AALBORG
UNIVERSITY

Women's participation in indigenous politics in Amazonian Ecuador: A study of the intersection of violence and women's inclusion in decision-making processes.

GRS Final Thesis 10th semester 2022

Cristina González Torelló, study nr: 20201218
Sara Brun Nielsen, study nr: 20202217

Abstract: In recent years there has been an increase in the participation of women in indigenous politics in Ecuador, both in the fight for their rights as women and also in the fight for the defense of their territory. The aim of this work is to analyze the multidimensionality of the violence that indigenous women are subjected to and the consequences that this has for their political participation. To do this, we will analyze the perception of women in indigenous culture and how it affects their daily lives. We will investigate, therefore, the intersection between violence and political participation of indigenous women, which will be essential to understand the strategies that they use to navigate their societies.

Resumen: En los últimos años ha habido un incremento en la participación de las mujeres en la política indígena en el Ecuador, tanto en la lucha por sus derechos como mujeres como en la lucha por la defensa de su territorio. El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar la multidimensionalidad de la violencia a la que se ven sometidas las mujeres indígenas y las consecuencias que esto tiene para su participación política. Para ello, analizaremos la percepción de la mujer en la cultura indígena y cómo ello repercute en su vida cotidiana. Indagaremos, por tanto, en la intersección entre la violencia y la participación política de las mujeres indígenas, lo cual será fundamental para entender las estrategias que utilizan para navegar sus sociedades.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This work emerged from our desire to create a joint project with the protagonists of this story: indigenous women in the Amazonian Ecuador. Indigenous peoples have historically fought colonialism, and more recently, extractivism, in their attempt to protect their rights and lands. A few years ago there was a rise in their use of social media as a tool to raise awareness of their struggle and demand change. It was a surprise for us that most of the activists we saw on social media were women, and that was the reason why, perhaps, we felt great sympathy for the topic from the beginning. Prior to that, we had not seen a social movement other than the feminist where the public image was monopolized by women. We decided to explore the role of women in indigenous politics.

1.1. Motivation

Our first talk with an indigenous person from Amazonian Ecuador was with the spokesperson for an indigenous association who confirmed our initial assumption: that women were slowly becoming the leaders and representatives of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement. We were glad to hear one of the most relevant male voices in the association talking about a shift of roles with such a big smile on his face. Since our focus was on women in politics, we then contacted Lineth Calapucha, vice president of the Quichua nationality of Pastaza. We already knew that we wanted to use participatory methods in our investigation, meaning that indigenous women would accompany us throughout the research process. We told Lineth that we were very interested in the role of women in politics and how they were taking the lead. Even so, we were open to any other ideas since our main goal was to create something useful for the indigenous movement. The answer we got was shocking in two senses. First, because it denied our main assumption that women had a strong role in the indigenous movement, and second, because she accepted our offer and immediately gave us material to work with. She told us: “Do you want me to say what I want you to study? Violence against women. Violence against women is present in politics, in the organizations, in the communities and at home”[1]. Her suggestion contradicted our initial assumption, which encouraged us to look into how women are being presented

[1] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth.

as active participants in indigenous politics and their actual participation. We then articulated the first part of our research question, it being: *How is women's participation in indigenous politics perceived and executed in Amazonian Ecuador?*

After expressing what she would like us to study, she warned us about the possible explanations that we might find throughout our investigation that would explain violence against women as a mere trait of indigenous culture. She referred to the Ecuadorian government, explaining that politicians often state that "this issue has to do with our culture, but in no way we have a culture of violence against women. It has not to do with that"[2]. The fact that she insisted on that made us realize that there was already a debate out there. We wanted to be part of that conversation, and we felt there was an interesting linkage between violence against women and women in politics. This linkage was not clear for us yet, but our initial readings and talks with Lineth made us believe that we had to look into that intersection to be able to answer our research question. Taking that as a premise, we determined our main sub-questions:

- *What is meant by 'indigenous politics'?*
- *How do stereotypes, gender roles and the meaning of 'indigenous politics' impact the perception of indigenous women in contemporary politics?*
- *How are women maneuvering the consequences of their perception?*
- *How can we explain violence against women with a focus on culture*?
- *How can other factors, beyond culture, explain the violence against women?*
- *How is the role of women in politics impacted by violence?*
- *How do women navigate violence in their private and public political space?*

On further conversations, Lineth told us that she was planning on organizing a seminar on women's rights for all the community members in her area. She thought men's participation was key to fully succeed and to achieve real change, and she argued that producing an academic paper reflecting about the impact of women's participation in indigenous politics would really help the communities. After further research on the topic, we realized that the intersection of women in politics and violence against

[2] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth.

women was so predominant and omnipresent in this case that we could only justify including that aspect in the research question. Following our methodology and research design centered around participatory research, we formulated the finale research question:

How is women's participation in indigenous politics perceived and executed in Amazonian Ecuador? A study of the intersection of violence and women's inclusion in decision-making processes.

To be able to answer this, we need to clarify the question. The research question is twofold and aims to answer the questions of 1) perception and 2) execution. First, we will investigate how women's participation in politics is perceived in Amazonian Ecuador. To do so, we need to understand the history of the indigenous political system. We also need to understand women's role in society as this from a social constructionist point of view shapes limits to their participation in politics due to a spillover effect of perception. A relevant question to keep in mind when answering the sub-questions would be: What gatekeepers do women encounter and how do they impact women's full and equal participation in indigenous politics? Through conversations with relevant actors and further research on the topic, violence seems to be a predominant gatekeeper. This assumption will be investigated in the analysis. It is essential to study the perception of women's participation in politics before moving on to the second half of the research question - the question of execution. The perception of women's participation constitutes the basis of comparison necessary to start a conversation on execution. To start such a conversation, it is vital to place the actors and recognize the perspectives we are studying - as well as the perspective from which we are making this research. First relevant question would then be 'perceived by who?' Our approach and data in this study allow us to study the perception of women's participation in indigenous politics by the actors themselves; women engaged in indigenous politics in Amazonian Ecuador. We will, however, start by going into an analysis of the general historical perception of women's participation in politics, but only to study how an external general perception of the women impacts their own perception.

1.2. Taxonomy of the paper

After having presented our motivation to conduct this study as well as our research question, we will now present the taxonomy of the study. This study contains several concepts and subject-specific terms. Most of them will be used contextually, introducing the meaning of that term in its context in the analysis, while others are already introduced in the methods and theory chapter. However, we have identified three terms or concepts that the reader should know the specific meaning of in this study. These are the following: the term *violence against women,* the concept *strategy,* and the terms *gender roles and stereotypes.* Thus, We will start off by defining how we understand these. From there we will introduce a literature review in order to identify gaps in already-conducted research and place our research within these bodies of literature. Next, we will present the methodological framework from which the research has been made. We will build on three methodologies, *Participatory research*, *Intersectionality*, and *Foucault's understanding of genealogy*. First, we present the merge of the three methodologies as the overarching strategy to conduct our research. Then we present the specific research design that we have followed in all phases of this study, from analytical approach, data and data selection and document analysis to the involvement of non-academic partners, the choosing of non-academic partners and finally our approach to conduct field work. Next, we go into a discussion of the limits of the methodology and methods in order to outline the scope of our research. Finally, as a natural consequence of our chosen approach, we position ourselves as researchers.

Having a clear methodological framework and analytical approach, we move on to the theory chapter. Here, the theoretical framework is presented in the intersection of a relativistic and social constructionist understanding of theory and analysis. This impacts how we understand and, later, apply our theories to the data. We then introduce the most dominating theories we apply to understand our data. From here, we are properly dressed to conduct the analysis. Following the methodological and theoretical framework, we start off by working in the relativistic scope when examining the question of perception in chapter 6: "Perception and Strategies". Thus, we start out by mapping our data, actors and observations to examine the networks between all of them. In the last part of the chapter, we turn to a more social constructivist approach and apply green governmentality to understand some of the strategies that

perception leads to. In chapter 7: “Violence against Women and Indigenous Culture”, we investigate the subculture of violence and structural oppression that indigenous women experience in their everyday life. Our last analytical chapter, “Fear and Resistance”, go into an in-depth analysis of the intersection of violence against women and women’s participation in politics. It does so by investigating some of the strategies women take use of when navigating violence in a political arena.

Finally, we present the discussion. Here we discuss our findings and the scope that our frameworks have allowed us to see as well as the choices we have made and the consequences of this. We discuss different approaches that could have cast light on different and equally important aspects within our research field. Furthermore, we suggest and discuss other researches that would be relevant to look into. Having made this discussion, we move on to our conclusion. Here we present our most important findings and sub-conclusion. The last two chapters of the paper are the bibliography and annex.

1.3. Key definitions

1.3.1 Defining violence against women

Given the unquestionable importance of violence in this study, we find a need to define both what is meant by violence, and specifically, what is meant by violence against women. In this study we will use the terms 1) *violence against women* and 2) *gender-based violence* according to official UN definitions. The two terms are often used interchangeably and are at times merged. According to the UN Decleration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Article 1, violence against women is defined as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”[3]. This expands the understanding of violence from being something solely physical to including psychological oppressing mechanisms that are limiting to the woman’s life. Thus, the definition of violence then depends less on the act itself and instead it emphasizes the impact of the act. To fully understand the definition of

[3] UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Article 1.

violence against women which is defined as “any act of gender-based violence”[4], we continue to define gender-based violence. We adopt he definition from the Explanatory report to the Istanbul Convention: “Gender-based violence refers to any type of harm that is perpetrated against a person or group of people because of their factual or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.[5]”

1.3.2. Strategy

Strategy is usually defined as “a high-level plan to achieve one or more goals under conditions of uncertainty”[6]. Mintzberg *et al*. compare different understandings of the word strategy based on what they refer to, such as strategy as plan, as ploy, as pattern, as perspective and as position. In this paper we use the word strategy as a ploy, which “takes us into the realm of direct competition, where threats and feints and various other maneuvers are employed to gain advantage”[7]. This understanding places the strategy formation in a dynamic context where moves provoke countermoves, as opposed to other senses of strategy that refer to static plans. However, it is important to note that “yet ironically, strategy itself is a concept rooted not in change but in stability”[8]. It is precisely this paradox of dynamic strategies that can destabilize the normal state of affairs only to a certain extent that makes this concept very useful for our research.

1.3.3. Gender roles and Stereotypes

Gender roles usually refer to the social norms and specific behavior that is expected from men and women by society, which creates the notions of femininity and masculinity. Bem adds that male gender roles are associated with agentic/instrumental behaviors “and traits that reflect independence, assertiveness, and dominance; the female gender role has been associated with expressive behaviors and traits that reflect sensitivity to others and communality”[9]. Gender roles are based on gender stereotypes, which can be defined as generalized and oversimplified presumptions

[4] UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Article 1.
[5] The Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.
[6] https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-68400-0_1ç
[7] Mintzberg et al., 2003, p. 9.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Bem, S. L., 1974, p. 161.

about how women and men think, feel or behave differently depending on their gender. Eagly et al. argue that "individuals are deemed to adopt a gender role self-concept, which is the amount of gender stereotypical traits and behaviors that persons use to describe themselves and to influence their dispositions"[10].

1.4. Note: our field trip to Ecuador

This research was intended to be based on data collected in the field, more specifically in Puyo, Ecuador. Lineth invited us to visit her in Puyo, the biggest city in the province of Pastaza, in the Amazon region of Ecuador, and stay in *Casa de Mujeres Amazónicas* of Puyo (House of Amazonian Women). We would spend three weeks there, making sporadic trips to the Amazon jungle to talk to women that are in more isolated locations. After our data collection, we would support Lineth *in situ* in the creation of a seminar aimed at providing indigenous women and men educational material and knowledge about women's rights - and the implications of these rights being violated or respected on the indigenous political movement. On our field trip not everything went according to plan, as we were unable to reach Puyo and therefore were unable to interview indigenous women in person. However, we managed to collect very interesting data that added new dimensions to the initial idea.

On June 17, 2022, we arrived in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Our intention was to take a bus directly to Puyo, 360km and around seven hours away from Guayaquil. However, this was not possible due to the national mobilization organized by CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador)[11] and other indigenous and social organizations on June 13. Amazon Frontlines listed the reasons behind the protests, which affect all citizens in Ecuador:

> the imposition of neoliberal policies of the government that has led to the exacerbation of poverty, the reduction of the general budget of the State in Health and Education and the reduction of social policies of social equality, the increase of insecurity and violence in several areas of the country, the

[10] Eagly *et al.*, 2000, p. 130.

[11] CONAIE was founded in 1986 and is made up of 53 organizations, 18 indigenous peoples, and 15 nationalities in Ecuador.

> aggressive imposition of extractive policies and activities (mining and oil), the violation of the collective rights of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples; and in general, to the lack of guarantees for the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights of the population[12].

One of the first consequences of the mobilization was the roadblocks in at least 11 provinces of the country. On June 14, the president of CONAIE, Leonidas Iza, would be accused of sabotage, arrested and released the next day. Iza insisted that the mobilization would end when the "10 points" that the movement claimed were resolved. The cuts on the highways were increasing during the following days and the mobilization moved with more force towards Quito. On June 18, President Guillermo Lasso decreed a state of emergency in the provinces of Imbabura, Cotopaxi and Pichicha. On June 30, after 18 days of national strike, an agreement was reached that promised a dialogue table for 90 days. We stayed in the country for two weeks, unable to move from the coastal area where we accidently ended up due to the uncertain situation and the roadblocks. Two days before the mobilization ended, we decided to leave the country and cross the border to Peru for our own security.

During our time in Ecuador, we felt the implications of the protests as hotel prices rose in the more touristy areas where many foreign tourists were stuck like ourselves. Public transport was shut down, flights were canceled and rumors emerged of violent clashes in the airports Guayaquil and Quito shutting down the entire national infrastructure. This resulted in shortage and inconsistency of food deliveries, and by the end of our two week stay we ate whatever food the hotel owner was able to get. The impacts of the protests that we personally experienced were amongst the very least. It was announced that the roadblocks would be paused for one day, Sunday 26th of June. Due to an economic privilege we were able to remove ourselves from the situation by paying a taxi overprice to take us to the southern border where we crossed to Peru. During this time, we were in close contact with Lineth who was stuck in the eye of the hurricane, Puyo. She kept us updated on how the situation impacted her and her family, which was critical due to their lack of economic resources and the fear of suffering reprisals by the police during the protests.

[12] https://amazonfrontlines.org/es/campaigns/paro-nacional-ecuador-2022/

One of the episodes that we would highlight from our trip was the conversation with a white Ecuadorian woman about the indigenous protests. When we asked her, her reaction was one of astonishment. She did not understand why we were interested in the demands of the indigenous communities. She made comments like "they do that from time to time", referring to the protests, accompanied by "you know, they go naked in the jungle", to end the conversation with “be careful”. The woman was clearly infantilizing and delegitimizing the protests led by indigenous people, even when those protests were against a generalized inflation that affected the entire country. The strange thing was that she spoke of indigenous peoples as if they had nothing to do with her, with her country or with her culture; she totally rejected them. Obviously, this is one individual opinion from the many interactions we had with Ecuadorian people. However, the message that this woman gave us was something that we had read about in other research papers and that Lineth herself had commented on lightly. Regarding the protests, the journalist María Sol Borja stated: “the speech tried to position that there were two sides in confrontation: the protesters and the rest; the good guys and the bad guys —or the other way around, depending on who's looking at it —and therefore some had to be jailed, sent back to their communities, or eliminated”[13]. The important thing about that episode is that she made us understand that the problem of the rights of indigenous women and the violence to which they are subjected went, probably, beyond their gender. We decided to, one way or another, investigate not only their position as indigenous women within their own culture, but also address how the historical, cultural and racial dimension had to do with the violence indigenous women are subjected to and what are the implications for their participation in decision-making processes.

[13] https://www.washingtonpost.com/es/post-opinion/2022/07/14/paro-nacional-protestas-en-ecuador-2022-guillermo-lasso/

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The reliability of a literature review depends on its structure and the researchers' abilities to position their research in the scope of already produced knowledge. Harding, Marra and Illes argue that this is especially important when studying groups of people for "for which there is a highly heterogeneous collection of literature"[14]. We find this to be the case with our study as we recognize the diversity of different indigenous peoples. At the same time we find that generations of literature bodies studying indigenous communities have created, to some extent, confined and homogeneous conclusions by mistakenly considering indigenous peoples as one kind of people. For that reason, we will focus on research on indigenous peoples in Latin America to the greatest extent possible. Still we identify a new wave of literature in the rise of indigenous feminist movements that counter the heterogeneity of findings and conclusions on indigenous populations. As we conduct the literature review, we first consider what aspects our research most importantly covers. We do so by defining a thematic list of key research relevant to our study. As we are limited by space in this paper, we cannot go into depth with all relevant studies. Therefore, we have selected a number researchers that we identify to be most relevant when positioning our own research. We will shortly mention other scholars and researchers but only to give the reader an idea of the body of literature that this paper can be identified within.

Due to the large amount of literature on the given subject, we set out to generalize and conceptualize the most relevant literature. First, we identify our own study. We intend to understand the relation between political participation of women and the systematic violence to which they are subjected to in indigenous communities in Ecuador. For this reason 1) *Indigenous women's political participation* is an academic focal point. The same is the case for 2) *Violence against women in indigenous communities.* But also the intersection where these meet is interesting for us. We then identify a body of literature addressing 3) *Indigenous culture and feminism.*

[14] Marra, Illes, 2021, p. 45.

2.1.1. Indigenous women's participation in politics

Alicia Mantel in "Indigenous women, political participation and prior, free and informed consultation in Ecuador" argues that the reproductive role of women is a great barrier for their participation in decision-making processes. Mantel argues that "it can be observed in some cases, that women who want to get involved in political actions, at community or international levels, remain single"[15]. In the same line, Lisset Coba and Manuel Bayón in "Kawsak Sacha: the organization of women and the political translation of the Amazon jungle in Ecuador" state that "the naturalization of gender roles that carry the work of caring for children, as well as work in the kitchen and the farm, imply difficulties for the organization of women, requiring them to challenge traditional gender roles"[16]. Therefore, "trying to reconcile care work attributed to women with political responsibilities when they assume leadership is a major source of concern for them"[17]. While these scholars mainly focus on indigenous women's participation in politics in relation to gender roles, Nina Pacari looks into indigenous women's political participation in relation to the history of Ecuadorian indigenous populations fight to enter politics on a state level. She finds that "in contrast to women who face a male-dominated patriarchal political system, the indigenous peoples find themselves face-to-face with a mono-ethnic political system that excludes diversity of identity"[18]. Specifically, she examines the spillover effect of the exclusion of indigenous peoples from politics to the contemporary exclusion of indigenous women in politics.

We recognize a line of scholars who like Nina Pacari adopt a perspective where they examine the women's participation in politics in relation to its exterior political and historical context. Another example of this is Amy Lind in her article "Gender and Neoliberal States: Feminists Remake the Nation in Ecuador". She furthermore broadens this perspective by demonstrating how "some women have become the new recipients of development"[19]. This is possible by virtue of their gender, Lind argues, however depending on how well the women are able to organize themselves. Realizing the potential of poor women as recipients of development aid, several actors

[15] Pacari, 2002, p. 2.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Pacari, 2002, p. 2.
[19] Lind, 2003, p. 183.

in the political system have developed strategies (consciously or subconsciously) to gain from this. In the same line, Coba and Bayón identify strategies of Amazonian female leaders. This strategy is to define "define a policy located in the forests"[20] where they find feminist support networks. By positioning themselves, the women use these strategies on a daily basis to counter the impact of colonialism on gender subordination. Coba and Bayón do not hesitate that these strategies are, indeed, intelligent and conscious: the indigenous women understand how to navigate power relations in politics. They argue that spatial reflections "gives us a non-linear understanding of the movement that makes up space, as well as the porosity of borders (Oslender, 2002)"[21]. This stresses the importance of acknowledging "geopolitical hierarchies and the territoriality of capitalist globalization (Gibson and Graham, 2002)"[22] when examining indigenous women's participation in politics.

At the same time, Alberto Acosta takes a commodity perspective on the matter. In his paper "Extractivism and neoextractivism: two sides of the same curse", Acosta builds his research on newer evidence showing a connection between poverty and "significant natural resources wealth"[23]. Though he does not go into the perspectives on indigenous women's participation in politics, he systematically outlines the economic circumstances to extreme poverty in indigenous communities. This is relevant to us, as it supports the other scholars' positioning of the women in question. In the same way, we draw attention to Maria Yolanda Teran. She contributes to this line of literature by offering a dual inside-out and outside-in perspective on indigenous peoples contemporary position in international politics. Teran is indigenous herself, from the Kichwa Nation from Ecuador. She has the lived experience that many scholars lack (us included) and she furthermore draws on the Elders in her community in her study. Simultaneously, Teran was a representative by virtue of her heritage and her academic professionalism in the negotiations between 2006 and 2010 which led to the Nagoya Protocol. She examines indigenous peoples' influence on the international political space. By doing so, she offers yet another layer to how traditional knowledge in indigenous communities can take the stage and define even

[20] Coba, Bayón, 2022, p. 145.
[21] Coba, Bayón, 2020,p. 144.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Acosta, 2013, p. 61.

international politics. Just like we witnessed indigenous women from Amazonian Ecuador at COP 26.

The general academic accounts on indigenous women's participation in politics (in a relevant context to our case) centers around gender roles in the community, but mainly it focuses on external factors that impact how indigenous women participate in politics. The researchers situate the women in their geopolitical reality, where commodities and nature intersect, and they draw on logics such as the oppressed becoming the oppressor. Finally one body of literature examines the strategies women adapt to navigate the political landscape. And navigation can be necessary in this context, as the hinders to women's participation in politics are many and not to be ignored. One of them is violence - and we will now expand the scope of relevant bodies of literature by diving into that specific field.

2.1.2. Violence against women in indigenous communities

When looking into violence of indigenous women in an Ecuadorian context, we find that a lot of research hovers between being qualitative and quantitative in its starting point. An example of this is the study "Female homicides and femicides in Ecuador: a nationwide ecological analysis from 2001 to 2017". The study by Ortiz-Prado *et al.* look into gender-based violence as a result to structural discrimination against women. The study places indigenous women alongside Afro-Ecuadorian women to be the most afflicted by the violence. While this study provides us with a thorough data foundation and indicates reasons to why violence is predominant in indigenous communities, it does not go further into examining the root causes within the society qualitatively. Another study by Edeby and San Sebastián focus on the prevalence of violence against women in Ecuador and the socio-geographical inequalities this may lead to. This is particularly interesting to us, as we in some parts of the study take on the opposite approach by examining how socio-geographical inequalities lead to violence.

Diving deeper into the investigation of qualitative research on root causes for violence, we introduce Judith Salgado. Salgado analyzes indigenous justice system and the lack of protection of women[24]. Salgado stresses that removing the patriarchal traits of

[24] Salgado, 2009, p. 13.

indigenous justice does not mean acquiring the features of state Ecuadorian justice. Indeed, she emphasizes that this lack of protection of women is also latent in state justice. She highlights the role of organized indigenous women, who "have managed to overcome the dichotomy between cultural relativism and the universalizing liberal discourse that ignores the collective rights of indigenous peoples"[25], while at the same time "combining a struggle for the rights of their peoples and for the necessary changes within them to guarantee the rights of indigenous women"[26]. Salgado concludes that in order to generate intercultural relations between justices, the coloniality of power and alterity must be recognized, as well as the patriarchal character of both cultures. In the same line, Milena Justo Nieto stresses that legislation in rural areas of the Amazon is not handled adequately and interculturally. She calls this phenomenon "institutional violence" and argues that "when violence against women is addressed, it is not made visible that the main reason for the persistence of the various types of violence is the tolerance and incompetence of the State"[27]. Acosto, too, looks into the outer circumstantial factors that impact the prevalence of violence in Ecuador[28]. Once again he takes on the commodity perspective to explain its presence.

In this work we will look at the consequences of that violence for politics. Not just on a practical level, that is, how physical impediments they face in so many aspects of life affect them psychologically. The scholars we largely draw on make visible how institutional violence permeates into the justice system. They furthermore demonstrate how institutionalized political agencies pave the way for the enabling of violence, which at the same time emphasizes the unimportance of stopping violence against indigenous women. As our research more specifically is in the scope of violence against women in politics in the indigenous political arena, the next thing we will cast light on is the indignous culture from a feminist perspective.

[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Justo, 2020, p. 86.
[28] Ibid.

2.1.3. Indigenous culture and feminism

As we have mentioned in the introduction, Lineth warned us that we were going to hear that violence against women in indigenous communities in Ecuador was a consequence of indigenous culture. Therefore, one of the first topics we started researching was indigenous culture in relation to women. Sylvia Marcos in "The spirituality of Mesoamerican indigenous women: decolonizing religious beliefs" argues that indigenous spirituality, which is being recovered and reinvented by indigenous women's movements, differs not only from hegemonic Christian influences, but also from hegemonic feminism[29]. The author explains that indigenous original culture, contrary to the Christian religiosity imposed after 1492, gives the same space to women as to men. In fact, some scholars maintain a postcolonial position, defending that the reasons why inequality exists in indigenous communities is solely and exclusively external. According to Montanaro Mena, Western feminists continue to see women in the Global South from their own lenses, categorizing them as victims of their own patriarchal and sexist culture at a level much higher than of North American and European women. That is why it is important to deconstruct the hegemonic assumptions of Western feminism and recognize the voices and opinions those women excluded by capitalism in a neoliberal context[30]. Manuel Capella *et al.*, investigate the role of history in understanding violence and mental health problems among indigenous peoples in Ecuador. They present how culture was taken away from indigenous peoples, which meant a violation of their culture apart from physical oppression. Capella *et al.* argue that "contemporary 'cultures of violence' do not exist in a historical vacuum. They are the product of centuries of power asymmetries and the use of material and symbolic coercion, mainly affecting low-income, marginalized ethnicities, with women being particularly vulnerable"[31].

The investigations presented are very useful to understand the transformations that indigenous peoples and their cultures have historically experienced to be able to recognize its consequences in the present. However, we consider that its scope is limited since the external factors that have influenced the internal change are prioritized and there is no detailed analysis of the internal practices that may contribute

[29] Marcos, 2014, p. 143.
[30] Ibid, p. 100.
[31] Capella *et al.*, 2019, p. 38.

to understand violence against women in a political setting. For this, it is essential to investigate indigenous culture with a focus on how women are perceived in indigenous culture.

2.2. Summary of literature review

While we encounter various and very insightful research on both women's political participation and systematic violence, we also find relevant research on the intersections of those. However, we do not identify a study similar to ours. The literature bodies that focus indigenous women's participation in politics find that gender roles and the geopolitical position of the women impact in what way women are able to act politically. One body of literature specifically goes into the strategies women take on to navigate the obstacles to their full and equal participation in politics. We, too, consider the gender roles, geopolitical position and strategies of importance, and we build much of our analysis based on this. However, the gap in research, that we identify, has not been analyzed as a sole issue; rather: the investigations on political participation have considered violence as an obstacle, but the focus has not been on the deeply-impacting consequences of that violence on indigenous women's participation in politics, apart from simply concluding that violence is a gatekeeper to indigenous women's participation in politics. The conclusions in this body of literature with a focus on violence centers around the participation alone, not the strategies they use and the invisible consequences of violence for their participation.

The bodies of literature that focus on violence, specifically in relation to indigenous communities and women in the given context, to a high degree focus on institutionalized political violence and conduct research based on this. We on the other hand do not specifically look for political violence, but rather the impact violence, in all different spheres of indigenous society, has on women's participation in politics. Furthermore, these literature bodies mainly focus on how the violence that indigenous peoples have been subjected to historically impact violence in the indigenous societies. This we find to be very relevant research that supports our assumptions in the analysis. However, our point of departure is that of the internal violence in the indigenous societies.

Lastly, when looking at the indigenous culture and feminism, research on the area show us the contextual findings that impact indigenous communities and the feminist aspects within them. This is highly relevant to our understanding of the given context and allows us to build on their findings with our own observations and data. Still, the focal point is the external factors that impact the contemporary culture in indgenous communities in Amazonian Ecuador. However, indigenous culture is presented as something “damaged” by external factors, presenting those factors as the reasons why there is violence against women. We find this problematic and simplistic, and we intend to challenge it in this paper. We identify a lack of in depth analysis on internal aspect within the societies that can help explain violence against women in a political setting.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This study employs a multi-method approach to answer the research question. The methodological framework and design are bearing pillars in our attempt to investigate, interpret and understand the relationship between women in indigenous politics and violence against women in different political and non-political spheres. Power permeates all aspects of this study, making it a study of power and agency. For this reason, we have chosen to conduct methods that allow for power to be studied from multiple perspectives and that accommodates theories well-fitted for the study of power relations and the question of agency. In the following section, we will present the methodological framework which is to be found in a coalescence of participatory research, intersectionality and Foucault's approach to genealogy. We will elaborate on the use of each method and methodology and introduce the theories we will apply to our data in line with the chosen methods. Chapter 4: "Theory" which follows the chapter in question will further broaden the theoretical scope from which the analysis is being conducted. In section 3.6. *Research design*, we will present the analytical approach, data and data selection, and document analysis. Lastly, we will discuss the involvement and selection of non-academic partners, and limitations to the chosen approach while reflecting on the impact of our own positioning in this study. Rather than having a dedicated section in this chapter on ethical considerations related to the study and its applied methods, we will continuously discuss ethical aspects to methods and methodology.

3.1. Methodological framework

We are predominantly relying on qualitative research methods for both data selection and for the methodological approach we apply to this study. In this section we will present the methodological framework that systematically guides the research in all its phases. When engaging in participatory research it is in the acknowledgement that all research and all methods are culturally conditioned. Rooted in the same acknowledgement, we find an academic need to actively position ourselves and inspect this position in relation to our research in all of its phases. We equally intend to position the subjects and other creators of data used in this study. This positioning will draw on the philosophies of both intersectionality and Foucault's approach to

genealogy. Intersectionality aims to counter the many shortcomings in qualitative analysis when analyzing human behavior. An easy and often applied approach in qualitative analysis is to base research on groups of humans on very few and predefined qualities. Researchers take into account the qualities of group members most visible to them and are blind to other equally important features. However, the qualities most visible to one individual are as a matter of course culturally conditioned from a social constructionist point of view, thus making the objects of analysis determined by the researcher's position. This approach is prone to simplify its findings and sometimes to a degree that disqualifies the findings. In the worst cases it produces and strengthens false assumptions and conclusions when the researcher fails to recognize the relevant qualities to the specific analysis. To accommodate these shortcomings, we combine the philosophies within intersectionality with the practical approaches of participatory research where the subject of analysis participates in several phases of the research. This includes the phase in which the objects of analysis are chosen - a specific example would be when choosing which qualities of that person to empathize in the analysis. While participatory research and intersectionality offers a methodological strong framework to create a research design from, while Foucault offers skepticism and a critical take on the object of analysis in his approach to genealogy.

Merging these methodologies into one that constitutes the overarching strategy for this research project, will enable us to study the research question from different viewpoints designed to accommodate the blindspots of each specific approach. In line with this methodological approach, we will further unfold the social constructionist and relativist theoretical framework that supports the method in chapter 4: "Theory". However, we will first proceed to unfold the bearing methodological pillars of the study: Participatory research, intersectionality and Foucauldian genealogy.

3.2. Participatory research

As we will illustrate throughout the analysis, this study is furthermore a study of mechanisms of violence and how this violence impacts women's participation in politics in Amazonian Ecuador. While we dive into a field of politics and culture different

from our own experience, we choose to work with participatory research as an acknowledgement to our own limits regarding insight, access and time while recognising the knowledge and experience of agents involved in both indigenous society and politics in Ecuador. This will be executed building on the approach suggested by Margaret Cargo and Shawner L. Mercer in their paper 'The Value and Challenges of Participatory Research: Strengthening Its Practice'.

> Decision-makers, advocates of underserved populations, researchers, and intended users have questioned the social and cultural validity of studies conducted by researchers who know little about the people, culture, and setting in which their research was done [...], and whether research findings from one setting can be applied to other situations, contexts, and populations.[32]

In this section, we will unfold participatory research as our main methodological framework, while elaborating on its use as a method in section 3.6 'Research design'.

1. Introducing the philosophies of participatory research

Participatory research initially emerged as an approach to address public health issues. Later, research has illustrated the potential of participatory research in other fields of study, like social science. According to Cargo and Mercer, participatory research has the potential to bridge "gaps between research and practice, addressing social and environmental justice and enabling people to gain control over determinants of their health."[33] This view is supported by academics from different fields as well as the subjects of the research conducted by the academics. Cargo and Mercer invite academics from other fields to implement participatory research as methodology and method, stressing its potential in social sciences. We find this particularly fitting for our research, as the aim of this study is not only to produce knowledge on a specific topic but also to contribute with *relevant* knowledge useful for the subjects of our analysis. In their comprehensive review of PR literature[34], Cargo and Mercer find how

[32] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 326.
[33] Ibid, p. 325.
[34] Ibid, p. 326.

practitioners and policymakers, who have engaged in research, express frustration when the outcome of these studies does not "address their specific needs or resource limitations (113, 142)"[35]. For the same reason, we need insight available to the agents participating in this study to know their limitations, needs and possibilities, and more important to know how the study can produce relevant knowledge and information to the indigenous community involved in the study. We will conduct our research in the intersection of multiple of the suggested approaches under the umbrella term *participatory research.* This will be presented in section 3.6 *Research design.*

The use of participatory research as the methodological framework of our study is on one hand 1) a philosophical question concerning ethical aspects of the study. We do not wish to oversimplify the complexity of lived experience we encounter in our sources due to prejudices and lack of knowledge and insight. To limit such blindsides, the involvement of non-academic partners in this study will expand to the process of forming the research question, creating or verifying relevant sub questions, deciding on approaches to collect data and to assist in interpreting their own statements. Simultaneously, the study is limited by time and the length of the paper, giving that the full complexity of the answer to the research question will not be provided. Instead, we will analyze and discuss the most important aspects in line with the core philosophy within participatory research which emphasizes the importance of the different actors in PR as well as the importance of understanding their different abilities and limitations: "A key strength of PR is the integration of researchers' theoretical and methodological expertise with nonacademic participants' real-world knowledge and experiences into a mutually reinforcing partnership."[36] While we will discuss the strengths of PR in section *3.7 Validation*, we will just as importantly dive into a discussion of the pitfalls when using PR as the methodological framework for research. This will be presented in section *3.7 Limitations to methods.*

To structure this differentiation of roles in the research and to select the most important qualities subject to analysis, we apply intersectionality as a method.

[35] Ibid.
[36] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 327.

3.3. Intersectionality as methodology

The concept intersectionality was first introduced between 1989 and 1991 by Kimberlé Crenshaw, who urged scholars "to take both gender and race on board and show how they interact to shape the multiple dimensions of black women's experiences"[37]. More thoroughly, Collins and Bilge add that intersectionality as a theoretical framework "views categories of race, class, gender, sexuality, nation, ability, ethnicity, and age - among others - as interrelated and mutually shaping one another[38]. It also "investigates how intersecting power relations influence social relations across diverse societies as well as individual experiences in everyday life"[39]. In order to investigate women's participation in indigenous politics in Ecuador, we will use intersectionality as a methodology. To do this, we will rely on the proposal of intersectionality as methodology (IM) presented by Haynes *et al.* in 'Toward an Understanding of Intersectionality Methodology: A 30-Year Literature Synthesis of Black Women's Experiences in Higher Education'[40].

Haynes *et al.* investigate how scholars of 23 studies on Black women in higher education applied the analytical concept of intersectionality. The results of their investigation showed not only how the scholars applied the concept of intersectionality, but also that they tended to use four main strategies throughout their research. This includes the decisions that all the scholars made during the design, the choice of methodology and the analysis. These four features are what Haynes *et al.* coined as Intersectionality Methodology (IM), and we will present them below.

1) Centralize Black Women as the Subject

The most obvious and common characteristic of the 23 studies is the centralization of Black women as not only the subject of analysis but also as a producer and source of information[41]. In other words, the scholars did not take any knowledge for granted and

[37] Hill Collins, Bilge, 2020, 9. 773.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Haynes *et al*., 2020.
[41] Haynes *et al*., 2020, p. 771.

considered their voices as legitimate at all levels of their research[42]. This methodological practice put scholars and Black women in higher education on an equal position, becoming an analysis *with* black women instead of an analysis *on* black women[43]. In addition, the researchers who placed Black women at the center of the analysis often employed "collaborative auto-ethnography and counterstorytelling to illuminate how Black women, in particular, can experience intersectional erasure"[44]. Haynes *et al.* also suggest that "researcher proximity has great bearing on intersectionality research"[45].

2) Use of a Critical Lens to Uncover the Micro/Macro-Level Power Relations

The theories applied by the 23 scholars show that they used critical and intersectional lenses "to evaluate the structural and representational intersectionality that reinforces the race, sex, gender, and class domination"[46]. Furthermore, Haynes *et al.* conclude that "our analysis further indicates most of the lenses utilized have roots in Black feminist scholarship [...] used intersectionality and culturally relevant curriculum, respectively"[47].

3) Address How Power Shapes the Research Process

Haynes *et al.* state that "scholars in our narrowed sample politicized the research process to dismantle research traditions that reproduce whiteness (Harding, 1991), encourage single-axis analysis, and contribute to epistemic erasure of Black women"[48]. In other words, the scholars got rid of their previous Eurocentric notions about the issue under analysis, something that usually leads to the same confined conclusions. Indeed, "politicizing the research process also appeared to support these scholars in their decision to introduce the perspectives of Black women on their article's first page, rather than filtering their experiences through a race or gender only

[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid, p. 772.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid, p. 774.
[47] Ibid, p. 774.
[48] Ibid, p. 776.

discourse"[49]. Haynes *et al.* argue that the placement of the researcher in a position of less power shows that the one who should be most vulnerable in a research is the researcher[50]. In turn, focusing on the power relations inside the research "place emphasis on researcher reflexivity (or researcher positionality) and researcher proximity (e.g., approaches to trustworthiness/reliability)"[51]. Haynes *et al.* argue that this is especially relevant when it is White scholars who study groups of people from racially minoritized peoples[52]. In the same line, Kathy Davis argues that the geographical and social location of the researcher "will inevitably shape the ways you look at the world, the kinds of questions you ask (as well as the questions you haven't thought of asking, the kinds of people and events that evoke sympathy and understanding (as well as those that make you feel uncomfortable or evoke avoidance)"[53]. Therefore we plan to position ourselves as researchers and explore the blind spots or negative effects this may have in our investigation. Regarding the importance of Intersectionality Methodology (IM) in investigations of this kind, Haynes *et al.* wonder:

> Would a quantitative scholar conducting research about Black women be inclined to acknowledge and address how power shapes the research process, like those in our sample, if they were not applying IM? In this way, IM prompts researchers to consider how identity politics are compounded and maintained at the onset and throughout the research process.[54]

4) Bring the Complex Identity Markers of Black Women to the Fore

As the fourth strategy, Haynes *et al.* identified that all the scholars represented the Black Women they analyzed in a complex way, that is, they studied the different dimensions of their identity and not only those that define them as black and as women. Indeed, Haynes *et al.* "observed that their examinations addressed structural-political-representational intersectionality, seemingly to illustrate that Black women's

[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid, p. 778.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid, p. 780.

lives cannot be fully understood by studying one dimension of identity alone"[55]. The outcome of this methodology was the representation of women as the result of different individual dimensions and not as victims of a static and stereotyped identity that they cannot get rid of. These dimensions, in many cases, resulted in the representation of "Black women as triumphant, well-positioned for academic achievement"[56].

Haynes *et al.* conclude that the scholars who applied IM tended to better represent Black women and their complex identities, which cannot be the result of one of their dimensions alone. By doing this, scholars succeeded in representing the fullness of Black women's humanity[57]. We consider this positive result to be the outcome of the processes IM rejects to follow: "IM ostensibly rejects both (a) research approaches that examine Black women's experiences from the lowest common denominator and (b) study findings that insist Black women are a monolithic group"[58].

We have presented four strategies that can be understood as Intersectionality Methodology (IM): (1) Centralize Black Women as the Subject, (2) Use of a Critical Lens to Uncover the Micro/Macro-Level Power Relations, (3) Address How Power Shapes the Research Process, and (4) Bring the Complex Identity Markers of Black Women to the Fore. Intersectionality Methodology (IM) will work as a basis for approaching our research on women's participation in indigenous politics. We consider Intersectionality Methodology (IM) to be a procedure that can be adapted to the particularities of our research as well as remain open to the addition of new strategies that we may discover throughout the process. Therefore, we understand Intersectionality Methodology (IM) as an open and ongoing conversation where there is space for constant self-reflection and adaptation. In Kathy Davis' words, "it is this kind of conversation -open-ended, tantalizingly ambiguous and yet irresistibly compelling- which is what makes intersectionality a critical methodology and a creative writing strategy"[59].

[55] Ibid, p. 778.
[56] Ibid, p. 779.
[57] Ibid, p. 781.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Davis, 2008, p. 27.

Eventually, we find that IM on one hand aligns with the philosophies of PR while adding a valuable and systematic approach to the process of choosing which aspects to analyze in this paper. To build on this, we apply Foucauldian genealogy which will permeate how we select data and more importantly how we study data as a constitution of knowledge and discourses. What will show to be interesting, is how Foucoaldian genealogy allows us to look beyond the discourse and instead investigate the conditions that make the discourse possible.

3.4. Foucauldian genealogy

Taking point of departure in Foucault's philosophical take on genealogy, we present the genealogical approach adopted in this study. To do so we draw on the paper "Foucault's 'philosophy of the event': Genealogical Method and the Deployment of the Abnormal" by Brett Bowman. More so we go on to develop a methodological scope in the mix of this philosophy and document analysis as a method. This will be unfolded in section *3.6.3. Data and data selection*.

In order to set the relevant context for this research, we find it necessary to consider the complex historical context that still impacts indigenous communities in Ecuador. Therefore, we look to Foucault's take on genealogy. Genealogy is, in philosophy, a historical technique that investigates the subject by looking for relevant traces in history that co-constitute the subject's development. Foucault's genealogy of the subject consider "for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, and so on, without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history."[60] For this reason, this allows us to look into the historically rooted mechanisms that impact the development of the subject. Through conversations with local actors in Amazonian Ecuador and research by other scholars, we find this particularly interesting to look into when investigating perception. As the methodological approach then entails documenting the social basis for the subject's development, we will add a fitting theoretical framework to this specific historical

[60] Bowman, 2003, p. 57.

analysis of perception. We suggest Latour's Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as it both enables us to have a foundation for what is understood by the 'social' and to map out traces of history relevant to this study. This will be elaborated in chapter 6: "Theory".

What we gain from using Foucauldian genealogy is not much of a structured method. The structure of this study relies mainly on methods within PR and IM. However, the Foucauldian genealogy offers us something else: "a set of profound philosophical and methodological suspicions towards the objects of knowledge that we confront, a set of suspicions that stretch to our relationships to such objects, and to the uses to which such related knowledges are put."[61] The approach we build from this methodology then requires us to stay critical to our data, that being documents, policy papers or people. PR and the logic of Latour's ANT (to be unfolded in chapter 6: "Theory") urges us to take seriously and often literally what the subject of analysis tells us. Yet, we counter this position to accommodate pitfalls within these approaches. Thus, we use Foucault's take on genealogy to keep us on track academically, to challenge immediate interpretations of data, and, ultimately, to not lose touch with the academic foundation which aims to secure the reliability of our findings.

As we look at execution and not least perception of women's participation in indigenous politics, discourses are relevant to investigate. As shortly mentioned, genealogy lets us look beyond the specific discourses and instead investigate the conditions that made the discourse possible. Bowman presents the method of Foucauldian genealogy as a "methodology of suspicion and critique, an array of de-familiarizing procedures and re-conceptualizations that pertain not just to any object of human science knowledge, but to any procedure (or position) of human science knowledge-production."[62] This aligns with the relativist logics of Latour's ANT that, also methodologically, oblige us to not confine the research by assuming that we immediately are able to apply a theoretical framework through which we understand our data. To specify the influence of Foucault's philosophical take on genealogy on this study, we will now proceed to outline the research design we followed under this methodological framework.

[61] Bowman, 2003, p. 57
[62] Ibid.

3.6. Research design

Our execution of this study centers on answering the sub-questions to, ultimately, answer our research question. The research design is therefore carefully designed to guide the process of doing so systematically which will further enable us to be transparent about our approach throughout the analysis. We will continuously include ethical considerations on the chosen approach.

Our methodology aims to ensure a solid ethical foundation for the research put in place and respect for all involved partners. We choose to take on a PR approach that emerged parallel to the sovereignty movements of indigenous peoples[63]. Cargo & Merger refers to it as Self-Determination which builds on a rights perspective. Therefore, the study and study aim has been created in consultation with our main protagonist, Lineth Calapucha, vice president of the Quichua nationality of Pastaza. Lineth told us specifically to focus on violence as a gatekeeper to women's advancement in indigenous politics. Furthermore, we identify the need in the indigenous movement for research aiming at decolonization. The Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) urges the state of Ecuador to consider "geopolitics of space, the historical and current struggle of Indigenous peoples and descendants of enslaved Africans, and to the social construction of a social, cultural, political, ethical, and epistemological project aimed at decolonization"[64]. As we will later argue, violence against women may be seen as a consequence of colonial practices which also impact the violence internally in indigenous communities. This supports our assumption of the benefits of using PR in the design of the study as it requires insights we ourselves do not have and are not able to gain without great support from non-academic actors in indigenous communities in Ecuador. We have identified a need for this research as well as a gap in existing research that encouraged us to to ask our research question and examine the strategies indigenous women use to navigate violence in political spheres.

[63] Davis, 2008, p. 27.
[64] Davis, 2008, p. 27.

3.6.1. Analytical approach

Building on the specific approach of intersectionality as suggested by Haynes *et al*, we will, according to the philosophies in PR, need to translate the suggested approach into the context of indigenous women in Ecuador. Specifically, we will translate the four steps suggested to the relevant context: 1) Centralize Black Women as the Subject, 2) Use of a Critical Lens to Uncover the Micro/Macro-Level Power Relations, 3) Address How Power Shapes the Research Process, and 4) Bring the Complex Identity Markers of Black Women to the Fore. In our given context, this translation would be as follows:

1) Centralize indigenous women as the Subject
Indigenous women are the subject of analysis, but we broaden the scope by following PR methods, to also make them identify a lack in research. Thus, making this an analysis *with* indigenous women.

2) Use of a Critical Lens to Uncover the Micro/Macro-Level Power Relations
We will apply these lenses in our theoretical framework.

3) Address How Power Shapes the Research Process
This is done by positioning ourselves and the sources in the research.

4) Bring the Complex Identity Markers of indignoues women to the Fore.
We will do so by introducing a broad scope of historical, political and societal context that all co-constitute the perception of indegenous women.

3.6.2. Deductive and inductive ways

When making research with the aim of acquiring new knowledge, you typically have an outlet in deductive and / or inductive approaches. This study is no exception. The distinction between the two approaches has traditionally been linked to the distinction between how one examines quantitative and qualitative data. The inductive approach is linked to reasoning a a “theory building process”[65] that uses its observations to build new theories. On the other hand, the deductive approach sets out to test theories. The

[65] Ibid, p. 83.

approach then builds a hypothesis and uses theories to test if the hypothesis holds water. As anything, this approach has its own pitfalls, one being that the researcher can select data in order to prove the theory which would "color the data"[66]. To accommodate this pitfall, we will later introduce our theoretical framework in the scope of relativism and social constructionism which attempt to combine the inductive and deductive approach in a way that makes us first examine our observation to then apply theories to explain it. This also builds on the logic of genealogy which questions the underlying conditions for discourses, making us ask reflective relevant questions on how the data and even our observations came to be. We do believe in combining the approaches strategically, as the inflexibility in only following one of them would not benefit our research.

3.6.3. Data and data selection

The study investigates both primary and secondary data while empathizing qualitative data collected during our field research in Ecuador. The methodological framework, especially that of Foucauldian genealogy and intersectionality, will constitute *how* we analyze, while participatory research, document analysis, and, to some extent, intersectionality will account for *what* we analyze. It is exactly the methods to *what* we analyze we will present in this section. Selecting data, we realize that minorities and generationally oppressed people do not historically define history. For that reason we have to take into account that most historical accounts and the most accessible research by other scholars in academia are produced in the West by researchers somewhat similar to ourselves. This stresses the importance of positioning ourselves. It also encourages us to put more effort into looking for more diverse sources of information, especially regarding our secondary data.

1) Primary data

Our main body of data will be primary data collected during the field research in Amazonian Ecuador. The case study approach draws on numerous data sources including qualitative interviews with relevant agents and non-academic partners, field notes and other documents. The data will be collected according to our academic

[66] Ibid.

competencies while building on the methodological framework for the study. Engaging partners to decide what and how data will be collected provides us with an insight to their priorities and needs. This is done according to the methodology of PR. This data collection performed by partners will in some cases serve as data in itself as it allows us to ask the question of *why* they want to focus on that specific data. Furthermore, the participation of relevant agents in data collection "enhances the fit of the research with the implementing context"[67] which is particularly pertinent in our desire to produce relevant research to the indigenous communities.

2) Secondary data

The study draws on data collected and extracted from documents, academic research, news articles, social media, policy papers, reports, and books on practises, strategies, and historical context. It includes data on (and some produced by members of) the indegenous community and organizations studied in this paper. In line with our framework for the study, a merged methodological framework in the intersection of participatory research, intersectionality, and Foucauldian genealogy, we heavily rely on data and literature from the Global South, more specifically produced in Central and South America (in Spanish). We use document analysis when selecting this type of data to trace references between the documents. However, the data selection is also guided by relevant agents accordingly to the methodological framework[68]. The secondary data allows us to broaden our time frame for data selection as it is possible to access this data off-site. While being in close contact with Lineth Calapucha from the very beginning we were guided by what she identified as a lack in research and a community need. This broadened our search for relevant data as she would complement our assumptions of what questions would be relevant to ask. From there we used the snowball method to trace a body of documents relevant to answer our research question.

[67] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 339.
[68] Ibid, p. 331.

3.6.4. Document analysis

We now continue to develop a methodological scope in the mix of the philosophy of Foucauldian genealogy and document analysis as a method. The document analysis helps us structure our work with documents as data. As we examine the history of Ecuador relevant to the indigenous communities today, we set out to understand their contemporary context. We stress in section *3.6.3. Data and data selection* the need for alternative or untraditional data to counter the weight of historical accounts mainly written from a power perspective. “History is Written by Victors,” as Winston Churchill is quoted to say, though the origins of the quote is unknown. Our point is, once again, that we need to position ourselves as well as the sources of data, whether that be policy papers, academic research or creators of theories. We employed a inductive-analytical approach[69] in the first stages of the research when we looked for relevant data while being situated in Denmark. We do not consider documents to be factual data but rather from a social constructionist perspective as something “produced, used and shared in socially organized ways”[70]. With this perspective in mind, it opens up the scope for what we may analyze, as it directs attention to the creator of documents and their motives. By first mapping relevant data in accordance with a relativist theoretical framework and the inductive approach, we believe we are less likely to make confined assumptions about these motives. Though we can never be sure our assumptions are correct, we are able to test them by applying relevant theory and later work deductively.

3.6.5. The involvement of non-academic partners

As academics we must react when subjects of academic research repetitively and systematically critique the research that aims to draw conclusions on them. In this case, ignoring indigneous people’s critique on research being conducted on them (identified by different scholars, see L.T. Smith and Cargo & Mercer), would be neglecting our responsibility as researchers. However, this does not mean that our reaction should be to simply adjust the research according to the critique; The adjustment itself should be carried out methodologically. To make that adjustment with respect for involved partners and for the reliability of academic research, we present

[69] Lynggaard, 2015, p. 160-162.
[70] Atkinson, Coffey, 1997, in Bowen, op. cit., p. 27.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith, one of the academics Cargo and Mercer analyze. Smith is the author of the book “Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples" which we find particularly relevant for this study. Smith urges that research practices take on a more respectful, ethical and useful approach, and for it to build on the specificities of epistemology and methodology.

Therefore, the involvement of non-academic partners will expand to the process of forming the research question, creating or verifying relevant sub questions, deciding on approaches to collect data and finally assisting us in interpreting their statements. This is done accordingly to equitable participation[71] as presented by Cargo & Mercer. While we find great use of the involvement of Lineth Calapucha in particular, we respect her situation: Lineth is involved in many complex political initiatives in Amazonian Ecuador, she is a mother of two, and even with the support of her husband, gender roles in relation to housework is very predominant. She frequently travels between her home in Puyo and the *selva* (jungle) where she is disconnected from the internet. For this reason and also by defining the roles, her as a non-academic partner, and us as the academics, we are not to broaden her involvement in the research further. The main goal of chosen PR approach is to “bridge knowledge-to-action gaps”[72], thus, this will define the scope of involvement of non-academic partners.

Other non-academic partners expand to indigenous organizations in Ecuador, institutions and governments. These are not active partners in this research but chosen according to section *3.6.3. Data and data selection*.

3.6.6. Choosing relevant non-academic partner

Building on our methodological framework, we need “to partner with others who have complementary expertise”[73]. For us, the most needed complementary expertise is that of lived experience, both in the indigenous community and in indigenous politics. As indigenous women are the protagonists of this paper, a indignous woman with the described experience is a preferred non-academic partner. That we find in Lineth Calapucha. Using her actively in our research as a guide as well as a subject of

[71] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 325.
[72] Ibid, p. 331
[73] Ibid.

analysis, “it is important to clarify which hat [she is] wearing in each situation.”[74] We make that assessment based on the form of the interview. The initial interviews centered on the shaping of research questions, then subquestion and then approach. In these interviews, Lineth wore the partner hat, the role in which she was able to help us broaden our scope of research and direct us due to her insights to the context. After having defined the direction, the interviews shifted form to focus on her experiences of being an indigenous woman in the indigenous political system.

3.6.7. Field work

Visiting Ecuador, one of our main goals was to acquire knowledge in the field with relevant actors. We had planned on staying three weeks in Amazonian Ecuador where we would accompany Lineth on her travels between Puyo and *la selva* (the jungle) where the poorest members of the indigenous community live. However, our field trip turned out quite differently. Rather than relying on participant observations[75] and conversations and interviews[76] in the field, we were not able to enter the defined *field* at all. For that reason, we changed the definition of the *field* and our research scope. What we did have access to was mainly non-indigenous Ecuadorian people and a first hand experience of some of the consequences of the declared state of emergency during our visit. This allowed us to interview and have conversations with a number of different people. People we met during our travel to and our stay in Ecuador and people we met during our stay.

Due to the circumstances, the people we met and talked to were not carefully collected sources. Rather we had to position them to make use of their statements in an academic context. This was not ideal interview circumstances as all actors at the given moment had more urgent issues at hand. However, we felt a change in proximity to Lineth by being in the country as the protests, violence, killings, and ressource lockdown took place. During this period we conducted interviews with Lineth and stayed in touch through WhatsApp on a regular basis.

[74] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 332
[75] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 322.
[76] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 233.

3.7. Limitations

PR requires some translation as the method is initially designed to address research within public health in which the aim is to help or heal the subject of analysis. This cannot be directly translated to social sciences as it would create too many blindsides assuming that the end users, who co-design the research, are similar. It is easier to define goals in PR in health studies; often it is for the patient to get better or feel respected. While we in our research want the same for our subjects of analysis, the case is more complex. One main philosophy of PR is that the researcher and the subject find "consensus on the research"[77]. Also, both intersectionality and participatory research as methods grant its subjects multiple roles in the process of creating academic content. This may dilute the academic objectivity in the research, if the findings counter the subject's interest. Political interests may be both complex and disguised, why the distinction between the non-academic partner as a partner in research and a case of lived experience is vital to the research.

In our case, our method has also been limited by time. Ideally, we would spend months if not years in Amazonian Ecuador, but the frames for this study did not allow for that. This may impact the formalization of partnership[78], in which the formalization and trust building in a partnership can easily extend to six months.

Diving into the critique and pitfalls of PR, we introduce Matthew David and his paper "Problems of participation: the limits of action research". David argues that "Once the notion of detached truth is thrown into doubt, the question 'which side are we on' (Becker 1967) becomes paramount"[79]. He challenges the researcher, claiming that they simply are not brave enough to answer "our own side"[80]. While PR is being praised for its ethical approaches, David counters this exactly and describes PR as a "source of difficulties, epistemologically and ethically". While our methodological approach is not an action research, nor a policy paper, we do build on the same logics as such, aimin to create knowledge relevant to our subjects. This, David argues, can

[77] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, pp. 323-334.
[78] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 335.
[79] David, 2001, p. 1.
[80] Ibid.

make the research seem less academic and more as a form of "advocacy"[81]. In science, there is still an expectation that the researcher must keep a critical distance to its subjects to secure the quality of the study. Simultaneously, Hastrup and Elsass[82] argue "While anthropological advocacy seems precluded, anthropologists' advocacy may sometimes prove vital'". Other scholars criticize PR for avoiding evaluation and for being difficult to challenge due to its negativistic premise. A last blindside of PR, that we choose to highlight, is the premise of the subject as an interpreter of data and findings in the study. While this is highly encouraged in PR, the researcher simultaneously risks having findings coloured by an actor who has a lot at stake and an interest in reaching a certain conclusion. While the positive outcome (of having subjects interpret the final findings) is also clear to us, especially opposing the negative experiences many vulnerable sources have in participating in Western research, we decided that we did not have sufficient time to counter the potential pitfalls by doing so. The final interpretation of findings has thus been conducted by us alone. Still, we remind ourselves that:

"Decolonization [...] cannot be limited to deconstructing the dominant story and revealing underlying texts, for none of that helps people improve their current conditions or prevents them from dying."

We equally identify blindspots for the use of intersectionality as a method. Intersectionality, in its reaction to other approaches, opposes the confined findings that some research may lead to when overlooking important aspects of the subject of analysis. At the same time (name) concludes that by applying intersectionality methodologically it resulted in the representation of "Black women as triumphant, well-positioned for academic achievement"[83]. We argue that this can in a similar way be a confined finding, especially this shows to be a general finding as a result of the method.

We do not claim that we follow the ideal structure to perform such a research, rather that we could not possibly know what an ideal structure would look like. This does not mean that we simply claim to conduct subjective research as we do desire to produce

[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid., p. 308
[83] Ibid, p. 779.

not only raw or objective knowledge, but relevant knowledge for the indigenous communities. Instead we strive for objectivity knowing that we can never achieve it. Therefore, our best approach to achieve objectivity-striving research is to follow tested and verified approaches in academia, knowing their pitfalls and actively counter and criticize them. Our desire is then to be transparent in our research: about its scope and limits and about our own positioning. The search for a correct way to produce knowledge might be endless in academia, but knowing the pitfalls and validity of methods and approaches - the scope of the research - and being transparent about it might be the best way for a researcher to position herself.

3.8. Positioning

From the vantage point of Denmark, where we conduct the main part of our research, distance becomes a prominent word. It is 10.174 km from Copenhagen to Puyo, Ecuador. That is a distance. There are also distances in politics, history, culture, economy, privilege, yes in lived experiences. This was one of the main reasons we initially deployed PR. We simply lacked insight. But adopting PR to social science is not a simple process, and as argued it requires that we position ourselves. One way to execute this positioning is to keep asking relevant reflective questions throughout the research. Why do we consider gender such an important aspect in our research? Why did we, to begin with, overlook the heavy importance of racism? Why did we even initiate this specific research? The answer is on one side simple, yet complex. Despite our differences, we identify ourselves with the indigenous women in Ecuador. We see the issues they encounter due to their gender and we recognize them, though their fight for gender rights is completely different from ours. While we did consider racism as an important aspect of the study, we did not begin to imagine the spillover effects that racism on indigenous populations can have on gender violations in the indigenous community. That we do not encounter ourselves. Our position is one of privilege. Even in the same context, being in Ecuador during the state of emergency, our privilege shields us. We experienced not having eggs and chicken for a few days, while Lineth did not have medicine for her child, money to buy food or gas for the stove. Our position is simultaneously one of power. PR attempts to accommodate power differences between researcher and subject, and in our approach to intersectionality, Haynes *et al.* argue, as mentioned, that the placement of the researcher in a position of less

power shows that the one who should be most vulnerable in a research is the researcher[84]. Yet, we can from our position at any time stop the collaboration, we can use our research unethically, and we can harm Lineth and the community that we investigate. Therefore, we have found researcher proximity to be highly important in our study. It forces us to listen and to be open to observations. Although this does not account for all aspects to our positioning, we consider these to be most important.

CHAPTER 4: THEORY

In this study, we will work in the field between relativism and social constructionism as neither theoretical field seems to fully decipher our data and findings but both fields are able to cast light on specific aspects of the study. We will start by presenting the two overarching theories, that of relativism and social constructionism as the framework we understand the later presented theories within. After having made this presentation and discussed its potential with the methodological framework of this study, we will continue to present the main theories applied in the analysis. As ours is study of power relations and the question of agency, we use the feminist theories of intersectionality as presented in 3.3. “Intersectionality as a method” where we both present its methodological potential as well as its theoretical philosophies. For this reason, feminist theories will not be further developed in this chapter.

4.1. Theoretical framework

In this study we suggest adopting a theoretical framework that builds on both relativism and social constructionism, and in this order. Therefore, we will first present relativism as an overarching framework for theory. Later, we will present social constructionism, and finally suggest the merged framework.

Participatory research, intersectionality and Foucault’s take on genealogy guide our approach methodologically. We believe that relativism may add value to the study as its theoretical framework. Intersectionality as a method calls for a broader, more complex and less simplified theoretical take that may be granted by the recognized

[84] Ibid.

plurality of metaphysics[85] within relativism. At the same time, an important aspect to PR is not to oversimplify the complexity of lived experience. This could be a pitfall if we worked strictly in accordance with social constructionism and immediately applied theory. However, the relativist "takes seriously what [actors] are obstinately saying"[86]. Finally, what we extract from Foucauldian genealogy is that it lets us investigate the conditions that make a given discourse possible. This investigation of underlying conditions is also aligned with the relativistic plurality of metaphysics.

We adopt the understanding of relativism as put forward by 1) Carol Rovane in her book “The metaphysics and ethics of relativism” and 2) Bruno Latour in his book “Reassembling the Social”. Working within the relativistic theoretical scope, we conduct research on a reality “not with establishing its truth but with clarifying its content”[87]. The way we approach our research will then be to uncover relevant content that constitutes the reality we study. We do not attempt to find one basic structure to our data in order to explain agency, instead we wish to recognize "the metaphysical innovations proposed by ordinary actors"[88]. This allows us to map our actors (in this understanding actors can be both human and non-human) and look into the networks between them in order to see underlying conditions for discourses and not jump to a confined conclusion by applying theory before knowing the scope of our research. To do this specifically, we will later introduce Latour’s Actor-Network Theory. First, we will introduce the take on social constructionism in this paper.

Social constructionism is focussed on the nature of knowledge that is considered constructed rather than created[89]. It sees reality (metaphysic) as something constructed and it is linked to the idea of “how observations are an accurate reflection of the world that is being observed (Murphy et al., 1998)”[90]. As the name indicates, social constructionism conducts a social understanding of reality (or metaphysics) as

[85] Metaphysics or metaphysical reality is in this paper defined as the search for a fundamental nature of reality. The relativist suggests that there is not one metaphysical reality, but we all live in our own metaphysical reality.
[86] Latour, 2005, p. 235.
[87] Rovane, p. 1.
[88] Latour, 2005, p. 51.
[89] Andrews, 2012, p. 39.
[90] Ibid.

opposed to an individualistic one, and this understanding of reality leads to an acceptance of an objective reality[91]. According to Tom Andrews, it therefore has an "epistemological [and] not an ontological perspective" which opposes the relativist philosophy that takes on an ontological perspective. However, relativism does not deny the value of social constructivism - at least not in its form in this study. When we work inductively, we take a point of departure in our observations in line with the relativist philosophy. Having an outset in observation, we then apply theory as the inductive approach "grounded in the data [...] seeks to identify underlying concepts and the relationships between them (Murphy et al., 1998)"[92]. This means that our observations constitute the foundation to choose which theory would best help us answer our questions. We suggest merging these two philosophical scopes into one overarching theoretical framework that first works according to the logics in relativism, and then advances the analysis from the mapping of observations to structure these observations by applying suitable theory.

As we are studying a new field within research, we find the use of relativism suiting: Rather than immediately applying positive theories that may misguide the study, we choose to work with the negative logics of relativism until we have mapped out a series of actors and are able to trace the network between them. Latour encourages us not to take unknown or unclear (to us) statements and translate them into something recognizable, "into the few words of the social vocabulary"[93]. Instead, we will have the courage to listen and let the actor explain themselves to their best ability before making any assumptions. For that reason, we will welcome the controversies, uncertainties and hesitations we may find and use them as our foundation to reach understanding. Only then will we try to stabilize all the uncertainties and controversies that have become visible to us through our description by applying a theoretical framework to the data

[91] Ibid, p. 44.
[92] Hyde, 2000, p. 25
[93] Ibid.

4.2. Latour's Actor Network Theory

Actor Network Theory (ANT) is the theory of how humans and non-humans interact and codependently exist. In our analysis we will look into different political spheres, some of them being technological spheres, why it makes sense to apply ANT.

Using participatory research as our methodological framework and approach in recognition of involved agents' insight into their specific situation, it seems logical to look into Bruno Latour's take on ANT. Latour (born 1947) is a French sociologist, anthropologist and one of the primary philosophers behind ANT. He is known for his work in science and technology studies and the work in which he combines these studies with social science. In his early career days he would be labeled a social constructionist, which permeates his early work. ANT is correspondingly a theoretical and methodological social constructionist approach to social theory where the relationship between humans and non-humans as well as social and natural worlds exist in ever-changing situations, described as 'networks'. The analysis of these networks may be complex, but Latour argues that it is worth it: "Their complex metaphysics would at least be respected, their recalcitrance recognized, their objections deployed, their multiplicity accepted."[94] What is characteristic about Latour is his later distancing from his early social constructionism beliefs; Latour engaged with a metaphysics discipline devoted to the relativistic researcher in his work "Reassembling the social" from 2005. It is in this work, Latour seeks to explain the 'intellectual architecture' of ANT which we find suitable for this study.

Latour aims to answer the question of 'what makes them act' by expanding the understanding of motivation from the social constructionist conception of motivation as a socially constructed phenomenon or drive to the relativistic conception of the term. For the relativistic researcher, translation is key. The relativistic researcher will learn its subject's language and trust it to be relevant independently from the conception of truth. Basically, this approach recognizes the plurality of metaphysics and aims to map its subject's actions rather than squeezing actions and situations into a single structure that is set out to explain them altogether.

[94] Latour, 2005, p. 255.

4.3. Governmentality and green governmentality

Foucault presented in 1977 the theoretical framework 'governmentality' (also referred to as the 'art of government') in a course in *Collège de France*. Foucault aims to analyze how the power tries to 'conduct the conduct' of the citizens to obtain certain goals. He stresses that governing people does not imply coercing them to act as the ruler dictates; "it is always a versatile equilibrium, with complementary and conflicts between techniques which assure coercion and processes through which the self is constructed or modified by himself"[95]. Hence, the governmentality framework can be defined as the need to 'govern the self' to be able to 'govern others'. In a neo-liberal context, Fouault's governmentality theory seeks to grasp how "the new object of government […] regards these subjects, and the forces and capacities of living individuals, as members of a population, as resources to be fostered, to be used and to be optimized"[96]. He also suggests that governmentality theory can help understand the interconnection of politics and knowledge, that is, the creation of a 'political knowledge'[97]. The political knowledge can be explained as the rationalities that the citizens assimilate and that legitimate the actions of the governor or 'governing power'[98].

Thomas Lemke argues that the governmentality framework can be applied to how governments hold the legitimate power to manage nature and the environment: "nature, which once meant an independent space clearly demarcated from the social with an independent power to act and regulated by autonomous laws, is increasingly becoming the 'environment' of the capitalist system"[99]. Indeed, Timothy Luke presented the concept 'green governmentality' as an expansion of Foucault's suggestion during the 1990s[100]. Green governmentality is understood as the application of Foucault's suggestion to the relations between humans and the

[95] Foucault, 1993, p. 203.
[96] Dean, 2009, p. 14.
[97] Foucault, 1997, p. 67.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Lemke, 2002, p. 10.
[100] Ibid.

environment to be able to investigate the rationalities that make them legitimate to the population.

4.4. Subculture of violence theory

Wolfgang and Ferracuti developed in 1967 the *Subculture of violence theory* in an attempt to explain the reasons behind the use of violence among groups in the south of the United States. Wolfgang and Ferracuti argued that "this overt (and often illicit) expression of violence (of which homicide is only the most extreme) is part of a subcultural normative system, and that this system is reflected in the psychological traits of the subcultural participants"[101]. When looking at acts of violence, they focused on those non premeditated or considered as "passionate"[102]. Their hypothesis defends that the reason behind similar patterns of violence within a group is, at least partially, the existence of subcultural norms and values. This subculture does not need to be opposed to the wider culture; Wolfgang and Ferracuti stress that subcultures are in fact a part of the wider culture, them being, essentially, "cultures in conflict"[103]. Although Wolfgang and Ferracuti admitted that there are other elements that can explain the tendency of a group to violence, such as economic development, there are groups that culturally tend to violence. As an example, they presented that when comparing different regions of Colombia with the same economic circumstances, in some of them the violence was much more present in the daily lives of its inhabitants, being the subculture of violence a feasible explanation of it. Still, the subculture of violence theory has been largely criticized due to the little importance given to structural factors within the group and/or region.

Building on the Wolfgang and Ferracuti *subculture of violence*, Jerome L. Neapolitan presented in 1994 an investigation on Latin America's subculture. The aim of his research was to find explanations for the high homicide rates in Latin America, which appeared to be the highest in the world. Neapolitan argues that all regions in Latin America had moderate to high homicide rates because they share specific cultural values and norms that contribute to violent behavior. Therefore, subculture is

[101] Hartnagel, 1980, p. 218.
[102] https://criminal-justice.iresearchnet.com/criminology/theories/cultural-transmission-theory/4/
[103] https://criminal-justice.iresearchnet.com/criminology/theories/cultural-transmission-theory/4/

presented by Neapolitan as a variable for explaining the high rates of homicide in Latin America[104]. As a part of Latin American subculture, Neapolitan highlights what is known as *machismo* culture, which can be defined as "an aggressive masculinity, intransigence, and sometimes violence"[105], that expects men to be "brave, fearless, and never backing down"[106]. *Machismo* is also a "combination of paternalism, aggression, systematic subordination of women, fetishism of women's bodies, and idolization of their reproductive and nurturing capabilities, coupled with a rejection of homosexuality"[107]. He argues that this "masculine ideal" has been proven to be something that all Latin American regions share: "machismo produced the image of man as sexual conquerors of women"[108]. Neapolitan argues that the fact that all Latin American regions have a common history of cruelty and oppression has contributed to the creation of a common violent subculture between men and towards women[109].

4.5. Bare life

Giorgio Agamben developed the concept of bare life in his work Homo Sacer. Agamben presents that the Greeks did not have a single word to define what we now consider life. In ancient times, "zōḗ, which expressed the simple fact of living, common to all living beings (animals, men or gods)"[110], while bíos "indicated the form or manner of living of an individual or a group"[111]. In short, what in Archaic Roman Law was "the distinction between natural being and the legal existence of a person". The Collins English Dictionary defines life as "the quality which people, animals, and plants have when they are not dead, and which objects and substances do not have"[112]. As we can see, the current concept of life is similar to what in ancient times was understood as zōḗ. However, Agamben's theoretical proposal defends that, analyzing current

[104] Soo Chon, 2011, p. 300.
[105] Neapolitan, 1994, p. 5.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Soo Chon, 2011, p. 300.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Neapolitan, 1994, p. 20.
[110] Agamben, 1998, p. 9.
[111] Ibid.
[112] https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/life

society from a biopolitical perspective, the concept of life has to do with the legal status of a person or what in ancient times was understood as bíos[113].
Agamben takes the notion of homo sacer from archaic Roman law and describes it as someone who has been deprived of all humanity and legal protection. It is someone who is not part of society and who can be killed with impunity[114]. Precisely, it is the exclusion from the political-social community that has reduced homo sacer to merely his condition as a human being. Leland De la Duranyate adds that

> From the moment of his ritual pronouncement as a homo sacer, he can be killed with impunity by anyone but cannot be employed in sacrificial rituals that require the taking of a life. This "sacred man" is thereby removed from the continuum of social activity and communal legislation; the only law that still applies to him is the one that irrevocably casts him out of the communal sphere[115].

Agamben and Hannah Arendt analyzed the figure of the refugee from this theoretical perspective, since they argued that it was the perfect example to make visible the separation *zōé*/*bíos*. Hannah Arendt argued that bare life constitutes a contradiction with contemporary understandings of human rights. More specifically, the paradox

> in the loss of human rights is that such loss coincides with the instant when a person becomes a human being in general —without a profession, without a citizenship, without an opinion, without a deed by which to identify and specify himself—and different in general, representing nothing but his own absolutely unique individuality which, deprived of expression within and action upon a common world, loses all significance[116].

Ayten Gündogdu argues that those who are seen as expelled from the socio-political community can only generate compassion, but they are by no means rights holders[117]. Agamben argues that the inclusion of life in politics is something original and intrinsic

[113] Agamben, 1998, p. 9.
[114] Hegarty, 2010, p. 20.
[115] De la Durantaye, 2009, p. 206.
[116] Arendt, 1968, p. 302.
[117] Gündoğdu, 2013, p. 3.

to politics. From Agamben's biopolitical understanding of society, the inclusion of a human being in society is purely possible from the exclusion of those who do not have the legal status to be a part of it.

4.6. Everyday fear

In "Fear as a way of life", Linda Green presents how fear in Guatemala is not only a response to danger, but also a part of social memory and, in some cases, a chronic condition. Based on his field work with the people of Xe'caj, Green argues that the spectacles of death, torture and disappearances have penetrated the imagination of its inhabitants so much that they have a constant feeling of threat. In her research, Green tries "to capture a sense of the insecurity that permeates individual women's lives wracked by worries of physical and emotional survival, of grotesque memories, of ongoing militarization, of chronic fear"[118]. Fear, she argues, is the hidden and constant state of emergency in which people live, which becomes intertwined with the everyday choices and behaviors of women and men[119]. To address this, she introduces the concept of "everyday fear". Green highlights that "although the focus of my work with Mayan women explicitly on the topic of violence, an understanding of its usages, its manifestations, and its effects is essential to comprehending the context in which women of Xe'caj are struggling to survive"[120].

During her field work, one of the first things Green acknowledged was that fear is a complex, subjective and elusive concept: "fear, like pain, is overwhelmingly present to the person experiencing it, but it may be barely perceptible to anyone else and almost defies objectification"[121]. Green would describe her own experience as an "eerie calm" during most days, which she understood as "an unease that lies below the surface of everyday life"[122]. She would add: "my own experiences of fear and those of the women I know are much like what Taussig aptly describes as a state of 'stringing out the

[118] Green, 1994, p. 228.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid, p. 230.
[122] Ibid, p. 231.

nervous system one way toward hysteria, the other way numbing and apparent acceptance'"[123].

From her theoretical proposal we underline the importance of silence as a strategy or consequence of what Green understands as everyday fear. Green exposes the case of Elena, who told a journalist from El Salvador what she thought about the guerrilla incursions and was later punished by her family for the consequences that this could have for them. Green relates it to the way in which Alan Feldman defined secrecy in the Northern Irish context: "an assertion of identity and symbolic capital pushed to the margins. Subaltern groups construct their own margins as fragile insulators from the center"[124]. Silence is, indeed, not only a survival strategy but also "a powerful mechanism of control enforced through fear"[125].

Moreover, Green presents silence as a way to avoid both danger and also public exposure and gossip in the community. In her case, women in the community were afraid of what people might say if they saw Green entering their homes and the potential negative repercussions that might entail[126]. As a consequence of this constant fear and trauma, Green argues that women have ongoing pains, such as chronic nerves and headaches, that can be alleviated with Western medicine but not heal their pain. Green points out that women explained their illnesses and daily sufferings as a consequence of the oppression and violence that they are subjected to: "'I have these nervios because I am poor", Doña Martina explains. 'I have this headache because they killed my husband and now I am alone, and it will not go away because I am afraid', Doña Isabel says"[127]. Green argues that the fact that women are able to reflect on the reasons behind their daily pains or, from Green's theoretical perspective, the consequences of everyday fear, is positive and represents an advance for the improvement of their situation. In her words, "as they share their suffering, the women's understanding of their predicaments takes on a more social dialogue that offers hope for the future"[128].

[123] Green, 1994, p. 231.
[124] Ibid, p. 238.
[125] Ibid, p. 239.
[126] Ibid, p. 244.
[127] Ibid, p. 249.
[128] Ibid.

4.7. Nonviolent resistance

In “Nonviolent Resistance and Power Asymmetries”, Verónique Dudouet explains the concept of nonviolent resistance and analyzes under what conditions it has been a successful strategy for conflict transformation[129]. Nonviolence resistance (NVR) can be defined as “an abstention from using physical force to achieve an aim, but also a full engagement in resisting oppression, domination and any other forms of injustice. It can thus be applied to oppose both *direct* (physical) violence and *structural* violence”[130]. Dudouet argues that although it might seem a weak strategy to fight against power asymmetries, in reality it has been a very efficient tool for marginalized communities to claim rights and fight against structural inequality[131]. In fact, NVR is understood as a form of direct action due to the risks that entail and its unconventionality in the context. It is unconventional because it involves not using other methods and channels available for social change and conflict resolution, such as legislature, negotiation, lobbying, etc. NVR, on the contrary, “is disruptive of public order and poses a radical threat to the status quo”[132].

NVR theory is based on an in depth examination of the “structural contexts that organize and institutionalize power relationships, and social patterns that explain the origins and perpetuation of injustice or authoritarianism”[133]. Early adherents of NVR developed the non violent “theory of consent”, first articulated by Étienne de la Boétie. The main characteristic of the "theory of consent" is that for the authority of any leader to be maintained over time, it inevitably needs the voluntary obedience of the subjects[134]. In consequence, “the essence of NVR rests on withdrawing this consent through non-cooperation or civil disobedience towards unjust laws (e.g. boycott, strikes, tax resistance), so that governments can no longer operate”[135]. McCarthy denominates the outcome of NVR as “creative disorder”, “meaning that it magnifies existing social and political tensions, by imposing greater costs on those who want to

[129] Dudouet, 2004, p. 238.
[130] Ibid, p. 240.
[131] Ibid, p. 238.
[132] Ibid, p. 242.
[133] Dudouet, 2004, p. 240.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.

maintain their advantages under an existing system[136]. NVR has recently introduced the importance of external factors and variables that can affect the results of nonviolent resistance strategies, such as “the means of control and repression by the regime, the level of active support from outside powers, the social distance between the adversary parties, the degree of loyalty within the state bureaucracy and security forces, or the broader geopolitical context”[137].

On the other hand, most literature on NVR indicates that nonviolent action is directly related to empowerment, often “correcting their lack of self-confidence as former subordinates, and, through the development of self-reliance and fearlessness, giving them a sense of power-over-oneself”[138]. In fact, Dudouet points out that the first phase of self-empowerment is connected to creating public awareness about the necessity of addressing unequal relationships impacting negatively the ones being empowered[139].

[136] Ibid, p. 241.
[137] Ibid, p. 244.
[138] Dudouet, 2004, p. 250.
[139] Ibid.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

Our research question is twofold and centers around the question of 1) perception and 2) execution of women's participation in indigenous politics in Amazonian Ecuador. To follow the argument put forward in the introduction of this paper, we intend to first answer the question of perception. Answering this enables us to look into the second question of execution, though the two are, undoubtedly, interconnected. In the first chapter, "Perception and Strategies", we will make an historical analysis following Latour's Actor-Network-Theory. "Perception and Strategies" chapter aims to understand the contextual events or actors that impact how women are perceived in society and in indigenous politics. First, we intend to map out the perception of women's participation in a historical context, then in a contemporary political context. We do so as the perception of women has a spillover effect on how women perceive themselves. We will conduct this analysis from a relativist point of view, trying to *describe*[140] the different actors (human and non-human) in line with the philosophies within Latour's ANT and its action theory. Here, "an actor is what is made to act by many others"[141]. This chapter on perception aims to make a foundation for the following two chapters that focus, mainly, on execution. The questions posed in this part is the following:

- *What is meant by 'indigenous politics'?*
- *How do stereotypes, gender roles and the meaning of 'indigenous politics' impact the perception of indigenous women in contemporary politics?*
- *How are women maneuvering the consequences of their perception?*

Initially, when we presented our study to Lineth, she made it clear to us that we will not be able to understand women's participation in politics, without understanding the reasons and consequences of violence. This, of course, sparked an interest, and soon we understood that the scope violence in indigenous women's lives had to be a focal point for our analysis. When investigating the intersection between violence against women and their role in indigenous politics, it is essential to place the topic in the

[140] Latour, 2002, p. 33
[141] Ibid.

Ecuadorian historical context. This is done according to the philosophies within participatory research that questions the applicability of research findings from one specific setting to another[142]. The two last analysis chapters will apply different theories to their different sections. The theories are chosen as they complement our methodological framework and each theory allows us to investigate our subjects from different perspectives. This aligns with the theoretical framework in the intersection of relativism and social constructionism as the relativist considers this approach one that accommodates most blindspots in analysis. “If something supports many viewpoints, it’s just that it’s highly complex, intricately folded, nicely organized, and beautiful, yes, objectively beautiful.”[143] Though working with several theories, they are carefully chosen to complement each other and the employed methods; in other words: we do not consider this a superficial analysis - quite the contrary. In the chapter, “Violence against Women and Indigenous Culture”, we search for different factor that may help explain predominantly high rates of violence agaist indigenous women in Amazonian Ecuador. The analysis is executed by answering the following questions:

- *How can we explain violence against women with a focus on culture*?
- *How can other factors, beyond culture, explain the violence against women?*

The objective of the last analysis chapter, “Fear and Resistance”, is similar to the first: to investigate the execution of women’s participation in indigenous politics. However, this chapter takes on a different approach by examining what violence produces in relation to our research question. This is done by answering the following questions:

- *How is the role of women in politics impacted by violence?*
- *How do women navigate violence in their private and public political space?*

[142] Cargo, Mercer, 2008, p. 326
[143] Latour, 2002, pp. 145-146.

CHAPTER 6: PERCEPTION AND STRATEGIES

This chapter seeks to answer the question of the perception of women in indigenous politics. To conduct the research, we will draw on multiple factors that may impact this perception; the historical perception of indigenous peoples, the role of women in indigenous societies today and specifically the perception of them as actors in politics. Following the research design in this study, intersectionality as a method allows us to investigate how general historical perceptions of indigenous peoples impact the perception of women today, as well as how women by virtue of their gender is perceived in politics. Concurrently, as we work under the relativist theoretical framework, we will use the main part of this first analytical chapter to *describe* the circumstances that will later allow us to answer our research question. Specifically, this chapter sets out to answer the paper's first four sub-questions. The first three will be answered in a relativist framework, building on Latour's ANT, while the last part of the chapter applies theory to its analysis under a social constructionist framework. We will start off by concretizing what is meant by 'indigenous politics'; what it covers, how it is understood by the political indigenous movement in Ecuador, and, especially relevant to this study, how indigenous women understand indigenous politics. We ask the question: *What is meant by 'indigenous politics'?* This is done in the first part of the research, "The meaning of 'indigenous politics'". For the next part of the analysis, "Perceiving indigenous women in politics", we pose the question: *How do stereotypes, gender roles and the meaning of 'indigenous politics' impact the perception of indigenous women in contemporary politics?* To answer this, we briefly describe the positioning of indigenous women in the political sphere. We will furthermore draw on the negative findings in the first analysis part to uncover what aspects, relevant to indigenous women, are not covered and discuss the consequences of this. Having mapped data, findings, indicators to answer the first two questions, we are now able to apply more specific theory to investigate the last part of analysis in this section, "Taking advantage of perception". For that, we choose green governmentality.

6.1. The meaning of 'indigenous politics'

To investigate the meaning of 'indigenous politics', we will try to trace its origin. Indigenous peoples in Ecuador have historically been excluded from politics in terms

of representation and participation. However, this does not mirror their historical political agency. The organization of what came to be CONAIE in 1980 reflected a long political tradition within the indigenous communities, and today CONAIE consists of 53 organizations, 18 peoples and 15 nationalities of indigenous peoples in Ecuador[144]. The political field in the indigenous movement are similar to the understanding of what was most urgent to defend during the conquest: "the conservation of the lands, which were passing into Spanish hands, not without encountering tough, and sometimes successful, resistance from the communities"[145]. One of the consequences of colonization was a completely unequal society: "the whites, especially the Spaniards of peninsular origin (members of the civil and ecclesiastical bureaucracy, encomenderos and merchants) were at the top of the social pyramid". On the contrary, at the base of the social pyramid were the indigenous peoples, who resisted social oppression in various ways.

Throughout history, indigenous people have had political agency and (at times) been able to push back political interventions oppressing the indigenous peoples. However, they had no place in the official political systems; those of the state of Ecuador. After independence in —, indigenous peoples continued to be excluded from politics. In the 1970s, the period of oil exports that extends until today started. Ecuador became part of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and took state control of oil trading. This provoked discontent and consequent protests from indigenous peoples, which would in turn provoke a wave of violence and repression against them. This became a new chapter of extractivism in Ecuadorian history. Some scholars argue that extractivism is to be understood by its relation to capitalism which “began to be structured with the conquest and colonization of the Americas, Africa and Asia”[146] Like it is the case in Ecuador, the extractivist “mode of accumulation has been determined ever since by the demands of the metropolitan centers of nascent capitalism”[147]. After a century of struggles to protect their lands and to achieve social justice, the 1980s became a decade of change. In 1986, the Confederation of

[144] https://westobserver.com/news/europe/what-is-conaie-and-what-are-its-10-claims-in-ecuador/
[145] Latour, 2002, p. 33
[146] https://www.tni.org/files/download/beyonddevelopment_extractivism.pdf
[147] https://www.tni.org/files/download/beyonddevelopment_extractivism.pdf

Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) was founded, which aimed to represent the voices of the heterogenous indigenous population:

> The main demand of the Indigenous movement was the declaration of Ecuador as a plurinational state. In social terms, this means expressing the transformation not as multiculturalism —the naïve or innocent celebration of difference and diversity. In sharp contrast, a plurinational state is defined by interculturality, which is linked to the geopolitics of space, the historical and current struggle of Indigenous peoples and descendants of enslaved Africans, and to the social construction of a social, cultural, political, ethical, and epistemological project aimed at decolonization. In other words, it entails another system of knowledge, another political practice, another society, another way of thinking and acting in relation to and against modernity/coloniality[148].

Today, oil in Ecuador is proclaimed as a resource of "national interest" according to the Constitution[149], thanks to which the State can provide public services. However, it also contributes to pollution and violence. In fact, when looking at the indigenous movement today, we take notice that it still centers around the protection of lands on top of the fight for protecting indigenous rights. Both fights are to be traced back to the beginning of the Hispanic Era when their lands and rights were violated by exteriors for the first time. Looking at CONAIE's own definition of its political positioning, "Resistance and Social Organization of Indigenous Peoples"[150] seem to be at the heart of the organization. CONAIE, too, empathizes the impact of the historical events on its positioning, claiming that the indigenous population has been partly annihilated[151] as a direct consequence of colonization. What CONAIE has formulated as the most urgent objectives for indigenous politics is the following:

> "to consolidate the indigenous peoples and nationalities of Ecuador, to fight for the land and indigenous territories, to fight for their own education (bilingual intercultural), to fight against the oppression of the civil and ecclesial authorities,

148 https://www.sit.edu/story/a-historical-perspective-puts-ecuadors-indigenous-protests-into-context/
149 https://geografiacriticaecuador.org/minkayasuni/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/DECLARATORIA-DE-INTERES-NACIONAL.pdf
150 https://conaie.org/quienes-somos/
151 https://conaie.org/quienes-somos/

> fight for the cultural identity of indigenous peoples, against colonialism and for the dignity of indigenous peoples and nationalities"[152].

Here, CONAIE stresses the origin for their political motives, that being "against colonialism". In this study we take into account the ontological weight of our subjects' claim according to the conceptualization of Latour's ANT. We therefore would like to broaden the understanding of indigenous politics, for it not to be defined only by the executors of it. Maria Yolanda Teran is an academic scholar, occupied with indigenous politics, from the Kichwa Nation in Ecuador, and she states: "All of us must remember that our resources are our relations, the relationship between men and women with Mother Earth, and that among Indigenous Peoples, a song, story, or medicinal knowledge has a reciprocal relationship and connection with particular human beings, animals, plants, and places"[153]. During one of our interviews, Lineth Calapucha said: "For me, politics is to help. To work in the territory, in social projects. It is to know how to lead and help people. To know the needs of people, interact, try to help, support us and serve the people"[154]. Meanwhile, Lineth tells us that she, in her political life, is subject to political violence[155] because of her gender. By virtue of her gender, Lineth experiences opposition to her as a political figure, both from men and women. The political violence she is subject to has the shape of exclusion, suspicion on her motives and abilities.

This encourages us to adopt a broad understanding of politics. Values, deeply rooted in culture, history, traditions and practices, yes even rooted in nature, also form politics. Yet, the execution of politics in the indigenous context still seems to be heavily influenced by communities' need for resistance to external threats. Historically, indigenous peoples of Ecuador have been violently oppressed. They have been subject to both ethnocide and genocide, and are amongst the most vulnerable to climate change and extraction of their lands. Indigenous politics, in its executive form, is a reaction to colonization and the ongoing oppression against indigenous peoples and culture. It is also a reaction to their exclusion from politics. This context can help

[152] https://conaie.org/quienes-somos/
[153] Cajete, 1986, p. 187
[154] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth
[155] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

explain what we identify as the two main pillars in indigenous politics today: the protection of lands and of indigenous peoples' rights.

6.2. Perceiving indigenous women in politics

The reaction in the indigenous movement to colonization and extractivism has made indigenous politics focus on their fight against the exterior oppressor to a point that could somewhat overshadow other important threats to the community. As we will later unfold in chapter 9 "Violence against women and indigenous culture", violence against women continues to be one of the most urgent threats to indigenous women, and arguably to the whole indigenous community. Amy Lind[156] find that CONAIE traditionally "has taken the position that a struggle for women's rights competes with the general struggle for the rights of indigenous nationalities and communities"[157]. She argues that, simultaneously, "middle-class, urban-based women's movements often overlook the multiple factors leading to the ethnic/racial/gender oppression of indigenous women, thus isolating indigenous women from their organizations." However, indigenous women have gradually been involved in official politics and their political participation has not been static. During the creation of CONAIE, different elements gradually favored the entry of women into political organizations like CONAIE, such as the emergence of the feminist movement and the arrival of development programs in which gender equality was a priority[158]. That participation had, however, clear limits. Women were entrusted with logistical tasks related to the family, but in no case were they allowed to participate in important decisions related to the territory[159]. Lisset Coba and Manuel Bayón point out that dialogue and conversations with colonizing actors such as soldiers, priests, and more recently, multinational administrators, are negotiated only by men. Coba and Bayón argue that "In the nebulous space of postcolonial and capitalist powers, in communities, the Catholic inculcation of strict gender roles, the submission of women to men, crosses the systems of community reciprocity"[160].

---

[156] In the paper "Gender and Neoliberal States: Feminists Remake the Nation in Ecuador",

[157] chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfulltext/15749584.pdf

[158] Coba; Bayón, 2020, p. 149.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Coba, Bayón, 2020, p. 146.

We still see these gender roles in indigenous politics. The scope to their impact is to be unfolded in chapter 10 “Fear and resistance”, but taking a point of departure in the definition put forward in section 1.1.4. “Gender roles”, we go on to identify them in the following setting. While the indigenous movement is led most visibly by CONAIE, setting the agenda for indigenous politics today, the division of gender-specific political areas are visible in the organization. The female leaders within CONAIE mainly lead areas traditionally designated to women, in line with gender roles: Women and families; Health and nutritions; Youth, culture and sport, and; Communication[161]. At the same time the male leaders govern Education; International Relations; Territories and natural resources, and; Organizational strengthening and politics[162]. The structure of CONAIE consists of a quota system and dictates that the President and Vice President must have different genders. The current governing council (2021 to 2024) has a man, Leonidas Iza, as its President, and a woman, Zenaida Yasacama as its Vice President. We argue that contemporary gender roles in the indigenous movement impact the perception of the women who enter politics. As mentioned earlier, we will later dive into the investigation of these gender roles.

First, we will take a look at stereotypes. A long history of research within psychology confirms the limiting impacts of stereotyping on many aspects in women’s lives. Hentschel, Heilman & Peus[163] found that “gender stereotypes can be impediments to women’s career advancement, promoting both gender bias in employment decisions and women’s self-limiting behavior”. There is furthermore a key difference in how women and men perceive themselves when being subjected to stereotyping. While men on an individual level perceive themselves having more ability and agency than their perception of the general man, women did the opposite. The scholars argue that stereotyping seems to impact women’s perception of themselves more than men and

[161] https://conaie.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/DIRIGENTES-scaled.jpg

[162] Ibid.

[163] In the paper, “The Multiple Dimensions of Gender Stereotypes: A Current Look at Men’s and Women’s Characterizations of Others and Themselves”, Hentschel, Heilman & Peus investigated the two defining features of gender stereotypes, agency and communality in their study: “628 U.S. male and female raters described men, women, or themselves on scales representing multiple dimensions of the two defining features of gender stereotypes, agency and communality: assertiveness, independence, instrumental competence, leadership competence (agency dimensions), and concern for others, sociability and emotional sensitivity (communality dimensions)”

in a more limiting manner[164]. One aspect especially relevant to this study of women in politics, is how stereotyping women impact their perception of themselves in leadership. According to Hentschel, Heilman & Peus, "women tended to characterize themselves in more stereotypic terms – as less assertive and less competent in leadership – than they characterized others in their gender group". Like ours, the study by Hentschel, Heilman & Peus is one of perception and agency and implications of such. In their study they find that "the majority of barriers for women's advancement that were identified were consequences of gender stereotypes." We find that the perception of women's participation in indigenous politics in a similar way is limited according to their traditional role in society. This, we argue, is possible due to the reinforcing effect of 1) how the perception of women limits their participation in politics, and 2) how the limited participation maintains the perception of women aligned with the traditional gender roles that are not compatible with political participation; forming a limiting vicious circle.

We find that the violent historical context, from which contemporary indigenous politics emerged, may also limit the scope of the focus for the indigenous movement. We argue that when CONAIE positions gender as a hinder to achieve its defined goals, the organization neglects gender equality and the equal involvement of women in politics. When women are included in politics it is in accordance to how they are perceived in line with gender roles and stereotypes. We simultaneously make an observation that the "middle-class, urban-based women's movements" also has neglected the position of indigenous women. When the indigenous movements build on two pillars (protection of territory and indegenous people's rights), non-indigenous women may also fail to perceive indigenous women as important actors in feminist movements as the understanding of 'indigenous rights' do not entail a gender perspective. In an intersectional perspective, indigenous women find themselves doubly discriminated against in relation to ethnicity and gender. The exterior perception of indigenous women is in this case a perception of less important and, by virtue of stereotyping, less qualified actors in the political system. In the ultimate consequence of this, the result of exterior's perception of women forms 'a limiting vicious circle'.

[164] Ibid.

6.3. Taking advantage of perceptions

In the same way we, as researchers, are impacted by our own viewpoint, the actors we investigate are too. Therefore, only concluding that the exterior perception of women forms 'a limiting vicious circle' would be too simplistic. Following Latour's logic, we need to transport ourselves between different points of views to gain different perspectives on the matter. While we do defend the 'limiting vicious circle' as a sub-conclusion, Lineth challenges this finding. She tells us that she recognizes a change in how women perceive themselves and how they want to be perceived, stating that "little by little we are becoming aware of the capabilities we have individually and recognizing the capabilities other women have."[165] Lineth is simultaneously an example of this change herself, actively positioning herself politically and navigating the violence that follows this positioning.

We also see how women are using the stereotypes of them strategically, whether consciously or not, to frame themselves as capable and essential actors in indigenous politics. In our analysis of violence against women, Lineth empathizes how husbands' and the community's perception of women and their role in society impacts the woman's space to act. To challenge the argument of perception being limiting to women's participation in politics, we proceed to investigate the opposite argument: that the gender-typical stereotyping of women may empower their position.

An example of this would be how women take advantage of this limitation by presenting themselves as interpreters of nature. In 2008, Ecuador recognized the *Sumak Kawsay* or "Good living" understanding in its Constitution, promoted since the 1980s by indigenous organizations. "the term alludes to the implementation of a socialism that is more independent of European socialist theories and that is rather linked to a communitarian and ancestral thought and lifestyle of the Quechua ethnic groups that should be promoted as a new model of social organization and state"[166]. This contributed to the recognition of indigenous and nature rights. "The national plans for Development and "Good Living" redefined in the last decade the rentier character

[165]Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

[166] Coba, Bayón, 2020, p. 146.

of the State, based on territorial expansion for the extraction of minerals, including oil. Thus, the indigenous approach was blurred. Faced with this threat, different indigenous organizations stated that “Good Living” is not possible without the “Living Jungle” or *Kawsak Sacha*, the place where the protective beings who make the regeneration of the forest live. Respect for *Kawsak Sacha* is essential for the existence of *Sumak Kawsay*”[167].

In October 12[168], 2013, around 200 indigenous women went to Quito to present a new economic-political-cosmological proposal “the *Kawsak Sacha* or “Living jungle’”[169]. To fight against the expansion of the Pastaza oil frontier, indigenous women positioned themselves as interpreters of the jungle and its politics[170]. They decided to take the lead because they defended that men give in easily and put the lives of the *ayllus* (traditional community) at risk. Many indigenous women claim that “men have stopped listening to the forests”[171]. Indigenous women argue, in turn, that they are the ones who best know the consequences of extractivism since 1) they are in charge of providing daily food and 2) many women are experts in plant cultivation and know the forests in depth[172]. In fact, women understand the behavior of natural beings in the forest, being able to predict events and interact with it in an intelligent and beneficial way for humans. For indigenous peoples, “the forest is not a mere resource, it has intrinsic value made from the fabric of the collective memory of the ancestral peoples that can continue to be so only if the forest survives”[173]. We argue that, although this understanding of nature is traditionally common to all indigenous peoples, the contemporary inaction of men in this regard has made women feel responsible for it. Indeed, it is not only the inaction of indigenous men but also their counter-productive actions that have made women stress that they are the ones who better understand the *Kawsak Sacha* or “Living Forest” mandate. As the data reveals, indigenous men have been bribed by oil companies in exchange for money in many cases. This behavior goes completely against the *Kawsak Sacha*, opposed to the fetishism of

[167] Coba, Bayón, 2020, p. 144.
[168] Official date for the “Discovery of America”.
[169] Coba; Bayón, 2020, p. 141.
[170] Ibid.
[171] Ibid, p. 142.
[172] Ibid, p. 144.
[173] Ibid, p. 153.

merchandise as a part of its core, and which means "not believing that they possess a spirit but rather assigning them the character of a vainly interchangeable thing"[174].

In economic terms, private goods or commodities refer to conventional goods on the market[175]. Public goods, on the other hand, equate to the goods that are considered free and equally accessible to the public: “they are characterized by the properties of "non-rivalry in consumption and non-excludability"[176]. The most important characteristic of private goods is that one’s consumption of it reduces the quantity available to another individual[177]. That is, that they are exclusive insofar as it is possible to prevent a person from consuming the commodity. Nevertheless, in the case of Ecuadorian extractivism nature becomes a commodity, as opposed to what *Kawsak Sacha* demands: “the transformation of the forest into a natural resource, essential for national development and to feed the metabolism of the global economy, hides the social life of the forest and supposes the reproduction of extractive political violence”[178]. We argue that in order to understand the rationality behind the *Kawsak Sacha* or “Living Forest” mandate, we should first look into the rationality behind the generalized perception of nature as “essential for development”.

In “Environmentality and green governmentality” Stephanie Rutherford suggests looking at the rationalities that are behind the general way of perceiving the environment, which can be also called ‘regimes of truth’[179]. She points out that the green governmentality framework “has become a useful concept to help think through the ways that the environment is not only a biophysical reality, but also a site of power, where truths are made, circulated, and remade”[180]. The lenses of governmentality can be defined as the necessity of ‘governing the self’ in order to ‘governing others’. We argue that the assimilation of the rationality “nature is essential for national and economic development” constitutes the ‘governing the self’ necessary to govern nature. And it is precisely these kinds of rationalities or truths that make capitalist

[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid, p. 153.
[179] Rutherford, 2007, p. 2.
[180] Ibid.

societies understand the management (not exploitation) of nature as something logical. In fact, Lineth stressed that men usually accept money because oil companies convince them that with that money they will have a better life, which includes better education for their children, food security and better general wellbeing. More money implies a better life. In a different way, we argue that indigenous men accepting money in exchange for "giving in" can be also seen as the assimilation of the rationality "money is essential for private economic development".

Rutherford points out that "the rationalities that underpin green governmentality suggest the forms of knowledge/power that open up particular grids of intelligibility while foreclosing others"[181]. We argue that the rationality "nature is an essential resource for national and economic development" is the reason why the *Kawsak Sacha* is seen as something difficult to imagine in a capitalist world. We argue that the rationality "nature is essential for national and economic development" might be less visible in women's understandings of life because they have been historically pushed away from politics while living in isolated locations in the Amazon. This meant that they had little or zero contact with the outside world and, therefore, with what we suggest to call "capitalist rationalities". In fact, when talking about political organizations, Lineth stated that "the mind of nationalities is colonized"[182]. We acknowledge, however, that this suggestion requires further analysis.

The perception of women in politics is formed by many exterior factors, some being the exterior historical and cultural perception of women in indigenous societies. We argue that they perceive themselves as capable actors in a network that does not allow for their participation on equal terms as men - and that historically not allowed for their participation. Still, the women have found ways to use the limiting stereotyping of them strategically by positioning themselves as essential political actors according to the stereotype. Rather than fighting against, though that can also be the case, the women navigate the excluding and oppression political arena by following these strategies. Though being a strategy, it also impacts indigenous women's perception of themselves as, in fact, essential actors in politics. Mapping the different *actors* that

[181] Ibid.
[182] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

make indigenous women act, those being (in this analysis) historical accounts, perceptions, violence and nature, we argue that women's politics can be perceived as a fight against capitalism in its essence, which, on top of the difficulties they face for being women and the stereotypes that this entails, makes their political action more challenging. Indeed, women are questioning one of the most important sources for economic development in Ecuador; they are challenging the common knowledge and the status quo. That does not mean women are best suited for politics nor they have more ethical values in terms of protecting nature than men. It is not possible to know what would happen if women had the same power as men when negotiating about nature and indigenous territory. What we defend is that, based on our data and applying green governmentality as a theoretical framework, women tend to be less influenced by the capitalist rationality "nature is essential for national and economic development" than men. On the contrary, they see nature according to the "living forest" mandate and consequently carry out a stronger and less transigent resistance against extractivism (at least for now). In turn, they use the importance of how they are perceived and make it something to use to their advantage. In this case, they present themselves as the only ones who can protect nature, which is in reality their territory, which in turn is the *raison d'être* of indigenous politics. We argue this constitutes an incredible act of political intelligence.

CHAPTER 7: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND INDIGENOUS CULTURE

Violence against women is one of the most obvious consequences of gender inequality in the indigenous context. The Ecumenical Commission on Human Rights and ALDEA Foundation reported that in 2021 there were 197 femicides in Ecuador, appearing as the most violent year since femicide was recognized as a crime in 2014[183]. 2022 has already exceeded that figure, with a total of 206 women killed counted until the month of September[184]. Six out of ten women report being victims of gender-based violence in Ecuador, and 59% of them appear as indigenous women[185]. When we first talked to Lineth, she warned us that some people in Ecuador say that high rates of violence against women in indigenous communities is the result of indigenous culture, and that this assertion was a sign of racism. She insisted that by no means violence was a result of indigenous culture. However, Lineth was only able to define the negative, not why indigenous women are among the most affected by it in Ecuador. To conduct this analysis, we then apply the negative logics of Latour's ANT which make us question this assumption. While Lineth is a non-academic partner with great insights to the situation under investigation, she is also a result of that culture from a social constructionist point of view. Therefore, following the responsibility of our role as this paper's academic partners and by virtue of what our position allows us to see, we will challenge the assumption that violence by no means is a result of indigenous culture.

To investigate whether culture can explain violence, we rely on Jerome L. Neapolitan's subculture theory, which aims to explain high rates of violence in Latin America. Cultural ideals permeate societies and influence power relations. Our research shows that stereotypes are very predominant in the indigenous community and that their consequences are not to be ignored. For this reason, we will dive into an investigation of cultural ideals of men and women in Latin America with a focus on indigenous peoples to be able to understand the consequences of them. Thus, In the first part of this chapter, "Subculture of violence and impunity", we will try to answer the following

[183] https://agenciaecologista.info/2022/05/04/femicidio-en-mujeres-indigenas/
[184] http://www.fundacionaldea.org/noticias-aldea/tercermapa2022
[185] https://www.lahora.com.ec/pais/206-femicidios-ecuador-enero-septiembre-2022/

question: How can we explain violence against women with a focus on culture? We will look at the indigenous justice system when it comes to sentencing gender-based violence. This way, we will try to elucidate the points where violence and culture meet. At the same time, we will be able to understand the implications that violence and culture have for the political participation of indigenous women.

Drawing on intersectionality as a method, we must consider other factors which can help explain the intersection of violence and women in indigenous politics. This will be done in the second part of the chapter, "Structural elements and bare life" by asking the question: *How can other factors, beyond culture, explain the violence against women?* Here, we will apply Giorgio Agamben's concept of bare life to understand indigenous peoples' and, specifically, indigenous women's positionality in the Ecuadorian context. This also enable us to see not only the cultural, but also the historical and social dimensions that can help explain why violence against women is predominant in this case. Our aim is therefore to investigate the intersections between violence and women's participation in politics through culture.

7.1. Subculture of violence and impunity

The word "culture" is one of the most complex words to define because "it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought"[186]. There are many suggestions that explain what culture means in sociological terms, and in this research we will make use of Spradley and McCurdy's definition:

> Culture is a kind of knowledge, not behavior: It is in people's heads. It reflects the mental categories they learn from others as they grow up. It helps them generate behavior and interpret what they experience. At the moment of birth, we lack a culture. We don't yet have a system of beliefs, knowledge, and patterns of customary behavior. But from that moment until we die, each of us participates in a kind of universal schooling that teaches us our native culture. Laughing and smiling are genetic responses, but as infants we soon learn when

[186] https://sociologydictionary.org/culture/

to smile, when to laugh, and even how to laugh. We also inherit the potential to cry, but we must learn our cultural rules for when crying is appropriate[187].

Jerome L. Neapolitan presented in 1994 an investigation on Latin America's subculture. The aim of his research was to find explanations for the high homicide rates in Latin America, which appeared to be the highest in the world. Nowadays, Latin America continues to be the region in the world where there are more homicide victims in the world, with a total of 173,000 victims in 2017[188]. The Global Study on Homicide made by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2019, confirms that "male homicide rates are 8 to 11 times higher than female rates in parts of the Americas – a much wider margin than seen in other regions[189]. Neapolitan suggested that all regions in Latin America had moderate to high homicide rates because they share specific cultural values and norms that contribute to violent behavior. The subculture of violence theory was first introduced by Franco Ferracuti, Marvin E. Wolfgang in 1983, who explained violence in the southern regions of the United States as a consequence of them sharing subcultural norms and values. In the Latin American context, Neapolitan sheds light on the machismo culture, which can be defined as "an aggressive masculinity, intransigence, and sometimes violence"[190], and that expects men to be "brave, fearless, and never backing down"[191]. Machismo is also a "combination of paternalism, aggression, systematic subordination of women, fetishism of women's bodies, and idolization of their reproductive and nurturing capabilities, coupled with a rejection of homosexuality"[192]. While it is true that Neapolitan's approach is inconsistent in terms of proving that machismo culture is much more visible in Latin America than in other regions of the world, recent studies such as that of Judith Salgado point out that violence against women is not only a common situation in the indigenous context but also a normalized practice. If we look at Spradley and McCurdy's definition of culture, a shared knowledge is what makes

[187] Ibid.
[188] https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet1.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3A2HDySLTJQLCGxAHQ9FouyO68mP5uKUhJbaGHXVXPu43phLnAgw7SGEo UNODC
[189] Ibid.
[190] Neapolitan, 1994, p. 5.
[191] Ibid.
[192] 300

people generate and interpret what they experience. We argue that, if a kind of behavior, in this case violence against women, is interpreted as something normal by a group, such behavior can be considered as a part of their culture.

Salgado's data findings in the Ecuadorian indigenous community of La Toglla show that women are, in fact, supposed to be subordinated to men. Our data findings also show that machismo is present in indigenous daily lives and violence is a normalized practice. In fact, Lineth explained that people in her community makes fun of his husband because he does not fit into the macho ideal:

> I have always thought that neither men nor women are more or less, we are complementary. My partner, thank God, understands it to a certain extent. For this reason people sometimes call my husband mandarina (mandarin fruit), to which he responds: "I am a great man, a macho, and I am not going to allow them to laugh at me". There are words he doesn't want to say but sometimes they come out[193].

Lineth presents her personal situation as a positive exception, although it has negative consequences in the way the rest of the community perceives her husband. It is reported to be a common situation that women do not participate in politics because their husbands do not allow them and they might be subject to violence if they do. We argue that the fact that a woman wants to participate in politics can lead to her husband being seen as weak since politics had been traditionally a public and male-dominated space. This adds another layer of responsibility on the woman's shoulders. She is not only responsible for her own safety when entering politics, she also bears the responsibility of society's view on her husband. Salgado suggests looking at how women's identity is perceived in indigenous culture, which has two main complementary elements: "the figure of the nurturing mother and the warrior woman"[194]. Regarding the first element, Salgado's findings show that the participation of women in political leadership positions is limited to their reproductive role: "sometimes we ourselves think that we are not going to be able to assume that position

[193] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

[194] Salgado, 2012, p. 258.

[...] because of my time, because of my children, my girl at school, sometimes I think that I do not have time"[195]. In regards to the "warrior" element of indigenous women, Salgado presents that they were "highlighted by men as an element that generates admiration and fear at the same time"[196]. Salgado also explains that once a woman is married, there is no option for her to ask for help from her family in case she suffers gender-based violence from her husband: "It is not possible that she later comes complaining about anything"[197]. Moreover, women that she interviewed agreed that "the idea of violence 'justified' by the breach of some responsibility assigned to women"[198] is very common, "which leaves them in a situation of vulnerability both before state authorities and before indigenous authorities"[199].

Indeed, an important aspect to look at when analyzing violence against women in the indigenous context is its independent judicial system. According to Salgado's findings, many cases of rape and violence against women are resolved through, for example, a transaction between families. Salgado relates this sexist practice that does not take women into account with what is known as "familism", in which "the individual female subject is lost by subsuming her in the family and her interests (the permanence of the family unit)". We argue that this constitutes a loss of agency as well as a normalization of the issue. Other non-economic means to resolve cases of gender-based violence are *the second chance* or *the apology*, which means that the aggressors end up unpunished in most cases[200].

Regarding femicides, Lineth told as that indigenous women's femicides are often silenced and are not counted in official records of the state[201]. Indeed, in Latin America, femicides in indigenous communities are often considered as "deaths of women that no one sees, registers or attends"[202], something that responds to

[195] Ibid, p. 259.
[196] Ibid, p. 258.
[197] Salgado, 2012, p. 262.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid, p. 265.
[201] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth
[202] https://ecuadortoday.media/2021/03/24/feminicidios-en-comunidades-indigenas-muertes-de-mujeres-que-nadie-ve-registra-ni-atiende/

"institutional racism"[203] and consequently prevents specific and culturally appropriate actions. This make us wonder if violence against women can be seen as the sole result of culture, or if it also can be seen as the result of the non-action from the state. Are there other elements that can help explain why violence against women are normalized in the given context?

7.2. Structural oppression and bare life

Don Soo Chon criticizes Neapolitan's analysis and argues "no researchers have been able to adequately explain why Latin America nations displayed such a high homicide rate"[204]. This is because, he argues, Neapolitan's research is based only on the regional subculture of violence thesis, which has not been identified in detail nor backed with quantitative data. While it is true that the *machismo* culture might help explain violence and gender-based violence in indigenous communities, Don Soo Chon insists that structural and quantitative factors such as poverty, income inequality, literacy rate and alcohol consumption level should be taken into consideration[205].

In Ecuador, 5 out of 10 indigenous people live in poverty, which means that they have an income of less than $84.82 per month. The UN Economic Commission for Latin America and The Caribbean (ECLAC) indicates that "the structuring factor of indigenous poverty lies in the lack of political and economic power"[206]. Although the gender gap is not very evident when talking about poverty among indigenous peoples, women appear poorer than men. The gender gap when looking at indigenous people's literacy is much more visible. While in 2010 there was a 13.7% of indigenous men who were illiterate or uneducated, the percentage of indigenous women in the same situation was 26.7%. The experts state that in the last decade women's rates of illiteracy have decreased by 10%, but there are no official statistics of any kind, neither from the state nor academia. Among the multiple consequences of it, gender violence is one of the most visible. In fact, it is proved that the more educated women are, the less violence they are subjected to. The article affirms that 61% of indigenous women

[203] Ibid.
[204] Salgado, 2012, p. 299
[205] Ibid, p. 300.
[206] https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20americas/documentos/publicaciones/2021/03/informeregionalmujeresindigenasderechos%20b25%20%20filac%20onumujerescomprimido.pdf?la=es&vs=1317

who attend literacy centers claim to have suffered different kinds of aggressions by men, as opposed to 36% of women with higher education or postgraduate studies. Nevertheless, official reports state that there is a sub-record of the cases “because there is an extended silencing, either due to fear of rejection, disbelief, stigmatization, retaliation and re-victimization before the justice systems”[207]. Indigenous women are in fact sometimes referred to as the “the most vulnerable among the vulnerable". Karen Lucero presents how indigenous women are doubly affected by ethnic discrimination within Ecuador and gender inequality within the indigenous communities to which they belong. Lucero compares indigenous women with women from other ethnical groups in Ecuador and concludes that:

> indigenous women have the highest rate of illiteracy (26.7%), the highest rate of poverty due to income (49.3%) and time (86.3 hours per week), the highest rate of gender violence (67.8%), the highest unpaid workload (55.8%) and the lowest rate of affiliation to social security (18.8%)[208].

In Ecuador, the fact of being discriminated against because of your race has historically been linked to poverty, political exclusion, and violence, which is still visible today in Ecuadorian society. Indeed, Ninari Chimba, indigenous activist, argues that women’s vulnerability is the consequence of 1) low levels of education of indigenous women and 2) discrimination and exclusion of indigenous peoples[209]. Some scholars have argued that the “struggle to be less Indian and black and more white, to see oneself as of a higher status and with economic privilege, as well as to define one’s worth based on the control and exploitation of others are all indebted to the colonial legacy”[210]. We can see how colonial violence was internalized in society in the letter written by a young Ecuadorian poet named Medardo Ángel Silva before committing suicide in Guayaquil at the age of 21:

---

[207] Ibid.

[208] https://www.revistagestion.ec/sociedad-analisis/la-mujer-indigena-la-mas-vulnerable-entre-los-vulnerables

[209] https://agenciaecologista.info/2022/05/04/femicidio-en-mujeres-indigenas/

[210] Capella *et. al.*, 2019, p. 35.

> "I despair in poverty and I am offended by blackness. Is it curious: I am a man of pure white race. My grandfather was Spanish. It is useless to explain a freak phenomenon of nature. But you must know that in me harbors a pure Iberian heritage. However, I look like a black Moor. And this physical reality, in my country, is a source of shame. But I would not mind as much being the black member of my family, if, in addition, I also were not poor"[211].

If we look at the reported triggers for gender-based violence, economic problems (36.4%), jealousy (47.4%) and substance abuse appear as the most common[212]. According to Kirmayer *et al.*, "all of these triggers are culturally and historically mediated"[213]. High levels of alcohol consumption is in fact something that Lineth emphasized when she told us about the bribes that oil companies offer men from indigenous communities. A report on alcohol and health in Latin America states that indigenous peoples are "especially vulnerable given its levels of poverty and limited access to health, education and other appropriate services for the prevention and treatment of problems related to alcohol consumption, as well as the influence of its colonial past"[214]. It is estimated that alcohol consumption is one of the internal practices that has historically harmed the most indigenous peoples of Latin America, gender-based violence being one of its most obvious consequences[215]. Kirmayer et al. argue that in Ecuador, "history permeates into the present through structural inequalities based on income and race-ethnicity[216]. The authors conclude that historical violence and, in consequence, historical trauma, can help explain contemporary violence in Ecuador and encourage other scholars to study the field further.

Kirmayer et al. argue that to be able to understand Ecuadorian cultural social construction and its relation to violence it is essential to look at how historical violence has shaped their everyday lives[217]. From a postcolonial perspective, we have seen that structural violence and exclusion have been presented as important shapers of

---

[211] Ibid.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Kirmayer et al., 2014., p. 14.
[214] https://www.paho.org/hq/dmdocuments/2009/AlcoholySaludIndigena06.pdf
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Kirmayer et al., 2014, p. 17.

the current Ecuadorian social construction. In fact, “it is estimated that 50% of the indigenous Indian population died between 1500 and 1600, directly because of violence or indirectly as a result of miserable conditions”[218]. If we examine it from Agamben’s bare life, we could argue that homo sacer here is not only a fixed concept that applies to a person or a group of people; it is a feature that historically has had a grayscale. The less white you are, and, in most of the cases consequently, the less social status you have, the more sacred or bare your life becomes. Walter Benjamin, prior to Agamben’s description of the homo sacer, noted that it is necessary to understand that what is considered sacred was, from the perspective of the old mythical thought, where a mark of guilt is deposited, which is nothing more than mere life”[219]. In consequence, sacralising a man entails, in a certain way, a punishment. On that subject, the importance lies in the concept of “bare life”, what can be defined as “empty humanity that is neither quite human nor animal, an intermediate state that, even as it appears, is shoved into the background to be made part of a society based on law”[220]. Agamben claims that the first foundation of political power is a life that can be killed absolutely, that is politicized by its very possibility of being killed[221]. From an intersectional perspective, we argue that indigenous women appear as the most vulnerable in Ecuador, which, in turn, can be seen as the consolidation of Homo Sacer in the ultimate sense of the concept.

7.3. A perfect storm[222]

While Lineth stresses that culture is not even part of the conversation, Neapolitan presents Latin American subculture as the dominating explanation. We argue that the presented perspectives cannot individually explain the high rates of violence against women in indigenous communities in Ecuador. By challenging both viewpoints, we try to offer an explanation that is more holistic and nuanced. We do see that indigenous culture has strong patriarchal understandings of life, which makes women especially vulnerable to violence and relegates them from the political space. We recognize that *machismo* and indigenous culture might help understand why gender-based violence

[218] Mora, 2008, p. 111.
[219] Hegarty, 2010, p. 20.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] “Perfect Storm” refers to a complex situation that is affected by a unique group of circumstances.

rates are high among indigenous peoples. The extent to which these attitudes are the result of Latin American, Ecuadorian or indigenous culture is something that requires further analysis and that cannot be answered in the context of this investigation. This make us pose another question: *To what extent can sexism and violence against women be part of the culture of a particular group when it is a world historical phenomenon?* This question should serve as inspiration for further research.

At the same time, we acknowledge that other quantitative variables, such as poverty, literacy rate and alcohol consumption, should be taken into account. Indeed, indigenous peoples appear as the group with lowest literacy rate and highest poverty rate in Ecuador, which can help explain why sexism is still very present in their culture. Finally, to get a complex explanation of violence in Latin America, the violent history that characterizes the region and indigenous peoples, and whose fundamental ethos continues in the present, cannot be ignored. In fact, indigenous peoples have been excluded from society for centuries, which has led them to extreme poverty and slowed down their development in terms of education in human rights and gender equality.

CHAPTER 8: FEAR AND RESISTANCE

As we have previously explained in the introduction, when we first talked to Lineth we asked her which were the main concerns or issues she and her community were facing lately. Her response was very clear: “the problem that exists here, which is common to all peoples, is that violence against women continues to exist. And it is in every way: in politics, in the organization, in the community”[223]. She emphasized that the violence that she was referring to was not only physical and in the private space, but also psychological and in terms of political participation in indigenous organizations - in line with how we have come to define violence in this study. She wanted to make clear that although the oppression they face is unique because they are indigenous and sometimes doubly discriminated against, women in the Ecuadorian society suffer inequality too. Lineth explained that even when women are educated and have relevant studies, men are reluctant to give them space and power in indigenous political organizations. And this is because, she argued, women are still seen as only good for housework, an example of it being the making of chicha, a typical beverage of the Andes and Amazonia. According to the report “Rights of Indigenous Women: 25 years after the Beijing Declaration” made by the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC) and UN Women in 2021, “at the local level, the participation of indigenous women in political and community decisions is not actively promoted, which is reflected in the fact that the majority of indigenous authorities are men”[224].

As we have presented in “Chapter 9: Violence against women and indigenous culture”, violence is the outcome of cultural, historical and social factors that oppress women. In this chapter we will investigate the outcome of such violence. First, we will look into this by answering the question: *How is the role of women in politics impacted by violence?* In line with our relativistic theoretical framework and Latour’s ANT, we will start by mapping violence that impacts women’s political lives. This will be done in the first part, “10.1 Violence and politics”. Furthermore, we will do so in accordance with

[223] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

[224] https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20americas/documentos/publicaciones/2021/03/informeregionalmujeresindigenasderechos%20b25%20%20filac%20onumujerescomprimido.pdf?la=es&vs=1317

Foucault's take on genealogy that urges us to look for alternative sources of data, outside of the normative sources. Specifically, we will outline data from numerous interviews with Lineth as our main protagonist. In the second part, "10.2 Everyday fear and circumstantial silence", we apply a different perspective to the investigation by introducing the theoretical framework of *Everyday fear* developed by Linda Green. This will cast light on how fear as a product of violence impacts women's strategies in politics. In the third part of the chapter, "10.3 Non-violent resistance" we will present these strategies through the concept of non-violent resistance. The second and the third part of this chapter will simultaneously help answer the question: *How do women navigate violence in their private and public political space?*

8.1. Violence and politics

Lineth pointed out that when there is some space for women in politics, it is usually given to single women without children. She experienced first-person this discrimination by being discouraged from staying in politics after she gave birth to her children: "I have two small babies and people in the organization think that I do not have the strength to continue being in politics. They really think I have to stay home"[225]. In fact, UN Women states that when women achieve leadership positions, "they are singled out, stigmatized and their actions are constantly evaluated"[226] up to the point that some women, that want to be involved in politics, end up breaking their relationships with their families and never marry[227]. According to Lineth, it is common that women that are married and that consider the possibility of getting into politics are usually asked: "Why do you want to do politics? Why do you want to be with other men?"[228], to which she adds: "there are men who do not support you even to try. Then the women say 'I shouldn't, I can't, I don't want my husband to leave me'"[229]. Therefore, the reproductive role of women, gender roles and sexism constitute a great barrier for their involvement in politics:

[225] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

[226] Ibid.

[227] Mujeres indigenas, participacion politica y consulta, p. 4.

[228] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

[229] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

> ancestral customs and ideals have constructed processes of differentiation of the public and private sphere […]. And because the exercise of power and prestige are associated with the male, if the woman risks invading the public space, she runs the risk of becoming a public woman[230].

That risk, like many, inevitably leads to a concern that it will happen, in this case being seen as a public woman, for example. Because, according to Lineth, women are scared of what people might think and gossip about them, of *el qué dirán* (what will be said): "what will people say if my husband hits me, if my husband leaves me?"[231]. So it is not only about how they will be perceived by their husbands but also by their community. And this, according to Lineth, "does not help us at all, does not help a woman to empower herself"[232].

When talking about women fighting for their territory, and about women in general, Lineth expressed repeatedly "debemos sanar"[233] (we should heal). This was particularly revealing because, for us, it implied that even if indigenous women speak up, demonstrate and fight for indigenous rights, they cannot do it in the same manner that men can. Lineth argued that there are other barriers apart from the reticence of men to involve women in politics, such as the pain they suffer at home, "with our partners, with our children"[234]. She explained that "there is a lot of pain hidden at home", many fights and mistreatment that women hide from others. And an added problem to this they encounter, Lineth argued, is that there is no space for women to share their emotions, their feelings, their pain: "there is no space for me, bodily, emotionally"[235]. Because women have to pretend that nothing happens in order to please their husbands and keep a low profile. She stated: "In order to defend the territory, something we want to do, we women must be well, in good health, and for

[230] Coba, Bayon, 2020, p. 23.
[231] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth
[232] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth
[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid.
[235] Ibid.

this reason we have to make the community, the husbands and the leaders understand our situation and achieve equality”[236].

8.2. Everyday fear and circumstantial silence

But how do women navigate the violence and pain presented? What is it that indigenous women share in their private and public experiences? How can we understand the cautiousness through which indigenous women live their lives? We argue that indigenous women are distressed and operate in a constant state of cautiousness. Linda Green analyzes the situation of women in Guatemala through what she calls “everyday fear”[237]. In the recent past Guatemala has been affected by great massacres, ordinary torture and death. Nowadays, there is a widespread fear of rumors about death lists, of the possibility of being accused by your neighbor. This has caused women to experience fear not as a personal reaction to imminent danger, but as a chronic state. Linda Green tries “to capture a sense of the insecurity that permeates individual women’s lives wracked by worries of physical and emotional survival [...], of chronic fear”[238]. And ultimately, she asks herself what is at stake for these women. To answer it, she “examines the invisible violence of fear and intimidation through the quotidian experiences”[239]. Green presents the theory of everyday fear from a series of stories that she herself collected. Although her initial focus was not violence, she ends up concluding that the manifestations of violence and its consequences in the daily lives of women are key to understanding their daily lives. Green states that "fear became the metanarrative of my research [...] Fear is the reality in which people live, the hidden state of (individual and social) emergency that is factored into the choices women and men make"[240].

Green points out that “the people in Xe’caj live under constant surveillance [...] everyone’s movements come under close scrutiny”[241]. We argue that while women’s physical movements in indigenous communities in Ecuador might not be under

[236] Ibid.
[237] Green, 1994.
[238] Green, 1994, p. 228.
[239] Ibid, p. 227.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Green, 1994, p. 232.

constant surveillance, or at least full surveillance, their political actions are under close and constant scrutiny. Lineth insisted on how women are always analyzed when they work in politics, knowing that the least negative detail about their performance will be used against them; to "attack" them: "they look for 'why it shouldn't be her?' and that is political violence. And this is a way of attacking me"[242]. Women have traditionally taken care of the private spaces in almost all societies of the world, which provoked their actions and ways of behaving to be constantly evaluated (find quote to prove the point). What we see in the Ecuadorian context is that when it comes to women's participation in politics, there is a similar searching look and predisposition to find mistakes in women's professional behavior. What women do politically, therefore, it is conditioned by the certainty that it will be looked at in a more inquisitional way than if they were men. We argue that the certainty that their performance has to be close to perfect and that they cannot make any mistakes because they will be used against them has visible consequences in the Ecuadorian context. If we see it through the lenses of everyday fear, one could argue that women are in a constant state of alertness, of cautiousness, when it comes to expressing their opinions in their professional political setting.

According to Green's theory of everyday fear, "silence can operate as a survival strategy; yet silencing is a powerful mechanism of control enforced through fear"[243]. In fact, Lineth stated that women tend to stay quiet either because they think speaking up is sometimes useless and also for the fear of getting hit when they get home: "I sometimes try to take out their potential. Because they analyze, they know what is happening in the communities, and they think of smart solutions. But they do not say anything because their husbands do not allow them, because they are scared"[244]. While Green refers to silence when it comes to sharing information that can put them in danger and keeping a low profile, we argue that silence in the Ecuadorian context operates as a survival strategy both in the private and public space. Privately, because they are scared of the violence their partners can use against them; and publicly, because they think it is either useless (men will not listen) or dangerous (everything

[242] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

[243] Green, 1994, p. 239.

[244] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth

they say may be used to discredit them). And this exceptional state of affairs, we argue, becomes women's routine. Green states that "the routinization of terror is what fuel its power. Such routinization allows people to live in a chronic state of fear which a facade of normalcy, while that terror, at the same time, permeates and shred the social fabric"[245]. Indeed, if we use Green's everyday fear lenses, they way women interact with men is inevitably conditioned by terror. A terror that is so deep that it is sometimes unconscious and difficult to recognize:

> A sensitive and experienced Guatemalan economist noted that a major problem for social scientists working in Guatemala is that to survive they have to become inured to the violence, training themselves at first not to react, then later not to feel (see) it. They miss the context in which people live, including themselves. Self-censorship becomes second nature -Bentham's panopticon internalized[246].

In 2002, a law to encourage the inclusion of women in politics was passed, which compelled political parties to include 50% of women in electoral lists progressively[247]. In this regard, Lineth firmly stated that this has not been achieved of indigenous elections: "men in my organization want to quickly select a man so that there is no chance of a woman being elected"[248]. Lineth added when situations like this happen, "it is preferable to remain silent and handle the situation in another way"[249]. When we asked Lineth what she meant by "in another way" it was difficult for her to put it into words. Looking at the rest of conversations we had had with her, we assumed that even if *the other way* was not a clear idea in her mind, confronting the men in the organizations was definitely not *the way*. In fact, she mentioned that in the past she used to be much more confrontational with her colleagues, but that she realized that sometimes it is smarter to remain quiet and work internally. She added: "I am not going to argue with people that in the end will not understand what I am saying"[250]. On the

[245] Green, 1994, p. 231.
[246] Ibid.
[247] https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2002_res028-2002-tc_ecu.pdf
[248] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth
[249] Ibid.
[250] Ibid.

contrary, she would go to the communities and try to educate women about their rights. She implied that the *best way* was that women unite and work together to help each other, with women's collectives for example. Progressively, she claimed, women are becoming aware of their own capabilities and the capabilities of other women. And these groups are not only useful to raise awareness throughout women; they also function as safe places for women "to express their feelings, and especially their pain"[251]. Lineth insisted that when they get together "they are free to listen to each other [...] Because in groups with men they cannot do it, they are not allowed, because men are always the majority"[252]. We see silence as a strategy to avoid violence in some circumstances, because, according to Lineth, sometimes it is smarter to remain quiet. We suggest referring to it as circumstantial silence, because it is only activated when facing certain interlocutors and certain settings.

8.3. Non-violent resistance

One of the most important topics for indigenous politics is the protection of the territory and nature. Although there are women in indigenous political organizations, in most cases they are given power in matters of education or health, for example. Questions about territory, on the other hand, are always male-led. However, women also have ideas and a willingness to participate in this matter. Indeed, they have strong opinions on how the protection of the territory should be handled and what should be prioritized. Lineth asserted that while men are in many cases corrupted and easily manipulated by extractivist companies in exchange for money or alcohol, women are more transparent and faithful to nature. For women, in fact, it seems to come not only from a political conviction to protect their territory, but also from a connection and pure will to protect the nature that surrounds them. Lineth elaborated that, since men are the ones who should bring the money home, and the more money, the better quality of life –according to extractivist companies– men end up giving in. On the contrary, Lineth feels that women always prioritize nature above all else, because that is where we get our food from, and that food is what we give to our children.

[251] Ibid.
[252] Ibid.

In October 2013, women leaders of indigenous organizations from all over the country undertook a march to Quito to protest against oil expansion and the threat that this poses to their ways of life. Its objective was to deliver the Kawsak Sacha or Living Forest Mandate to the President of the Republic, which explains the way in which indigenous people, and in particular women, understand life and its fusion with nature. As we have presented, women are responsible for the care and feeding of their families. Therefore, it is the women who mainly have knowledge about crops and plants, which in turn makes them see, they argue, the consequences of oil exploitation on their lives more clearly. The women who marched towards the capital, mostly of Ichwa, Sápara, Waorani, Shiwiar, Shuar and Achuar nationality, had few economic resources. However, with the help of people they met along the way who housed them and helped them financially, indigenous women reached Quito.

The authors highlight in her research that women's political strategies have to "overcome sexist relations in homes, communities and indigenous organizations, as well as against the State and extractive companies"[253]. In fact, the authors argue that being a female leader "implies being strong to confront different scenarios of violence, both in the intimate territory of the home, and in public intimacy in community assemblies and federations, as well as in front of the State and corporate actors"[254]. Therefore, they have to overcome the violence that they encounter on a daily basis and, as we understand it, the everyday fear, when they mobilize and act politically. This means that everyday fear can limit indigenous women's political strategies but not eliminate them. In fact, there have been many women's mobilizations since the early nineties. One of the most relevant was in 2018, when a group of indigenous women from the Amazon obtained an audience with the president of the republic to demand an investigation about the gender and sexual violence that exists in the country.

We have seen that women share their opinions, they mobilize and they demand changes in a non-confrontative way. We could therefore understand indigenous women's mobilizations as an expression of non-violent resistance, "which has been

[253] Coba, Bayón, 2020, p. 145.
[254] Ibid.

proven to be a very strategic tool in the hands of marginalized communities to redress structural imbalance and claim rights to justice"[255]. Indeed, Lineth expresses that when they face situations of injustice inside political organizations, "it is preferable to remain silent and handle the situation in *another way*"[256]. There is therefore an aim of resisting that violence in an active way. In fact, nonviolent resistance requires an active "engagement in resisting oppression, domination and any other forms of violence"[257], which applies to physical and structural violence. Furthermore, the pragmatic school of nonviolent action argues that nonviolent resistance has been historically chosen by its protagonists because it was the most useful and available strategy to fight against a particular opponent, and not because of an internal commitment against the use of violence[258].

8.4. Navigating violence

We argue that the way indigenous women in Ecuador navigate violence can be seen through the lenses of everyday fear. More specifically, we see circumstantial silence as the main and most practical strategy to navigate their societies. A focus on violence is therefore a useful tool to approach and grasp the multidimensional and complex reality of women in the indigenous private and public space. In a context where women's political perspectives are silenced and gender inequality minimized, there have been many female mobilizations at a national level in the past decades. Therefore, although we can look at indigenous women from a perspective focused on violence and power relations, we should be careful not to silence their resistance towards it. A resistance that cannot only be understood as fighting against their oppression and standing up for their rights in a non-violent way. Resistance is also how indigenous women oppose the perception of them as vulnerable to violence, and act as agents who fight for the defense of their territory with unique resources.

[255] Dudouet, 2004, p. 240.
[256] Annex: 12.1. Interviews with Lineth
[257] Dudouet, 2004, p. 240.
[258] Ibid, p. 243.

CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION

The aim of the discussion is to discuss the findings in the three analysis chapters. By arguing their potential, strengths and shortcomings, we ask ourselves what other approaches could enlighten the blindspots of the chosen methodological and theoretical approach. What new knowledge does our research contribute? We then discuss what further analysis could be conducted building on this paper.

When we began this research, our focus was on the active participation of women in indigenous politics. However, we chose Participatory Research as our main methodological framework as we wanted our research to contribute positively to the needs of the women we were about to put at the center of the research. While there are many strengths to PR, a critique is that it tends to be advocating in its approach and conclusion. This critique, we would argue, holds as an assumption that research and research methods are culture free. We argue that this could never be the case. The position of the researcher matters, and to not take this into consideration would be a weakness of any research. In this study we do not claim nor believe that our research, methods and approach is culture free. We strive for objectivity, for the ability to take a step back and get an academic overview of a case, while realizing that we will never fully achieve objectivity. That is why, when Lineth asked us to focus on the violence above all else, we inevitably left out other aspects. The fact that the three analytical chapters have attempted to elucidate the intersection between the violence that indigenous women suffer and their political participation has certainly been revealing in order to understand that they are not separate spheres but have been and are interrelated. A violence that, moreover, has been shown to be multidimensional and complex, something that we believe has not been analyzed in depth in the literature reviewed, especially in relation to the invisible consequences of such violence in the daily lives of indigenous women. Our analysis has functioned as an anthropological investigation in some cases, giving great relevance to the primary data we obtained from Lineth. Indeed, our analysis has contributed to demonstrate the initial hypothesis that we obtained from Lineth: that the political participation of indigenous women cannot be understood or analyzed without thoroughly addressing and looking at different aspects of violence against women.

In turn, the intersectional approach has allowed us to examine more dimensions to the oppression that indigenous women experience as a result of being women and indigenous at the same time. However, this approach runs the risk of revictimizing indigenous women by applying theories such as "bare life" and "everyday fear". Despite the fact that we presented women as active agents during much of the work, delving into power relations, violence and oppression, which in this case is unidirectional, runs the risk of ending up suggesting a hegemonic perspective based on an aggressor-victim opposition. In this sense, we are aware that this work has not taken into account data from one of the main co-actors in this matter: indigenous men. That is, therefore, a clear limitation of our analysis that would add more complexity to the matter, challenging perspectives that homogeneize men. It was actually Lineth who stressed many times that men should be part of the conversation in order to deconstruct stereotypes that affect both women and men negatively. In our analysis, we also find that men are essential for this exactly. As a result, this study is unable to say anything on indigenous men's experience on the matter. What it does offer, on the contrary, is an in depth understanding of how women navigate violence in the indigenous political arena.

One of the events that motivated us to carry out this research was the impact that indigenous women are having on social networks. They not only have a very strong presence in the public image of the indigenous movement at the international level, but they are also creating unique strategies for the protection of nature and the fight against extractivism and for their rights. It seems that social networks are becoming, not a safe space, but a safer space for women to share their political demands. Our assumption is not that this sphere is violence free, but that the violence works in a different way - not least in a less physical way. Simultaneously, this also accommodates other gatekeepers to women's full and equal participation in politics. Considering the disproportionate extra hours women spend on work (paid and unpaid) compared to men, every minute matters, being on social media requires access to the internet and access to a device capable of connecting to the internet. But it does not require a car or a transportation time. Navigating the political sphere on social media can also be done in a way that aligns more with the stereotypical perception of indigenous women. The storytelling on social media often takes on an autobiographical form, one less immediately aggressive than the political language in

other arenas. Arguing that indigenous women can use stereotypes strategically to support their cause, the use of social media can be considered another strategy. And it seems to be effective. The use of social networks can be seen as a strategy to obtain international attention, specifically that of feminist movements and for the defense of the environment. In fact, Latin American indigenous women got a lot of attention at COP26. Therefore, the use of social networks can be seen as a political strategy with great impact on top of the ones we have already presented throughout the research. The extent to which these virtual spaces can be safer than the physical reality requires further analysis and, we would argue, more years of social media use.

On the other hand, and as we explained in the introduction, we were motivated by the fact that organizations such as CONAIE portray indigenous women as such important actors in indigenous politics, when, as we have demonstrated in this work, this is not a reality. We suggest that the reason has to do with both national and international pressure to fight against violence against women and equality, as well as the international success that the political action of indigenous women is having through social media. Therefore, we suggest that, in further investigations, the dissonance between the participation of women in politics and the framing of the same women by organizations such as CONAIE is investigated.

On the other hand, in this work we have presented how the rights of women and the fight to prevent violence against them is not a priority for the dominating institutionalized indigenous politics in Amazonian Ecuador. Today, that may carry the risk that both indigenous politics and other powers like indigenous justice will be seen as underdeveloped according to Western human rights frameworks and understandings of justice. It is important to understand that all political agendas follow certain interests and are influenced, at times, by major powers that are difficult to elucidate. In this case, the power that the oil companies have in indigenous politics and over the men who are part of it, as Lineth and other women emphasize, is something difficult to prove and that has not been analyzed in this work. In the first chapter we suggest that the struggle of indigenous women is, due to its tenacity, dangerous both for the Ecuadorian state and for the oil companies in the sense that it challenges the status quo. Therefore, it must be taken into account that the indigenous political agenda is not, and has not been, only the product of politicians' will, something

we recognize in most societies of the world. Other actors such as the private sector and other (national and international) governments have a strong influence in directing political action. We suggest this is also investigated in further investigations.

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this work was to analyze the multidimensionality of the violence that indigenous women are subjected to and the consequences that this has for their political participation.

In chapter 6: “Perception and Strategies”, we showed how violence historically has been a great part of indigenous women’s lives. They are subjected to it by virtue of being indigenous and by virtue of their gender. While the institutional indigenous politics recognize the first violation and dominantly builds its political focus based on this, organizations like CONAIE fail to recognize the other. This is not without consequences, as deeply rooted gender roles and stereotypes limit indigenous women’s space to act and strongly impact how they are perceived, which, to some extent, is irrelevant in political arenas. We have suggested that under the right conditions, this will form a vicious limiting circle for women's participation in politics. One that cannot efficiently be broken by indigenous women alone in its extreme consequence. For those who have some space to act politically, like Lineth, strategies have been developed to accommodate the gatekeepers to women’s participation. In our analysis, we introduced taking advantage of stereotypes as an effective strategy for women in decision-making processes, in this case through positioning and framing themselves as the protectors of nature. Though it is a strategy, it is not one without consequences due to what it prescribes. The negative consequences of stereotyping furthermore impact the women disproportionately more than men, making the individual woman question their agency in politics. To some extent it becomes a question of being able to decide on one's own life.

In chapter 7: “Violence against Women and Indigenous Culture”, we analyzed violence against women from a perspective focused on culture and other structural social and historical factors. We challenged the statements of both Lineth, who affirmed that violence against women had nothing to do with indigenous culture, and Neapolitan, who defends that the high rates of violence in Latin America are due to a specific regional subculture based on *machismo*. As we presented, culture can be defined as the knowledge behind people’s behavior, which includes *actions* and *reactions*. In this

chapter we focused on the violent *actions* that more than half of indigenous women claim to have suffered. We also looked at the *reactions* of women's families and indigenous justice, both *reacting* to gender violence with little severity. We argued that when a kind of behavior is normalized, in this case violence against women, means that it is part of a shared knowledge, of a shared culture, which makes it difficult to stop if there is no radical change. Only if indigenous peoples recognize violence against women and inequality as an urgent issue, which starts by punishing violence outright, women will be able to exercise their political rights. Regarding the importance of sentencing violence, Hannah Arendt argues that forgiveness cannot take place without accountability

> because it undermines the formation of democracy by obviating any hope of justice and makes its pursuit pointless. [...] While recognizing that forgiveness is an essential element for freedom, Arendt contends that 'the alternative to forgiveness, but by no means its opposite, -which, she argues, rather, is vengeance punishment, and both have in common that they attempt to put an end to something that without interference could go on endlessly'[259].

It has been presented that other structural elements such as poverty and literacy rate, which are historically mediated, are important to understand sexism and violence against women in indigenous societies. What is important, we argue, is that culture and structural elements are interconnected. They should not be understood only as a sum of factors that generate the perfect storm for violence against women to occur; the elements that we have presented are so strong that they reinforce each other forming a vicous spiral of violence. This chapter made us pose a very interesting question: *To what extent can sexism and violence against women be part of the culture of a particular group when it is a world historical phenomenon?* In turn, we ask: *To what extent can sexism and violence against women be explained through the history and structural characteristics of a particular group when it is globally present in all stratums of society?*

[259] Coba, Bayón, 2020, p. 150.

In chapter 8: Fear and Resistance", we recognized the way in which indigenous women navigate violence can be seen through everyday fear. Indeed, their actions are determined as well as limited by fear, by *el qué dirán* (what it will be said) and by the possible retaliations by their husbands. There is a fear that choosing public life may exclude you from having a private life. Therefore, silence, or as we suggested, circumstantial silence, appears as a useful strategy to navigate violence in the private and public spaces of their communities. Despite violence and the oppression to which they are subjected to, indigenous women resist violence actively and not violently. Not in the sense that they survive it, but in the sense that they fight against it banding together and with unique resources.

As we take notice, indigenous women face two interrelated tasks. One, by understanding the implications of external perception of the women, is to make the argument that their political inclusion and their demands to urgently focus on eliminating violence against women do *not* counter the two pillars in indigenous politics: protection of the territory and indigenous peoples' rights. The other task is to demonstrate that in order for the pillars in indigenous politics to be respected and protected in the best possible way, women's demands on inclusion and the elimination of violence against violence is vital.

To achieve this, indigenous women use different strategies. Strategies are, in the way we understand the concept[260], a ploy and something dynamic that women use in different ways depending on the specific context, taking the form of something organic. What we argue is that women use strategies as the result of an understanding of how they are perceived and how this perception may affect their political participation. To navigate violence, indigenous women know how to present themselves, when to be silent, where to speak, and what to say in order to get involved in politics. Strategies are not a product of change, rather, they are rooted in stability. It is precisely this paradox of dynamic and organic strategies that can destabilize the normal state of affairs *only* to a certain extent that makes women's strategies a sign of political sensitivity and intelligence.

[260] See section 1.3.2. Strategy

CHAPTER 11: BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acosta, A. (2013). *Extractivism and Neoextractivism: Two sides of the same curse.*

Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo Sacer: El poder soberano y la nuda vida*. Valencia: Pre-Textos.

Andrews, T. (2012), "What is Social Constructivism", *The Grounded Theory Review*, 11:1-39.

Ayala Mora, E. (2008). *Resumen de historia del Ecuador.* Quito: Corporación Editora Nacional.

Bem, S. L. (1974). The measurement of psychological androgyny. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 42*: 155–162.

Bowman, B. (2007). Foucault's 'philosophy of the event': Genealogical Method and the Deployment of the Abnormal. In: Foucault, Psychology and the Analytics of Power. Critical Theory and Practice in Psychology and the Human Sciences. Palgrave Macmillan, London. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230592322_5

Bidaseca, K., Vázquez Laba, V. (2011). *Feminismos y poscolonialidad: Descolonizando el feminismo desde y en América Latina*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Godot.

Cargo, M., Mercer, S.L. (2008). "The Value and Challenges of Participatory Research: Strengthening Its Practice", *The Annual Review of Public Health,* 29: 325-50.

Coba, L., Bayón, M. (2020). "Kawsak Sacha: la organización de las mujeres y la traducción política de la selva amazónica en el Ecuador" in *Cuerpos, Territorios y Feminismos: Compilación latinoamericana de teorías, metodologías y prácticas políticas*. Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 141-159.

Czarniawska, B. (2006). Bruno Latour: Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory. Organization Studies. 27: 1553-1557.

Davis, K. (2008). “Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful”, *Feminist Theory*, 9: 67-85.

De La Durantaye, L. (2009). *Giorgio Agamben. A Critical Introduction.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Chon, DS. (2011). “Contributing Factors for High Homicide Rate in Latin America: A Critical Test of Neapolitan’s Regional Subculture of Violence Thesis”, *J Fam Viol*, 26: 299-307.

Dudouet, V. (2004). “Nonviolent Resistance in Power Asymmetries”. In: Austin, Beatrix ; Fischer, Martina ; Giessmann, Hans J., *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation* [2004] Berlin, Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management, 2011, 237-264

Eagly, A., Wood, W., & Diekman, A. B. (2000). “Social role theory of sex differences and similarities: A current appraisal”. In T. Eckes & H. M. Trautner (Eds.), *The developmental social psychology of gender* (pp. 123–174). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Espinosa Miñoso, Y., Gómez Correal, D., Ochoa Muñoz, K. (Eds) (2014). “La espiritualidad de las mujeres indígenas mesoamericanas: descolonizando las creencias religiosas”. In *Tejiendo de otro modo: Feminismo, epistemología y apuestas descoloniales en Abya Yala* (pp. 143-159). Popayán: Editorial Universidad del Cauca.

Foucault, M. (2003). The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential works of Foucault, 1954-1984. New York, NY: The New Press. p. 306. ISBN 978-1-56584-801-6.: https://doi.org/10.22439/fs.v0i1.573

Green, L. (1994). “Fear as a Way of Life”. *Cultural Anthropology*. 9-2: 227-256.

Gündogdu, A (2013). “Potentialities of Second Nature: Agamben on Human Rights”. *Second Nature: Rethinking the Natural through*. Edited by Archer, C., Ephraim, L. and Maxwell, L. New York: Fordham University Press.

Haynes, C. *et al.* (2020). “Toward an Understanding of Intersectionality Methodology: A 30-Year Literature Synthesis of Black Women’s Experiences in Higher Education”. 90-6: 751-787.

Hartnagel, T. F. (1980). “Subculture of Violence: Further Evidence”, *The Pacific Sociological Review*, 23-2: 217-242.

Hegarty, P. (2010). “Giorgio Agamben (1942–)”. *From Agamben to Zizek*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Hentschel, Tanja and Heilman, Madeline E. and Peus, Claudia V., 2019. “The Multiple Dimensions of Gender Stereotypes: A Current Look at Men’s and Women’s Characterizations of Others and Themselves”, Frontiers in Psychology

Hill Collins, P., Bilge, S. (2020). *Intersectionality*. New York: Wiley.

Justo, M. (2020). “Violence against women and justice from women in the Amazon”, *Revista de Derecho*, 34: 85-102.

Latour, B, (2005), *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor–Network Theory*. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Laurel, S. (2008). “Intersectionality”. in *Politics, Gender, and Concepts: Theory and Methodology*. Goertz, G., Mazur A. (Eds). New York: Cambridge University Press. 193-218.

Lind, A. (2003). “Gender and Neoliberal States: Feminists Remake the Nation in Ecuador,” Latin American Perspectives.

Lynggaard, K., “*Dokumentanalyse*”, Kvalitative Metoder, Brinkmann & Tanggaard, Hans Reitzels Forlag, vol. 2, 2015

Marra, Illes. (2021). “Establishing a comprehensive search strategy for Indigenous health literature reviews,” PMCID: PMC8056629, doi: 10.1186/s13643-021-01664-y

Marcela, A., Mena, M. (2017). *Una mirada al feminismo decolonial en América Latina*. Madrid: Editorial Dykinson.

Mintzberg, H. *et al.* (2003). *The Strategy Process: Concepts, contexts, cases.* Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Rabinow, P., Rose, N. (eds.) (2003). *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, New York: New Press.

Pacari, N. (2002). *The Political Participation of Indigenous Women in the Ecuadorian Congress: Unfinished Business.* International IDEA, 2002, Women in Parliament, Stockholm.

Salgado, J. (2012). “El reto de la igualdad: género y justicia indígena” in *Justicia indígena, plurinacionalidad e interculturalidad en Ecuador*.

Salgado Álvarez, J. (2009). “Violencia contra las mujeres indígenas: entre las justicias y la desprotección. Posibilidades de interculturalidad en Ecuador”, *Revista electrónica Aportes Andinos*, 25: 1-14.

Santos, S., Grijalva Jiménez, A. La Paz-Bolivia: Ediciones Abya Yala, pp. 243-278.

Silverio Chisaguano M. “Las mujeres indígenas del Ecuador: Condiciones de educación y uso de la lengua en el acceso al empleo”, INEC.

Smith, L.T. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, London: Zed Books.

Teran, M. Y. (2016). The Nagoya Protocol and Indigenous Peoples. The International Indigenous Policy Journal, 7:2.

https://www.goraymi.com/es-ec/ecuador/historias/historia-ecuador-a2rmy00r8

https://www.culturaypatrimonio.gob.ec/los-incas-en-el-ecuador-1460-1532-d-c/

https://westobserver.com/news/europe/what-is-conaie-and-what-are-its-10-claims-in-ecuador/

UN Decleration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Article 1: https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N94/095/05/PDF/N9409505.pdf?OpenElement

The Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence: https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/documentAccessError.jsp?url=https://rm.coe.int:443/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/sso/SSODisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016800d383a

A Genealogy of 'Globalization': The Career of a Concept: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14747731.2014.951186

12. ANNEX

12.1. Interviews with Lineth

- **Meeting 15/06/2022**

Do you want me to tell you what I would like you to study? The problem that exists here, which is common to all peoples, is that violence against women continues to exist. And it is in every way: in politics, in the organization, in the community. Many times they want to attack the community saying that this has to do with culture. But in no way we have a culture of violence against women, it hasn't to do with that.

We are currently nearing the end of our council. It was supposed to end in May, but it will probably last until December. I would very much like to focus on that topic. I would like to enter the communities, although for that I need a lot of financial support. I would like to go to socialize rights issues. I see all the groups here in the city where the organization is.

Women are empowering themselves as long as they are among women. That is why I would like to set up a workshop that men also attend, because it is the men who must listen to the needs of women, when it is violence against women. It's always between women. Women, women and women. At what point do men listen and reflect? And every time women come from the communities to participate in a women's meeting, they always think that it is not necessary. I would like them to listen. I want to do that in the communities. But there are no resources. And violence is not only mistreatment, beatings, but rather psychological, in the form of participation in politics, etc. And not only in indigenous communities. Men keep saying that women, even though they have studies, even though they have experience in other sectors, are wary of giving way to women. That is very worrying to me. That women let go, that they be liberal, that they express their feelings, their concerns, their pain, what they feel in their needs.

Women are seen as only good for the type of projects like creating chicha. In order to defend the territory, we women must be well, in good health, and for this reason we have to make the community, the husbands, the leaders understand our situation and achieve equality. Because we are always there. We really want to defend our territory but we suffer pain at home, with our partner, with our children. We must heal.

I'll see how I can get help. Many times help arrives but it is not focused on projects for women, it goes to other projects.

The government focuses on hiding the participation of women. It is in the government's interest to focus on male leaders and weaken female defenders, that is how I see it.

So that ideas reach men to delegitimize the participation of women. It is not being made visible that the leading men are signing agreements in favor of the sale of territories for money. Here in the organizations they even put ideas against me, saying that I am a simple activist who shouts, who does not have clear proposals, who shouts now and leaves. But I do not consider that mine is only activism. Now the women in the south are being beaten, mistreated, so that the government does not extract resources that for us are goods. In that sense I felt weak. I am discouraged because I don't have the support of some women who are being led by men. The defense of the territory has to be from the heart, not for money.

I would like to find a project to look for alternatives. We women can work in defense of the territory. We can generate an economy, for example exchanging, etc. And that way of life is being lost. I don't even have resources for my transportation. The resources that arrive are to brainwash each president. I would like to manage some funds directly and not have male intermediaries, who do not understand the needs of women. Leaders are always men. I like women to be in politics, I always give them my support and encouragement. They don't give spaces. The woman still has to take care of the children, etc. They cannot afford to go to conventions, etc. And that is psychological abuse. That stalls us.

It is said that at conventions it is always 50% men and 50% women, but that is a lie. At the end of May the candidacy had to be defined, but that will last until December. The political men in my organization want to quickly select a man so that there is no chance of a woman being elected. It is preferable to remain silent and handle the situation in another way. So I think it would be interesting to analyze the indigenous policy in the province or at the level of the Amazon as well.

I think I can find the democratic code resolution saying that 30% should be women. It would be an achievement if the majority were women. If there is a male president, the vice-presidency must be for a woman. And then we have the woman's rule (diligence). But who says that a woman cannot be a leader of education, or of territory, youth, health. We women have to enter those spaces, even in the presidency. I would like you to do a great analysis of those elections.

- **Meeting 23/06/2022**

Many times we women go out pretending that nothing is happening, but because the men threaten us so that we don't talk. Bullying, that exists and continues to exist. There is a fear. Also a fear of divorcing because of what people will say. And that mistreatment is not cultural.

I have two small babies and people think that I don't have the strength to continue being in politics. They think I have to stay home. Only women without children and

single women have some option, but still they do not give them enough space, they use it to benefit themselves.

This week I will finish a topic on indigenous justice and focus on who can help me with the topic of workshops for women. Perhaps you could help me follow up, so that you would come to the exhibitions to help me and give ideas in the workshops that I plan to do. People are already wondering where I am, and after this break I want to go back to work and start with this project.

- **Meeting 07/07/2022**

I think that intelligently sometimes it is better to remain silent and work internally. work together I am not going to continue arguing with people who are not going to understand me. I have actually been too impulsive, but now I have slowed down a bit. for example precisely with the women's groups, uniting. There are many cases of femicide happening here in Ecuador, and that hurts me. we are women who have been in the struggle. We have to work a lot. You have to go to the communities and teach the women about their rights. and the mestizo companions are suffering that too. What will become of my sisters who are in the communities when they go out to the city? We have to work a lot. The candidate has promised me that I am going to focus on women's issues.

there is violence against women because the mind is still that men are the ones who have to lead in the patriarchy, they are the ones who must govern. Gradually women are becoming aware. we ourselves are not valuing the capacity that we have, that the compañeras have. we are used to and do not value other women.

In these decision-making, if someone wants to have the ability to govern, they will not accept it, because their husband will not accept it. we speak of a good home, a good family. for them the fact of separating is very important. Enduring blows, everything that mistreats a human being. They say: no no I don't want problems. and there is a lot of hidden pain and wanting to pretend that it is okay. and the fact that there is no space for women to express what they feel, space for me, bodily, emotionally. that space is useless if I have to serve my husband and appear to be well all day. and husbands must understand that the woman has capacity and that she must help each other. understand, support, share tasks. there is a lot of pain that is not being made visible, that is hidden. There's no space. attending, cooking, making chicha. that is being a good woman, that is in the minds of the people of the communities. Husbands must understand that between couples they can support each other, they can share tasks.

There are no women leaders of a community. they are all men. The worst thing is that among women we don't support each other, as they are going to support us.

Why do you want to be in politics? Why do you want to be with other men? that does not help a woman to empower herself, it does not help us at all. there are men who do not support you even to try. then the women say I shouldn't, I can't, I don't want my husband to leave me.

afraid that people will say if my husband leaves me, if my husband hits me? What they will say silences many women.

and I sometimes try to get the potential out of them. because they analyze, they know what is happening in the community and they think of solutions. but they can't because the husband won't let them. if they were allowed, it would be seen that women are very capable of leading a community.

- **Meeting 8/07/2022**

I have been criticized a lot on social networks, and I am sure that if it had been a man nothing would have happened. Because there's nothing wrong with giving up. I am listening to other women in other sectors, women are always being analyzed, how negative she is. seeing the least negative to attack. they look for "why it shouldn't be her" and that is political violence. very internally they are attacking me.

It is important to use social networks. so that people understand who we are in the line of defense. to tell what is happening, to talk about our rights. Lately I haven't shared many things because I don't want more attacks than those that have already been done to me. when I publish the resignation, delete all the messages I received. They were all men who criticized me, and they did it because I have always said what they did. and the person who most strongly criticized me was the one who negotiated and accepted a deal with the oil companies. In the networks, by whataspp they also attacked me a lot. there were many ways they attacked me, and i felt really finished. I think violence on social media is the same as in real life. in fact sometimes they tell me what they really want to tell me. I block, I eliminate, because it doesn't help me to advance with the fight.

in the demonstrations of women in terms of rights. I have always thought that neither men nor women are more or less, we are complementary. My partner, thank God, understands it to a certain extent. For example, they call my husband mandarin, and then he says that I am a great man, a macho, and I am not going to allow them to laugh at me. there are words that he doesn't want to say but sometimes they come out.

women are a little more transparent, sincere. We make a separate group because men are very easily convinced by the exchange of money, of liquor, and they think that with the money they will be able to lead their family to have a better quality of life (as

the extractivists say). but we women feel that we should prioritize nature because there we have our farm, food. and we need to generate food for our children.

when single women get together we express all the pain. We are free to listen to each other. while in groups of men we are not going to achieve that, and they are not going to let us speak. because they are always the majority.

- **Meeting 09/07/2022**

Before, I was with the vice president of the Kichwa nationality of Pastaza.

If I resign that position because I have already served the time for which I was elected. But the assembly was extending more time for that leadership and I could no longer stand in the city without pay... I was thinking of going to live in the jungle... with my partner who was also a leader of his organization and he was ended in leadership time...

That's why I was presenting my resignation... even though I also had the proposal of a political movement. But I wasn't sure I would accept. But my son and my husband encouraged me to accept the candidacy for the vice prefecture of Pastaza. And he had more positive reasons to accept... the young political scientist always worked together with nationalities in territorial defenses. And because of that acceptance I had many attacks of political violence.

Because there is a partisan political movement that represents the peoples and nationalities itself, it has a very good philosophy of not stealing, not lying and not being hateful. But today that movement has become like other political parties and considered that there is no difference.

Therefore, I have accepted the candidacy for the vice-prefecture of a new movement in the province, those of us who believe that the new generations can make the real change... we can make a different policy.

But why do those from the pachakutik political party attack me... I have simply always been a good defensive supporter of pachakutik, but today I realized that those who lead that movement there are very macho, it has the same structure patriarchy.....and they do and undo to the liking of the leaders...of those who are at the head of that political organization and I do not share I am loyal to my principles. Ppr that...they judge me...but they can't do anything because I tell the truth.

The organization I was in supports that political party...and they participate in that corruption...and they sell jobs. I do not share that.

- **Meeting 10/07/2022**

My partner was a leader and his period ended. I also wanted to quit. The president has lawsuits, etc. and the only way that they do not condemn him is that he continues in the leadership. and I wanted a work team which did not exist. Having love for people, for communities, is not enough. because I wanted a team. and the people working have personal interests, with the oil companies, and I am the only one who is raising my voice. They do not have the conscience to protect the forest. they talk, they talk a lot, but they have no real conscience.

I had a call from a young man, a candidate who has real dreams of making the change. My idea is to support him, because he wants to be transparent.

What is politics to you? Know how to lead, help people. Know the needs of people, interact, try to help. support us and serve the people. I have helped as little as I could. you cannot cover the sun with a finger: workshops are needed, talk is needed, talk about a community economy. go sowing, sensitizing people. It's difficult but not impossible. the mind of nationalities is colonialized. For me the policy is to help. work in the territory, in social projects.

Right now I have experienced a lot of political violence. At the time of resigning, very intense in the networks, I said that I was saying goodbye to the organization, but that I would continue supporting the peoples and nationalities, fighting for rights, I am simply leaving with a movement. They said, look at her, the vice president betrayed us. and for me it is not betrayal, it is the opposite. because I will continue fighting for the rights of nature, and treason would be to give in to the oil companies. I am loyal to my principles, I like to be transparent. the communities are submissive listening to the presidents, and I don't play that. I am not good at accepting bribes, money, in exchange for saying certain things. Although they offer me thousands of money, I remain firm in my fight. what they are doing is treason. I rather leave because they have offered me another space. I think we should have spaces and help people.

They supposedly didn't want to accept my resignation, not because they really didn't want me to resign, but because they immediately knew that I was already accepting the candidacy for a movement. That I left the organization was a joy for them because I always confronted them. there are two compañeras who recently entered but they entered with a political idea, rather than to represent the people. I felt very alone, because instead of meeting among women, they joined the corrupt, the usual, those who manipulate. when they came in they belittled me, because they are professionals, engineers, etc, and said that I was not a professional, saying that they were more experienced. and men always need to put me in my way because what I do is put me in theirs. Now on social networks they criticize me for having resigned, but people don't analyze why I've left, what's behind it. The two women in the organization consider that I am their enemy, and that hurt me much more, because they were the ones who

were in charge of making my life impossible and not letting me resign so that I would not go to another movement. and people know it, that they didn't want me there, but they didn't want me to go anywhere, much less to a political movement, with a young boy who really wants to change things. They criticized me a lot, they wanted people to think that I had given up, that I would be left alone, that I only had my family… I was very bad, very depressed, I felt alone, totally finished. but I said: no, my fight must continue. I believe that people should know that we must change. that we must work with transparency, and they did not do it there.

although many mestizo people, which is where the candidate comes from, are racist against me and do not want the candidate to support me. there is a lot of racism too. I have lived and overcome racism since I was 13 years old when I went to live in the city. interculturality is important. He always says that I am a representative of the nationalities and I deserve respect.