejoratively charged designations connoting “hillbillies” or “heathens,” used to mean persons raised and living in primarily indigenous language and setting.

¹² In Peru, a person has two surnames, first from the father and second from the mother. Every parent passes on only his or her first (paternal) surname to the child.

¹³ Tupian indigenous group from the Ucayali, Marañón and Huallaga Rivers, on the Tapiche often assumed to be “more advanced” and sometimes synonymous with *mestizo*.

asked N. “¡Cocamazo!” answered A. strongly, intensifying the name with the augmentative suffix.

N. said he knew who his grandfather was, while earlier even his older siblings were not able to tell me. Recalling a name [of a man that others said was not his father’s father], N. told us the story of the elder’s death: falling from an elevated *pona* palm floor to break his neck, the subsequent accusations and temporary arrest of his uncle. When speaking of the “the old ones,” N. said that they, the *antiguos*, were real, while “us – we are nothing but their branches (*sus ramas*).” This led him to talk of his oldest son: “I have engendered him, he is mine! His mother only cast him out onto the world – I made him (*yo le hecho*)!” He told us about how he teaches his son to deal with *paturunu* – *patrón* [*mestizo* employer], and he urges him to study at school, learn to read and write, and get ahead (*adelante*), to be *ašuan huni* [more/better of a man], not to feel shame (*tener vergüenza*) like his father who did not know how to read and write. His step-daughters set an example – out there, in other parts of Peru, writing letters, studying.

With R., N.’s wife, who joined us later on, all three maintained that I spoke “their language” and insisted on speaking to me in Capanahua, which I could follow only partly. Whenever N. and R. switched to Spanish, A. opposed strongly, urging them to go back to speaking *idioma*, even though he too understands it partially and kept asking for the meaning of particular words or utterances.

All the while they were drinking *trago* that N. asked me for, and he acknowledged this by telling me “the story of this *trago*” (*cuento dese* [sic!] *trago*) in Capanahua – how I served him a drink, how nobody needs to know about this (he assumed that I had served him the *trago* of the *patrón* during his absence without paying for it, which was not the case), how I served him tobacco (“*siri huni!*” [a good man]); and how good it was to be there, *kuin kuini*, peacefully, unanimously. A. and N. went on to convince me of their great friendship for me and how they were going to miss me (*pensar*, *šina šinakin*) when I leave to “*miin hūma hanin*” [your land/city], even though at this point we still had 4–5 months of stay ahead of us. They finally left to look for the boom-box to play *música*.

Modalities of the drunken speech

The Capanahua recognized a speech genre referred to as *paʔin hui* or *paʔin yuwani* [*paʔin* – inebriated; *hui* – language, story, speech, word; *yuwani* – conversation], although it seems to refer rather to monologic turns (cf. Urban 1986: 381) and can be translated as “drunken discourses” (Loos and Loos 1980a: 64). In contemporary Spanish, it is referred to descriptively as *están conversando entre borrachos* [they talk among drunken people]. Capanahua descendants describe it in the context of an exclusive “conversation between ancestors”. It seems that the privileged setting for the *paʔin hui* had been drinking gatherings of men described

as “all-night drinking fest[s]” (Loos 1960: 7). The speech was interpreted to be “dedicated to ‘counselling’ the younger generation” (Loos 1960: 7; cf. Loos and Loos 1980a: 64), although the Capanahua descendants tend to present the paʔin yuwani of the ancestors by focusing on the partly unintelligible self-assertions.

Loos also mentioned the existence of a tradition of “tribal chants and [funeral] wails” which by 1950s was known only by older women (1960: 12–13). In Capanahua, it may be referred to as winiʔi [to cry, lament]. When I played a Sharanahua fidi, discussed by Déléage (2007b), to several middle-aged people, they said it was the same as winiʔi of their parents or grandparents. Today, their wailing is referred to as *hablando-hablando lloran, llorando-hablando, llorar en su idioma* [they cry while talking-talking, crying-talking, crying in their language]. While it refers mostly to funeral wailing, it is also said to have been employed when recalling absent or deceased loved ones: “She cries recalling the past, what had taken place, her fathers, mothers... One stays behind to give *ejemplo* [lit “example,” here: “account”] of it all. This is it, giving account of (*ejemplando*) the ancient ones”. While this may relate wailing to the educational or testimonial character of the drunken speech mentioned by Loos, in both cases, it seems that one occasion for lamenting would be the gatherings where people drank alcohol:

[My aunt’s] father (...) also was... saying... singing... like this. But I didn’t understand what he was saying. (...) Like I told you, drunk! Drinking, closing his eyes, there he would be, singing in his language, yeap... [chuckles] (...) Paʔin yuwani, they would call it, too. Paʔin yuwani... winiʔi (...) nukin šinibu winiʔi paʔini [Speaking drunk, they lament (...) – our ancestors would lament when drunk]. My cousin (...) told me this: “How was it [done], cousin?” – “Paʔinaš... winikani” (...) All bundled together, just them right there, (...) and they cried like this. There I heard the old C. sing like that – what could he possibly have been saying, the old-timer? I couldn’t understand him!

While it is fairly easy to recognize the winiʔi as a variant of the “ritual wailing” genre of native South America (e.g. Urban 1988), it is more difficult to relate paʔin yuwani to the literature. One might identify it with the “ceremonial dialogues” or “ceremonial greetings” (e.g., Rivière 1971; Urban 1986; Surrallés 2003), but while it is linked to encounters or gatherings, there is no information as to what level of encounters (e.g. intra- or inter-community) they referred to. Additionally, for the Capanahua, both paʔin hui and winiʔi seem to have been related to inebriation.

The Capanahua descendants tend to associate the drunken speeches with “customs of the ancestors,” specifically with the paʔin hui (section “Claiming ‘all that they are’”), and occasionally, winiʔi wailing (section “The language”). My use of the term “drunken speech” is more inclusive. First, I look at the contemporary practice observed during my fieldwork. Current drunken speeches take place on any occasion where alcohol is consumed. In occurrences that I have witnessed, they have been presented by both men and women, usually middle-aged, rarely younger. Women tend to limit the content of their speeches to

modalities from sections “Conviviality”, “Remembering, they cry”, and “The language”, with those from section “Claiming ‘all that they are’” being used predominantly, if not exclusively, by men. If at all spoken about, drunken speech is presented as occurring spontaneously, “naturally” when people drink and their content as simply the things that drunken people say, not requiring special skills. To an outsider, however, they show significant consistency – most importantly, displaying notable similarity to how the past examples of drunken speeches are described, either today or in available sources. Secondly, contemporary representations of past drunken speech and actual occurrences conflate the themes associated with both hypothetical genres of the ancestors. Because of this, I chose to present them separately, but only as elements or modalities used across the drunken speeches. These purely analytical devices facilitate presentation of the entangled thematic, emotional and social content of drunken speeches. The ordering of presentation from the convivial to conflictive modalities may reflect the chronological progression in actual speeches, but it is not always the case, and I take note of any chronological or logical connections in the employment of modalities. In some situations, the mode linked to *wini’i* can be predominant, yet it would also include elements associated with the *pa’in hui*, or vice versa. The introductory example demonstrates how a drunken speech can actually be laid out – drawing on all or any of the modes and combining them. Thirdly, I have included here an aspect of the drunken behaviour to which for convenience I refer as “conviviality.” The Capanahua descendants do not describe it as part of drunken speech in representations of either historical or contemporary examples, less so name it as such. It is, however a salient feature of the drunken speeches and is indispensable for understanding the remaining aspects.

Conviviality

N.’s speech begun with the description of circumstances of his inebriation, which is essential for contextualizing the remaining aspects of the drunken speeches. This mode is the most disparate in relation to the remaining ones in that it focuses on the present temporal setting and on the communal dimension. Its central themes are being joyous, peaceful, and creating bonds of friendship.

The expression *kuin kuini* refers to the feeling of joy and contentment (*alegrarse, contentarse*) (Loos and Loos 2003), and in contemporary practice, *estar alegre* connotes harmonious joint participation – being entirely present, with no conflictive elements. Enunciating what is being (or has recently been) done together can be interpreted as dismissing doubts as to intentions and expressing the speaker’s full, harmonious participation. It most often refers to:

- working – for example, on a *minga*, working hand in hand, V. called to me laughing: “Uuh! Suffering (working) together!”; in other situations, which explain current inebriation: “We have been working *lindo*, co-ordinately, with all of our friends!”; M. told me, speaking in Capanahua and gesticu-

lating, that they have been drinking strong *masato* while felling trees – and “[they] all got drunk!”;

- passing time together: “We are sitting here, joined by the bonds (*vínculos*) of friendship!”; drinking *masato* (sharing one bowl and sitting next to each other): “we are here, drinking like humans!”; “We are sitting here, drinking our *masato*, *tranquilo* – you know how we are!”; having a conversation (“Here we are, entirely peaceful, having a conversation, recounting – everything in order [*normal*]!”) – preferably about work: E. was scolding her companions for the verbal accusations – “Don’t talk about stealing, cheating – talk like Capanahua, about how to open a field, how to harvest manioc!”; “When my father was tipsy, he would converse about work, tell stories from other parts”; or dancing, etc.: “Here we are, in this surrounding (*ambiente*), drinking, smoking, dancing, peacefully, *tranquilo*, *lindo*!”.

A related meaning of *alegría* refers to the joyous uproar of laughter and music, perceptible proof of being together. A boom-box or a stereo is a device for overcoming the *tristeza*, or sadness/silence, and a proper meeting should be enhanced and affirmed by the loud music.

The peaceful, harmonious element is also defined through adjectives *siripi* [good, right, clear] or *tranquilo* [peacefully], *lindo* [neat], *normal* [in order], and indicates a peaceful interaction based on unanimity, free of fights, without offending anyone. A. told me about his birthday party as exemplary of the right way of drinking: “All the others got drunk and slept, some with vomit all over their faces and clothes... but all perfectly neat (*puro lindo*), no fighting, none whatsoever. No arguments. Nothing, not a little bit! *Puro lindo tranquilo*!”. Similarly, P. spoke about another villager: “at least he does no harm to anyone, he’s just walking about talking to himself and singing until his drunkenness passes or he goes to sleep”, and E. said she prefers when “everyone on a *minga* is merry and content, when no one gets mad (*no se rabia*)”. V. told me that “some look to pick a fight (*son líosos*) for no reason. Others bother (*molestan*) you talking or singing” – he stays away from these, and he himself drinks tranquilly – “there is no harm in somebody getting drunk and going to sleep, does not bother anyone”. This ideal is evoked in drunken speech. In drunken speech at another occasion, N. was telling us how “people are enjoying themselves in a good way, *alegre*, among *kaibu* [relatives]: *sinayama?* [without getting mad], just like the ancestors – they would come together to *čirini* [dance] all night, drink *masato* and go to sleep the next day”. P. would assure me in his drunken speeches that he is *tranquilo*, “without arguing (*discutiendo*) with anyone” – and Z. made sure that he had not offended me (*¿he faltado algo a tu persona?*).

Special effort is made to verbally create or confirm the surroundings (*ambiente*) of family and friendship links, joining the participants of the gathering. This is done by affirming the relation through proper terms by which people address each other (*tratarse*) (in Spanish or Capanahua). When inebriated, I. would call on his “beautiful idea for everyone to live tranquilly, neat. One large family! That’s what I go for!” – for this reason, he said, we were also part of the family,

and that is why he was calling me *compadre* [child's god-father]. S. would complain laughingly that Y. (distantly related) always calls her *mami* when drunk, but when sober – does not bring her even one fish. Speakers also praise the valued characteristics of a person they address (*bien bueno conmigo* [so good to me!], *linda gente* or *siri huni* [lit. beautiful folks, connoting generosity and unanimous participation]) and convince the listener of their good intentions and feelings (*estimar* [respect], *amar, querer* [love]).

Expressing sadness at the perspective of future separation is another way of emphasizing the bonds evoked in the present, both in terms of time and of space. For example, long before the time of our departure, during their drunken speech people would say: “When will we see you again? Never?! We are going to be very sad when you leave!”, but it can also be heard on other occasions which focus on the passing of time, such as the New Year's Eve or birthdays. There, amidst the wild *cumbia* music and dancing, drunken speeches accentuate joint participation to explicitly produce and fortify memories in the face of the unpredictability and inevitability of death or separation: “Tomorrow I die, and you will cry remembering me – how we used to dance and drink together! And the same if you die – we will be very, very sad! We don't know if we'll make it to the next year!”; “We may die tomorrow; we have to be *alegre* now!”; “Don't you ever forget me!”. Z. was even ascertaining that he would never forget my friend who visited us for a few days – “What's his name again?”.

To conclude, this modality of drunken speeches articulates and acknowledges the situation in a way characteristic to the foregone Capanahua and their descendants. For example, the usual Capanahua greeting questions the perceptible state of the addressee in the negative, and the response affirms it. The most common example, translated for outsiders as “hello” is “*mu'i yama'in?*” (“are you not awake?”), with the response “*mu'i ta' hai*” (“I am awake”), but there are many others in Capanahua narratives, including “*hiwiyama'in?*” “are you not living (in your house?)” (Loos and Loos 1980b; Scholland 1975). In local Spanish, the habitual greeting questions the activity of the addressee, for example “*¿tas sentado?*” (“are you sitting?”), and the response is an affirmation, “*aquí estoy, sentado*” (“here I am, sitting”) (cf. Erikson 2009). In a similar manner, in the convivial modality, speakers verbally affirm what is perceivable. People make merry and simultaneously describe how they drink while working, talking or dancing, elaborating on how well it is to be together in peace. It may be said that those expressions are meant to produce a safe, transparent environment that is the ideal of social interaction. But they also go further, because instead of simply stating the facts, they define the situations as already perfect through the use of the above key adjectives. The ideal of harmonious being in an unanimous gathering is the essence of their speeches. They as much reflect as create or impose it. The zeal in defining the situation is indicative of a lurking shadow which can be understood only in relation to other aspects of drunken speech, and more generally, to the way in which drunken speech reflects representations of sociality.

In order to situate this modality in relation to the remaining ones, it should be said that the moment of the switch from the convivial to the modalities discussed below (section “Modalities of the drunken speech”) can be defined as the slip of focus from the present to the past, and from group setting and conversation to individual introspection and monologue. *Alegría* is opposed to *tristeza*, bīna [sadness], which refers to silence, loneliness and abandonment. It is intrinsically connected with the verb *pensar*, šinakin [to think] which describes yearning for someone or something, remembering, homesickness, worrying and being in the state of detachment. Silence is also interpreted as the refusal of interaction caused by anger (*rabiar*, sinati). Therefore, this shift from convivial openness and communality to wini’i (section “Remembering, they cry”) and pa’in hui (section “Claiming ‘all that they are’”) modalities of introspection and difference plunges the speech into the shadow, at the depths of which lies the potential of conflict and violence. The following sections describe the revelations of what is said to be hidden behind the silences or shadows that the merrymaking is meant to cover.

Yet, the convivial mode may serve as an introduction or a background for the introspection and reminiscences. For example, in N.’s speech it is followed by themes from other modalities, but also encompasses them. Similarly, the building up of a harmonious space quite often leads up to the confrontational mode, revealing desire as a demand based on the invoked bond. Thus, drunken speech “proper” (pa’in hui – see below) can continue to be interwoven with the convivial mode in milder versions of the speeches. Nonetheless, the shift in content leads to an area that for the Capanahua descendants can be a source of potentially ominous antisocial force: individual thoughts and memories. Remembering can uncover old conflicts or new demands. Claims to one’s *raza* [line of origin], or presenting one’s experiences and memories easily lead to comparisons, pretensions of one’s hierarchic position and the tests of strength.

“Remembering, they cry”

Crying is commonly expected of a *borracho* [drunken person] as a “normal” element of inebriation. Often this emotional outburst is taken as spurious, just as when E. is ridiculing the *borracho*’s “*mami!*”, or when A. says people cried at a funeral only because they were drunk. Yet, the underlying idea is that *borracho* cries recalling (*pensar*) his family, and this touches on the central point of drunkenness as outlined by Capanahua descendants. While in the convivial mode, lamenting serves to reinforce existing or evoked bonds by envisioning future separation; this type of expression of sadness serves no social purpose and reinforces estrangement. Remembering is believed to deflect from the social setting at hand, causing thoughts to leave to other places, other times, and other people. Contemporary representations and practice situate the laments (possibly related to the wini’i wailing) alongside the proper drunken speech (pa’in yuwani) as the space of recalling.

Memories and nostalgia take the centre stage in this modality of drunken speech. Speakers bemoan their own pitiable state of loneliness, abandonment, and detachment from other members of their family, e.g. "At no time of night or day do I see my father. Any time I look, he's not there. There I am, recollecting, thinking of my dad...". "I have neither father nor mother" is an often used expression, and even older people deplore being orphans. Others lament the dispersion of their family – siblings or children, or their own status of being "from somewhere else." Yet others express their sadness at temporal separation, e.g. when the wife leaves temporarily while the husband stays at home and drinks, deploring his loneliness, hunger as well as the fear that she will never come back. Overall, the evoked image is that of an individual's abandonment and estrangement in the present social space, and of belonging somewhere else ("I have no family here!").

Those affiliations with remote or past places are often supported by revealing names or actual descriptions of people and places to which the *borrachos* claim to belong: "and so, when they [the old ones] were drunk, they recalled... their grandfathers, fathers of grandfathers...". The knowledge of genealogical ties or origins is actually often traced to this modality. For example, when talking about family connections of a certain man, R. told me: "well, when he got drunk in here, he said: 'I had a father who passed away, his name was M. Aguirre!'". The recollections concern the departed loved one's virtues, harmonious joint activities (hunting, working and conversations) or shared places. Apart from memories connected to family, one of those remote places revisited is the SIL social space on the Buncuya River between 1950–1980s.

Emotionally charged, painful recollections of sickness and death are also disclosed. The night before *día del tunchi* (All Saints' Day) M. came to us inebriated, and stating her full name and the names of her father and siblings (although we had known each other for 10 months already – cf. section "Claiming 'all that they are'"), she began a crying soliloquy, replete with gesticulation and dialogues. She told us of her loneliness in this village and recounted her father's sickness, collapse and death, detailing the caretaking, suffering, and arguments after his death. "I am alone; I have no mother, no father. Just my children and grandchildren, but there is no one to comfort me (*dar consuelo*)...". Drunken P., crying profusely, recounted separate stories of the deaths of his aunt, his grandfather, and his baby sister, one after another. Similar stories detailing dying and death are also comparable with the separations (e.g. farewells with the SIL missionaries), or the collapse of community (e.g. the story of the vampire bat plague that destroyed the whole stock of cattle on the Buncuya).

The speakers can also reminisce the transmission of knowledge (language, mythic stories) from departed close ones ("T. Paranhua! (...) *mi abuelo!* (...) ¡*El me contaba muuuchas... pasadas!* ¡*Cantidades!*" [T. Paranhua! (...) my grandfather! (...) He used to tell me maaany stories from the past! A lot!]), and sometimes proceed to the content of the stories themselves. These carry away to even more remote places and times, especially the curious and terrifying tales of the

sad past (*triste pasado*), where the ancestors suffer violence, persecutions and ignorance.

Finally, a speaker may lament his own life mistakes or misfortunes (such as premature deaths in the family) which determined his life path, failed chances at education or work in cities, traumatic memories, or his near-death experience.

Therefore, in this mode, *borrachos* recall their lost connections to other places, other times and persons. Most of all, they remember the departed family members and the social spaces they have passed through during their lives – it could be said that they recall the spaces of conviviality of the past. The frequency of these expressions of yearning in drunken speeches suggests that inebriation is one of the contexts in which they are expected and allowed to resurface. Inevitably, those reminiscences bring up a very common and important theme of the Capanahua descendants' social representations: passing away and temporal degradation or diffusion: "He was really-really real Capanahua! When he died, the Mocanahuas ended. We are... nothing but the roots (*raices*)¹⁴" – disdainfully told me Z., whose own surname is Mocanahua (cf. section "Claiming 'all that they are'").

The language

The language of everyday, "sober" communication in the Capanahua descendants' villages is Peruvian Amazonian Spanish, or Ucayali Spanish. Yet, it is commonly maintained that everyone in the village actually knows *idioma* ("the language") of the *antiguos*, but refuses to speak it or admit to understanding it. These commentaries feature a very characteristic mixture of resentment and derision: "They know the language, brother, they can speak it. How else would I hear them speak when they get drunk? And when sober, they don't want to!"; "They don't speak it every day – only once in a while, when they are a bit tipsy – there they remember too!"; "Just listen how this *borrachito* talks! That's how they are: when sober, he doesn't want to say a word. And when he's got his booze: Damn! He knows it all too well!"; "That one, when he's all liquored up, he speaks it. And the guy speaks it really neat, too!"; "Oh boy, how they would speak it when they had their liquor!"; "They don't want to speak it. Only when you catch them with their *masato* – only then!".

While the actual commonality of language competence seems questionable to me, drunken speeches do favour usage of Capanahua. Inebriation, then, is strongly associated with speaking *idioma*. "[I am drunk, so] I feel like speaking my language! (*¡Tengo ganas de hablar mi idioma!*)" – is a popular expression, and the "urge" is more often simply enacted, regardless of the actual competence of the speaker and the listeners. This is best illustrated by speeches of those persons who most strongly deny their knowledge and claim to have forgotten it completely while sober. One of them once struggled to utter: "buna ka'i!" While

¹⁴ This imagery refers to branching out, more commonly articulated as "tree-branches" or "tree-offshoots."

I tried to figure out what happened with the bullet ant (*buna, isula*), his daughter asked her mother: “*buna* what?!” Laughing, the latter responded that she had no idea. Only when the man started gesturing with tears in his eyes, did I understand that he meant *bina* [*pena*, sadness] – that he was going to feel sorry when we would leave.

The drunken speeches seem also to privilege languages of other social spaces, and since they are to a large extent a monologue – like in the extreme case of P., who “walks around talking to himself” – they can be opaque to listeners. Loos noted that “a grandfather chanted for the group in a dialect not clearly understood by the others, who claimed it was ‘too fast’ for them” (1960: 13), and P. (who is among the most competent speakers) recalled not understanding the speeches of his uncles. Also, he remembered that his father, when inebriated, sang and spoke in Quechua, which no one else understood: “My father spoke Inka, me – never, I was just listening. When drunk, he would be sitting there, all alone, speaking”. Contemporary examples are P.’s use of incomprehensible languages, including an invented dialect of Capanahua, improvised legal-official Spanish and the pretend-Polish which he spoke in his drunkenness, and even L.’s exclusive use of his native Yanasha language while drunk conforms to this pattern.

These other languages may be considered traces of remote social spaces included in one’s formation and experience. Similarly, for the villagers, Capanahua language is closely associated with the social space of the parents. *Hui* [language] also stands for words and stories, which are always traced to specific persons and the “exact” way they told them. It is often repeated that “the old ones no longer exist” – so there is no one to speak the language to. Therefore, language of the stories and of communication with the relatives who are gone is also a matter of memory, a trace of other places, times and convivialities – especially if it is not used in everyday conversations.

Claiming “all that they are”

The following modality of drunken speech is similar to the previous one in that it relates to places and people outside of the current spatial-temporal setting. In fact, it may evolve from nostalgic remembrance itself. Yet, while drunken lament expresses separation, longing and the temporal diffusion of authenticity, this mode actively brings particularity within the confines of the present social space. This aspect involves a boasting affirmation of difference in persons. Instead of projecting authenticity (*legítimo*, connoting centeredness and purity) onto the past, the speaker claims it for himself. Speakers announce “all that they are” (*todo lo que [son] ellos*), which is interpreted as their claim of superior authenticity against other participants of the social space, substantiated by origin, affiliation, formation, physical strength, prowess and knowledge. It is openly confrontational. Such an overt demonstration radically opposes the uniformity ideal of conviviality and everyday sociality, where self-restraint and humility are the norm. While daily communication postulates relative kinship address terms, drunken speech

exposes “absolute,” singular identities. This modality corresponds to the Capanahua descendants’ representations of a proper *paʔin hui*.

The most basic formula is “*Paʔin sta/ta hai*” [I am drunk], followed by *tribu* name. For example, “When they got drunk, they used to say: ‘*paʔin sta hai, niabakibu!*’”; “‘*Uuu – paʔin ta hai!*’ – he would say – ‘*ʔÁyu! ʔÁyubu!*’”; “my uncle used to say ‘I am Niabu’... when he was drunk” (GSR07); “my father-in-law used to say: ‘*Paʔin ta hai! ʔÁyu – ʔÁyubu! Niaʔin baki*’ [son of the Niabu woman]. It is a violent, expressive shout, occasionally accompanied by pounding the chest with the hand or fist. In case of the *Niabu*, speakers can imitate trumpeter’s calls (*čuuh! čauuh! čiiš! ššff! tuššš!*), and one man recalled seeing his grandfather also imitate the bird’s walk. Today, apart from (or instead of) the above, a full name and surname may be given, sometimes along with the names of parents or grandparents, including situations where people know each other and their relations, so that a man can yell his full name and surname even to his brother.

However, outside of the drunken speech those affiliations are normally considered boisterous, sometimes rebel identity claims. First, the speaker can be interpreted to arrogate a new centeredness by taking on a “strong” name, potential beginning of a new *tribu/raza* (see below). This refers to the names said to be either made up by the speaker for himself, or even improvised on the spot to support his skills, strength, or authenticity claims. For the currently living Capanahua descendants, they are an object of slight ridicule, both for the drunken speeches of the past and present, e.g. “He [my uncle] used to say that he was *Binuʔiʔbu*, *Mananʔiʔbu*¹⁵, *Niabu*. How? Which one in the end!? [laugh]”; “They used to say those [names] [laughs]. They say that in jest (*De broma hablan ese*), (...) – like that drunkard J.: don’t you know when he’s drunk he says: ‘I am *Mašin Kunibu*¹⁶?... I mean, they invent those names themselves, to speak there”. Yet, this logic of rampant, wilful self-naming ancestors inventing “strong” fighting names (invoking the eponymic animal’s strength or agility) is how the emergence of the different *tribus* is often presented:

My father said that sometimes, they’d take on names of animals (...) for example, Sloth-Indians (*Pelejo-aucas*) – [sloth] is really strong, has a lot of strength – because of this they were saying they are *Naʔinbakibu* – nobody can beat him! [laugh] (...) They took on names, nicknames. These are the significations [*significaciones*] of *Naʔinbakibu*, *Niabakibu* – that’s where their meaning comes from.

One unique explanation of the *tribu* name traced its origin to a mischievous boy, “naughty, playful, running around like a monkey!” Such replacement of the usual image of the drunken contest with a mischievous boy shows the mocking

¹⁵ From *binu* [*aguaje* or moriche palm (*Mauritia flexuosa*)] and *ʔiʔbu* [owner of], and *manan* [hill, highland] and *ʔiʔbu*. These names are said to have been used only by one man, but no one today could explain their status. Note that both have the suffix *-ʔiʔbu*, thus denoting claim for centeredness. While the precise *aguaje* palm reference is opaque to me, the highlands as habitat seem to have had significance for the *antiguos*’ identity.

¹⁶ From *mašin* [beach] and *kunibu* [knifefish] (order *Gymnotiformes*).

attitude towards the names of *tribus* and the wilful drunken boasting. The urchin would shout: “I am The Squirrel (Kapabu)!!!”, and the sardonic response of the adults was: “Oh, very well, Kapabu be it!” Thus he was named Kapabu, and eventually his name came to designate all the ancient Capanahua [from kapa – squirrel, and nawa – named foreign group).

For the Capanahua descendants, this aspect of pa'in hui is often the source of information on ascending generations' affiliations to what Eugene Loos referred as “patrilineal clans” (1960; Loos and Loos 2003).¹⁷ They are generally traced through the father, although both lines are sometimes affirmed (see N.'s speech) – and on occasion the focus can shift to the mother's side. They are composed of an animal or plant eponym and suffix -bu [denoting a generic class or 3rd person plural] or -bakibu [offspring of]. Their Spanish equivalents are composed of the eponym and the *-auca*¹⁸ suffix, e.g. *pelejo-aucas*, *trompetero-aucas*. They are referred to variously as *tribus* or *tribadas* [lit. tribes], as well as *razas*, *generaciones* and *descendencia* [lit. races, breeds or pedigrees, the overall implication being that of generic lines of origin, descent]. Today, they are presented as original separate groups said to have made up the Capanahua social formation in the past, and/or as origin categories of the ancestors. Sometimes they are said to be “the surnames” (*apellidos*) of the *antiguos*, and they in fact parallel the contemporary ones, so that one or more local surnames are associated with a given -bakibu category.

Eugene Loos noted (2009–14) that in the 30 years of his experience with the Capanahua, the “[-bakibu] distinctions didn't play much role in daily life as far as [he] could discern.” As the conviviality section suggests, daily sociality is focused on the present and obviates the past. Drunken speech does the reverse, by drawing such outside identities from the past and revealing them in the present. After 30 years since the SIL missionary's departure, they are still not very important in daily sociality, but people (generally middle-aged) do maintain a memory of them as things from the past – very often referring precisely to what the “old people” were saying in their pa'in yuwani. It seems that it is this very association with the past that is important, and that they are actually transmitted as the already partial and past identities. Rather than categories of living people or “descent groups,” they can be seen as the traces of ancestors hidden in people, as *ramas* [“branches,” connoting partiality] in Capanahua descendants' expression.

Therefore, even affiliating with one's rightful *raza* can be read as a claim. This is because the drunken speaker positions himself at the very core, as the *tronco* [“tree trunk,” connoting centeredness], by assuming the identity of his father

¹⁷ I have counted 7 of the most common and well-established “clan” names for the upper Capanahua and 2 for the lower Capanahua (known as “Pahenbaquebo”), with 13 additional ones which are either extinct or I am unable to ascertain their status (i.e. as possibly alternative or personal names made into surnames).

¹⁸ *Auca* in Loreto Spanish comes from Quechua language, where it refers to “barbarians, heathens.” Here, it is rarely used other than in this suffix form, which is locally meant as “an isolated group of savages (*indios*).”

or grandfathers.¹⁹ He does so by drawing on the idea of the direct continuity of *raza*, which, outside of drunken speech, is largely disdained as a chimera of the ancestors who wanted it to stay pure, isolated and never to perish. This is what the wild, timid *indios* do. The daily sociality supports the reverse idea, that of dissolution of authenticity through generations. Such claims to being authentic can therefore be ridiculed – for example, a man who is reported to have soberly called himself in a public situation a “real, proper Capanahua,” is now mockingly nicknamed *Capanahua*, and his son – *Capanahuillo* [lesser/smaller Capanahua].

In either case, the actual lines of descent are assumed to be ultimately unknown in the present, being the connections which are beyond the experiential knowledge of people. All identity affirmations are therefore received more or less sceptically and may be contested. Indeed, at the backstage of Capanahua descendants’ social lives, the majority of the existing surnames are suspected of being inauthentic: *cambiado*, *robado*, *regalado* [changed, stolen, received as a gift], etc.

Another type of claim, usurping foreign identities, parallels the previous ones in that it capitalizes links to remote places or times as sources of authenticity or strength. N.’s father’s association with the *mestizo* is emphasized through his language and surname. It is said that it used to be a common practice in previous generations to adopt the names and surnames of the non-Capanahua godparents, or to consciously, wilfully take up the *viracucha* surnames. Others claim that their ancestors were actually *gringo*-like Brazilians or Peruvians, or not “from here” like everybody else. This is spoken of as an act of “ignoring” (*negar*, *ignorar*) one’s own *raza* by assuming a new identity in order to appear as “someone more” (*gente más*). Interestingly, claiming *tribu* centeredness does not seem to contradict the claim to *mestizo* origin, as in the introductory example, where claiming to be the truest core of *ʔAyubu* is not nullified by the claim of being real *viracucha*.

Finally, speaking “all that they are” also includes self-assertive boasting in heightened competitive context. The speaker supplies arguments which support his claim to superior merit on various levels: strength or agility in fighting, knowledge of his *raza* origins and language (substantiated by the close relation with parents or grandparents, which implies the legitimacy of a direct, full transfer), endurance (Loos 1960), competence in work (measured in field size or possessions), hunting prowess, superior sorcery skills, as well as honesty, generosity, etc. He may also emphasize privileged connections to remote places as a sign of “getting ahead” (*adelantar*). These may include his relatives living or working in cities, fluency in Spanish, *mestizo* habits or diet, education (with a *viracucha* teacher), overall worldliness achieved through travels to other rivers or countries, meetings with strangers such as ornithologists, oil workers, traders, municipal officials, etc. In the process, other members of the community are downplayed as less authentic, more backwards (*atrasado*, *cholo*), or less

¹⁹ It might be reflected by switching from variation *ʔAyubakibu* [ʔAyu’s offspring] to *ʔAyubu* [the very ʔAyu].

knowledgeable (either as Capanahua or *mestizo*). Because such self-assertions are inextricably associated with confrontation and competition, they are often denigrated, mocked and contested by the sober.

Confrontation

Another modality moves a step further in revealing open confrontation between persons. It is captured by the sentence: “We are looking at each other like enemies!” that I have heard in the initial stages of acquaintance. It contrasts dramatically with “sitting joined by the bonds of friendship” of the convivial modality. Silence and withdrawal from social participation is read as a possible indication of “thinking other things” (*pensar otra cosa*), which describes misunderstanding, being secretly jealous, upset, or having a disparate agenda that disturbs social harmony and unanimity. It can be addressed openly: “Are you mad?” (*¿‘Tas rabiando?*), or “Why are you mad?” (*¿Porqué estás rabiando?*), “Are you thinking harm?” (*Masa šinakin?*), or “Do you know sorcery?” (*Min kušunti ‘unanain?*), “Perhaps you are trying me?” (*¿de repente me estás probando?*). A popular greeting attempts to prevent discord: “*Sinayamawi!*” [Don’t be mad!]. Although provocative questions such as these can be meant as an assertive way of striving for the convivial unanimity, they nevertheless do so by directly addressing the discordant aspect of the encounter.

Just as such open confrontation can lead to conviviality, the reverse may also be true – building up of harmonious space can lead to open confrontation derived from excessive demands. In any case, the *borracho* is making open requests; he can be described as *exilón* [“an impertinent, notorious demander” – from *exigir*, “demand”]. While his nagging can lead to the collapse of a personal business (e.g. selling cigarettes or *trago*), refusal of alcohol or tobacco to a drunk sorcerer is extremely dangerous, because it constitutes sufficient grounds for a sorcery attack.

In this modality I also include unveiling of daily conflicts, either directly to the person concerned, or to a third party. Whereas in daily life disputes tend to be muffled, in those moments of drunkenness I would learn about the strifes existing between the villagers themselves. People recalled past wrongdoings (thefts, rumours, debts) or conflicts, and produced new accusations. The observation by Loos (1960: 4) that a case of incest denied by the offender in daily life was brought up in the drunken feasts is representative of this. Through this modality I also often learned of people’s doubts and accusations towards myself and Kinga, my fiancée – ranging from serious accusations (of being demons, extractors of people’s faces or fat, knowledge, or language for business purposes) to bemoaning not visiting their house.

Violence

The end result of such overt supercharging of difference in competition or confrontation with others creates the potential for open violence. First, claiming “all that they are” [see above] remains inextricably related to confrontation, and is expressed in terms of superior fighting skills, evoking the old days of *macana* fightings. The speaker may build up his case to a point where he needs to demonstrate the ultimate proof of the vaunted strength – by himself or with the “enemies.” Putting each other’s agility, strength, or resistance to pain to the test (*probar*) seems to be presented as the objective of these fights. Secondly, the tryouts or remembering past wrongs can lead to an actual, uncontrolled, violent conflict.

An example where solo demonstration supports the speaker’s claim to superior strength may be found in the behaviour of a drunk uncle who is said to have had scratched the palm floor with his bare fingernails: “I am Tarzán!,” he would say as his fingers peeled and bled. Another “old-timer” is remembered bringing out his *macana* whenever he was inebriated. He would insist on making a demonstration with his impressive weapon: “That’s how you fight!” Jumping up, dodging and ducking – he would swing his two meter sword-club (*macana*) right next to the observer’s head, saying: “Don’t worry, with *Cha’i* [his nickname] everything is measured!”. Another uncle used to wield his *macana*, hitting house-poles as a demonstration (*muestra*) of “how [he] used to fight”.

These solo displays have roots in the actual fighting that the ancestral Capanahua are said to have practiced with *macana* during inter-community drinking feasts, where invitations were communicated with signal drums. According to oral histories, heads would split open, yet the injured stood up again resisting the pain, and special herbs cured their wounds within days. These fights are a constant element in the discourse on the ancestors and for the Capanahua descendants epitomize the untamed, “sad past” of the savage *antiguos*. The reason for those fights is often explained as a “winner-takes-all” gamble for women, or as validating the claims for individual superiority/centeredness, in direct association with *pa’in hui* proper (section “Claiming ‘all that they are’”). Accounts of a more recent past refer to fist or knife (rather than *macana*) fights among the drunken men, and associate them with the confrontational modality of drunken speech.

Another type of violent encounter reported for the ancestors is related to the confrontation-revealing aspect of drunken speech. Here, a man is said to recall and act on the wrongs suffered from another man. The wrongdoer was expected to wait to receive either a blow with a *macana*, or a cut with a *wušati* [*huaca* – small curved knife] (cf. Loos 1960: 18–19).

I have not heard of cases of actual persons being killed within the past couple of generations, and the older sources suggest sporting contests rather than serious violence. Eugene Loos (1960: 18) recorded a description by a man who may have witnessed them in his childhood. The duels are presented as “displays of strength” and “valor in the face of pain” during meetings between “clans” – thus, they would turn into actual skirmishes only if someone became seriously

hurt. Manuel Cordova's remembrance of the Capanahua feasts from the 1920s (Lamb 1985: 58–59) tells of a “sham/mock battle” where “it always seemed that someone surely would be killed, but no one received as much as a scratch,” and “shouting, groaning, weeping melee of drunkenness (...) sounded fierce but (...) no one [sic] really got hurt.” Rather, they were “a display of defensive skill and personal agility accompanied by the loud clatter of the striking clubs and wild shouts of the men” (ibid.). Yet, according to the common contemporary discourse on the past, people would regularly be killed in these *macana* fights. They are presented as dreadful acts of violence by the untamed, “messed-up old ones” (*los viejos fregados*). In one story illustrating the fierceness of the “old Capanahua,” a man's ear is cut off with a machete during work on the field. Inebriated companions would bring herbs to dress the wound, stick the ear back on and continue to drink *masato*, only to find out the next day that the ear had been placed backwards. Outsiders married to or working with the Capanahua recount situations where they felt their lives were threatened by drunken men. Currently, any acts of violence that I have been told about or have witnessed seemed to be much more about spontaneous confrontational eruptions rather than such formal displays of strength.

The releasing capacity of drunkenness

It would not be possible to understand the full meaning of *pa'in hui* without accounting for how drunkenness in general is construed by the Capanahua and their descendants. A *borracho* is an object of ridicule, scorn, derision, but also critique, worry and fear. At best, they are hilarious, annoying (e.g. smelly) or mischievous; at worst – unpredictable, violent and dangerous to themselves and others. It is commonly admitted that a drunken man is capable of hurting his own family: wife, brothers or even parents (two cases of death are connected, though indirectly, with the inebriated fight between a father and his sons). E. once handed me the glass of *trago* saying: “Careful with that, it makes us fight our family. You could end up beating your lady. Dangerous!”. Drunken people are expected to cry, sing, and to talk loudly and for the most part, incoherently.

Yet, an overview of the narratives and habitual discourse on drunkenness demonstrates an attribute that shines a very particular light on the drunken speech. A *borracho* is expected to let go easily: of his money (in a drinking binge, for example, he can spend everything he has earned working for months), of his belongings (often this is an opportunity to acquire a good quality object for a rock-bottom price) – and most importantly – his secrets.

Drunkenness is habitually represented as leading to the revelation of secrets and the display of hidden information that would otherwise remain obscured as secret or shameful in daily life. In stories of the “old ones,” drunken talk is blamed for the loss of special powers. In one of these, a man is said to arrive to

the sky world accidentally. There, he receives from a man (called *Wišmabu*) who presents himself as his brother-in-law, tools capable of opening a field without the owner's effort. He is warned never to disclose where his power came from. Yet, during a *masato* feast back on earth, envious companions try to find out the secret of his success. With increasing inebriation he boasts: "I have this and this because of my brother-in-law (...) – I am the fastest in making fields! What no one has, I have!". Consequently, the tools lose their special power. If it were not for the drunken man's talking, people would not need to work nowadays. In another story, luck in hunting is granted by a forest demon, under the condition that the latter is never to be spoken of. But the jealous companions consciously inebriate the hunter to draw out his secret. Also in contemporary life, inebriety is an opportunity to gain information that a person may be reluctant to "let out" (*soltar*) otherwise, like language, *ejemplos* [here: myths], stories of the old days, *descendencia* (origins) and his biography, for example of his experience with learning sorcery, or finding the village of isolated Remo Indians in the forest, etc. It can also be used as a strategy – in an attempt to entice the visiting, restrained Marubo Indians to talk, the man accused of embezzling community funds to admit, or a sorcerer to acknowledge his skills. It was often seriously suggested to me that I made people inebriated for the interview, so they would tell me all that they knew.²⁰

Conclusions

I hope to have demonstrated that the themes contained in N.'s speech were not random, and that they echoed deeply in other similar situations. Importantly, drunken speech as presented here through the medium of separate modalities can thus be read as a cross-section of several layers of Capanahua descendants' sociality and their relations. Specifically, *paʔin hui* proper, in which the subjects revolve around descent – is almost the exact opposite of conviviality, made up by the ideals of everyday social life. In the shift between these two modes of drunken speech, merrymaking turns into sadness; unanimity into confrontation; unity into particularity; extraversion into introversion; conversation into shouting monologues; dancing into fighting; family or friends into enemies. Also, the fact that inebriety is assumed to be leading to the revelations of secret information is crucial. It shows that descent is categorized along with other powerful secrets or shameful differences as an obscured aspect of communal life. Thus, the disparity between the content of convivial drunken speech (communal life)

²⁰ I have never used the method with premeditation, although several people insisted on being interviewed while slightly inebriated. This sometimes resulted in the drunken speech, where my questions mattered even less than usually. In any case, it may be interesting to note that my questions and interest in histories of the *antiguos* often evoked the very themes of various modalities of the drunken speech.

and *paʔin hui* proper (descent, particularity) could be read as one between the perceptible and the hidden.

Most importantly, drunken speech reflects unsolvable tensions and contradictions that define the tone of social life in the villages of Capanahua descendants. Specifically, the main object of convivial sociality is creating overtly harmonious social spaces by overcoming differences (cf. Overing and Passes 2000). Yet, the difference – epitomized by descent – is inescapable. More than that – although in a day-to-day village life, attempts are made to contain or obscure dissonances, they effectively paralyze any attempts at achieving unanimity and the ideal of a harmonious life, ultimately producing the feeling of unsolvable conflicts, which is often overtly expressed as “we don’t know how to live well” (*no sabemos vivir bien*) (cf. Santos-Granero 2000). This dynamic, alternating opposing perspectives of community and descent, gives a specific tone to the Capanahua descendants’ sociality, which I can only point out here, since it is the central theme of the dissertation that I am presently writing.

Furthermore, the conjuring in drunken speech of the ancestors as the strangers for daily sociality could be seen as an “act of alterity” (Course 2009: 306), making this kind of speech comparable to other Lowland South American genres of speech which invite the voice of the “other” (Oakdale 2002, 2005; cf. Déléage 2007). Such positioning of lines of origins, or genealogical descent alongside difference and particularity, reflected in drunken speech also allows a preliminary reading of the Capanahua descendants’ specific Amerindian notion of descent. It seems to be defined in a way that might be expressed as simultaneously inherent and claimed; traced through both consanguineal and “symbolic” transmission; being identity and yet alterity; being renewal and negation. While this local notion of “origins/generation,” connoting memory, generally reasserts the anthropological understanding that in Amazonia “kinship is history” (Gow 1991: 252), it also represents a local variety (cf. Gow 2003). In either case, while veiled, the descent principle of the Capanahua descendants’ sociality seems to be critical, and confirms the necessity of finding a way to talk about it within the anthropology of Amazonia (Rivière 1993; Lepri 2005; Mancuso 2013).

References

- Course, M. (2009). Why Mapuche Sing. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 15(2), 295–313.
- Déléage, P. (2007a). A Yaminahua Autobiographical Song: Caqui Caqui. *Tipiti: Journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America*, 5(1), 91–97.
- Déléage, P. (2007b). Trois points de vue sur les revenants sharanahua. *L’Homme*, 183(3), 117–46.
- Erikson, Ph. (2009). Diálogos à flor da pele... Nota sobre as saudações na Amazônia’, *CAMPOS – Revista de Antropologia Social*, 10(1), 9–27.

- Fleck, D.W. (2013) *Panoan Languages and Linguistics*. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 99. New York: American Museum of Natural History.
- Gow, P. (1991) *Of Mixed Blood: Kinship and History in Peruvian Amazonia*. Oxford [England], New York: Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press.
- Gow, P. (2003). Ex-Cocama: Identidades Em Transformação Na Amazônia Peruana. *Mana*, 9(1), 57-79.
- Harvey, P.M. (1991). Drunken Speech and the Construction of Meaning: Bilingual Competence in the Southern Peruvian Andes. *Language in Society*, 20, 1-36.
- Heath, D.B. (1987). Anthropology and Alcohol Studies: Current Issues. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 16, 99-120.
- Lamb, F.B., (1985). *Rio Tigre and beyond: The Amazon Jungle Medicine of Manuel Córdova*. Berkeley, Calif.: North Atlantic Books.
- Lepri, I. (2005). The Meanings of Kinship Among the Ese Ejja of Northern Bolivia. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 11(4), 703-24.
- Loos, E.E. (1960). Capanahua Patrilineality and Matrilocality, Term paper for "Latin American Indians" class. Eugene Loos' private archives.
- Loos, E.E. (1969). *The Phonology of Capanahua and Its Grammatical Basis*. Norman: Summer Institute of Linguistics of the University of Oklahoma.
- Loos, E.E. (2009-14) Private correspondence with Łukasz Krokoszyński.
- Loos, E.E., Loos B.H. (1980a). *Textos Capanahua Tomo II*. Série Comunidades Y Culturas Peruanas 17. Yarinacocha: ILV.
- Loos, E.E., Loos B.H. (1980b). *Textos Capanahua Tomo I*. Série Comunidades Y Culturas Peruanas 17. Yarinacocha: ILV.
- Loos, E.E., Loos B.H. (2003). *Diccionario Capanahua-Castellano*. Série Lingüística Peruana 45. Lima: Ministerio de Educación & ILV.
- Mancuso, A. (2013). Descent among the Wayú. Concepts and Social Meanings. *Journal de La Société Des Américanistes*, 94(94-1), 99-126.
- Michael, D. (2006). Alcohol: Anthropological/Archaeological Perspectives. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 35, 229-249.
- Oakdale, S. (2002). Creating a Continuity between Self and Other: First-Person Narration in an Amazonian Ritual Context. *Ethos*, 30(1-2), 158-75.
- Oakdale, S. (2005). *I Foresee My Life: The Ritual Performance of Autobiography in an Amazonian Community*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Overing, J., Passes A. (eds.). (2000). *The Anthropology of Love and Anger: The Aesthetics of Conviviality in Native Amazonia*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Rivière, P. (1971). The Political Structure of the Trio Indians as Manifested in a System of Ceremonial Dialogue. In T.O. Beidelman (ed.), *The Translation of Culture: Essays to EE Evans-Pritchard* (p. 293-311). London: Tavistock Publications.
- Rivière, P. (1993). The Amerindianization of Descent and Affinity. *L'Homme*, 33(126/128), 507-16.
- Santos-Granero, F. (2000). The Sisyphus Syndrome, or the struggle for conviviality in Native Amazonia. In J. Overing and A. Passes (eds.), *The Anthropology of Love and Anger: The Aesthetics of Conviviality in Native Amazonia* (p. 268-287). London and New York: Routledge.
- Scholland, T. (ed.). (1975). *Leyendas y narraciones históricas de los capanahua*. Datos Etno-Lingüísticos 13. Lima: Instituto Lingüístico de Verano.

- Surrallés, A. (2003). Face to Face: Meaning, Feeling and Perception in Amazonian Welcoming Ceremonies. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 9(4), 775–91.
- Tessmann, G. (1999). *Los indígenas del Perú nororiental: investigaciones fundamentales para un estudio sistemático de la cultura*. Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala.
- Urban, G. (1986). Ceremonial Dialogues in South America. *American Anthropologist*, 88(2), 371–86.
- Urban, G. (1988). Ritual Wailing in Amerindian Brazil. *American Anthropologist*, 90(2), 385–400.
- Viveiros de Castro, E. (2001). Gut Feelings about Amazonia: Potential Affinity and the Construction of Sociality. In L.M. Rival and N.L. Whitehead (eds.), *Beyond the Visible and the Material: The Amerindianization of Society in the Work of Peter Rivière* (p. 19–43). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SUMMARY

Drunken speech: A glimpse into the backstage of sociality in Western Amazonia

This paper engages notions on sociality by Spanish speaking descendants of Panoan Capanahua from Peru, as revealed in one aspect of social practice. Speaking while inebriated, members of this small Western Amazonian population draw from locally specific set of ideas about the nature of social life. Therefore, an overview of various standardized themes and attitudes or modalities of such speeches presented in this paper reflects different, often conflicting layers of ideas and practice of social life. Because of both their content and notions about the very inebriation, drunken speeches are shown to offer a privileged vantage point for understanding the Capanahua descendants' notions and realizations of sociality. Indeed, they reveal one of the important problems fuelling the dynamics of their sociality, which is the tension between, on the one hand, perceptible dimension of village sociality governed by ideals of equality and neighbourly conviviality, and on the other, the inherent difference and hierarchy encoded in contested personal histories of origins. The latter are conceived as normally concealed layer of social life, but at the same time they condition local ideas about what might be understood as kinship and descent.

Key words: conviviality, descent, alterity, Peru, Panoan, Western Amazonia.