ARTÍCULOS

Temporalities in Friction: Planning and Temporal Violence in the Ecuadorian Amazon

Temporalidades en Fricción: Planificación y Violencia Temporal en la Amazonía Ecuatoriana

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Abstract: In the light of global challenges like climate change, the energy transition, and biodiversity loss, the possibility of a future 'otherwise' seems to shrink. The Amazon denominated "the lungs of the Earth" is a focal point in these discussions as its future is not just important to the (Indigenous) people who live there, but to humanity itself. As the past and the present of the Amazon are rather marked by violent encounters and an intensification of extractive endeavors, this article considers how these violent structures persist across time, but also how they can be broken up and transformed. Therefore, the concept of "temporal violence" is introduced, on the one hand, to grasp the enduring structures of violence that creep into future timespaces through (state) planning, and, on the other hand, to underline that this violence is just one possible future out of a multiplicity of futures – it potentially can be temporary. Merging the anthropological insights of the experiences of Indigenous grassroots organizations in planning their futures with critical futures studies, this article explores the possibilities of alternative futures to materialize. To this end, planning as a mechanism of power with both violent and subversive qualities is discussed. The central inquiry raised by this article is, hence, how planning can be an instrument for decolonization, challenging and altering relations of violence.

Keywords: amazon, extractivism, futures studies, indigenous planning, structural violence, slow violence.

Resumen: A la vista de retos globales como el cambio climático, la transición energética y la pérdida de biodiversidad, la posibilidad de un futuro "otro" parece reducirse. La Amazonía, denominada "el pulmón de la Tierra", es un punto central en estos debates, ya que su futuro no sólo es importante para los pueblos Indígenas que la habitan, sino para la propia humanidad. Dado que el pasado y el presente de la Amazonía están marcados por encuentros violentos y una intensificación de las actividades extractivas, este artículo analiza cómo persisten estas estructuras violentas a lo largo del tiempo, pero también cómo pueden romperse y transformarse. Por lo tanto, se introduce el concepto de "violencia temporal", por un lado, para captar las estructuras duraderas de violencia que se arrastran hacia los espacios temporales futuros a través de la planificación (estatal) y, por otro lado, para subrayar que esta violencia es sólo un futuro posible de una multiplicidad de futuros: potencialmente

puede ser temporal. Fusionando las percepciones antropológicas de las experiencias de las organizaciones Indígenas de base en la planificación de sus futuros con futurología crítica, este artículo explora las posibilidades de que se materialicen futuros alternativos. Para ello, se analiza la planificación como mecanismo de poder con cualidades tanto violentas como subversivas. La cuestión central que se plantea es, por tanto, cómo la planificación puede ser un instrumento para la descolonización, desafiando y alterando las relaciones de violencia.

Palabras clave: amazonía, extractivismo, futurología, planificación indígena, violencia estructural, violencia lenta.

INTRODUCTION

In the light of global challenges like climate change, the energy transition, and biodiversity loss, the possibility of a future ‘otherwise’ (Povinelli, 2012) seems to shrink. The Amazon denominated “the lungs of the Earth” is a focal point in these discussions as its future is not just important to the (Indigenous) people who live there, but to the planet itself. As the past and the present of the Amazon are rather marked by violent encounters and an intensification of extractive endeavors, it is even more interesting to consider how these violent structures can be broken up and transformed.

In a transition towards a post-oil future, Ecuador faces major challenges. Since the 1960s when Ecuador has started to drill commercially for oil in the Amazon, the country has become ‘petrolized’ (Karl, 1997). For the urban middle classes, the dream of ‘modernization’ and ‘progress’ came true during the first oil boom (Alarcón, 2020), while rural, Indigenous, peasant and Black populations were rather excluded from the developmental promise that oil was holding. This is not surprising, as previous colonization of and violence against these groups have paved the way for current extractivisms. The Amazon had been previously included in the global economy through the extraction of rubber and cinchona; this integration has then exponentially increased over the last 50 years through oil extraction. The extensive road network, a growing population, accelerating deforestation and a more agricultural land use bear witness to these developments.

Ecuador has transformed into a “petrostate” (Lu et al., 2017). Whether progressive or right-wing governments are in power, oil is the backbone of the state revenues and has created a dependency on oil rates. The “rentier state” (Peters, 2019) falls into the illusion of a long-term extractivist development model. However, this pathway is very crisis-prone as the state’s economy crushes in line with volatile price developments on an international level. Both the falling oil prices in 2014 and during the COVID-pandemic are proof to this. Of course, these crises are never merely of economic nature, but also lead to social suffering and political turmoil as seen during the national strikes in 2019 and 2022.

Neo-extractivist policies have emerged with Rafael Correa’s government (2007-2017) and lived on under the presidencies of Lenín Moreno (2017-2021) and Guillermo Lasso (2021-today). They suggest that ‘development’, economic diversification and a move forward into a “postpetroleum era” (Silveira et al., 2017, p. 83) are possible through a ‘short-term’ expansion and intensification of natural resource extraction. On top of intensified oil extraction in the Amazon; the subsequent governments also started to promote large-scale mining for critical transition minerals, like copper, in the Andes. President Lasso has not just announced to double oil extraction when he entered his term, but as well that: "now that the world is about to move

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away from fossil fuels, it is time for us to extract every last drop of oil we have left" (El Universo, 2022). The recent social mobilizations of June 2022 have put a hold on these plans, but it must be waited how this matter develops in the future (Schwab, 2023). Futures studies are slowly emerging and are much needed to deal with these manifold challenges. They can give inspiration of what needs to change and how an alternative pathway towards the future can look like. Especially in extractivist countries like Ecuador, there is not much discussion of the probable drop in oil demand going hand in hand with the global energy transition towards a low-carbon future – and what fundamental changes this implies in the long-term for the "petrostate". This taboo needs to be broken, and the future needs to be re-centered as a central category in critical analysis. The future has the potential to act like a wake-up call instead of a tool to legitimize the present (Bryant & Knight, 2019, p.13; Collins, 2008, p.125). This emancipatory conception of future-making is crucial for normative and critical futures studies as it calls into question the desirability of the status quo and builds up the described leverage for transformative agency.

The focal point of this study is therefore to, first; examine the link between the past-present nexus and the future through the analysis of power. I tie power as the condition of possibility together with different conceptualizations of violence, in order to reflect on the persistence of violent societal patterns, but also their transformation. I suggest a new conceptual term "temporal violence" to grasp both the enduring structures of violence that creep into future timespaces through (state) planning, and to underline that this violence is just one possible future out of a multiplicity of futures – it potentially can be temporary. Merging the anthropological insights of the experiences of Indigenous grassroots organizations in planning their futures with critical futures studies, I am exploring the possibilities of alternative futures to materialize. To this end, I discuss planning as a mechanism of power, and examine both its violent and subversive qualities. The question I want to answer is then, how can planning be an instrument for decolonization, challenging and altering relations of violence?

This article is mainly informed by a 4-month ethnographic fieldwork in Arajuno (Pastaza province) in 2022 and the collaboration with different community organizations there. To a minor degree, I have also included data of my stay in Arajuno as well as Coca (Orellana province) in 2023. There are some methodological difficulties of studying the future i.e., something that is not yet in existence, uncertain by nature, and merely dwells as a possibility in our imaginations. I addressed this difficulty by complementing traditional ethnography with workshops on possible futures. The latter focused both on desirable futures and oil futures, as in Arajuno there is an expressed interest of the neighboring oil company to enter and start extraction in the territory. I translated all quotes from my informants from Spanish into English.

Temporalitiesin Friction

Social sciences and the humanities have traditionally favored the past and the present over the future in their analysis. When future was analyzed it was done in terms of the larger globalization debate and critique of capitalist modernity (Appadurai, 2013; Collins, 2008; Tsing, 2005). An important impulse for this orientation came from Johannes Fabian's monumental analysis of 'Time and the Other' (1984). He argues that time has been used as a "trick" to construct, oppress and legitimize the exploitation of the Other through chronopolitics; that is to say, how "capitalism and its colonialist-imperialist expansion [...] required Time to accommodate the schemes of a one-way history: progress, development, modernity (and their negative mirror images: stagnation, underdevelopment, tradition)" (Fabian, 1984, p.144). While the destructive and contradictive outcomes of this developmental trajectory have traditionally nurtured anthropology's field of inquiry and posed a source for critique, the future of the "Anthropocene" (Crutzen & Stroemer, [2000] 2021) was rather looming at large for anthropologists, until recently (Haraway et al., 2016). Anthropology's notorious "tempocentrism" (Textor, 2005) accounts for its reflexive strength and ethical outlook towards its own colonial past, however, this "disciplined hindsight" (Riner, 1987, p.311) impeded anthropology

to move beyond its suspicion of the future being intrinsically linked to modern and capitalist teleologies (Valentine, 2012, p.1064). With the emerging political debate about planetary boundaries, climate change and the energy transition, anthropology has recognized later than most disciplines the "urgency of addressing the future for those people with whom we work" (Bryant and Knight, 2019, p. 13). Its task is then to turn the unfinished project of postcolonial reflexivity (Pels, 2015) into a motor rather than an obstacle when engaging with alternative futures.

Relational Futures: Time, Power and the Temporal Turn

Time above all, is constituted through relations, i.e. intersubjectivity (Ssorokin-Chaikov, 2017). Hence, it would be too easy to conceive time in culturally relativist terms, even though it is true, that there are differing socio-cultural conceptions of time leading e.g., to more linear or circular temporalities (Munn, 1992). In the Kichwa cosmovision, there exist several dimensions of time and space in the form of different worlds that are interconnected by samay (force of life) (Andy Alvarado et al., 2012, p.117). The time in the 'human world' (Kay Pacha) is conceived cyclical, in reciprocity with the animated nature (p.38; p.125). However, this balanced cyclical time has recently been accelerating as changing weather patterns proof. Many people told me that winter (rain) and summer (sun) are now occurring within a day, instead of within the usual dry and wet seasons. Others also reported from changing day times (see also p.125) and wind patterns [1]. Andy Alvarado et al. (2012) argue that these are signs for Kay Pacha losing control over its own time. Thus, the human world is being left alone, detached from the other worlds, which in turn means that the living force samay is fading: "A manifestation of this loss of control are the human activities that are currently destroying ecosystems [...]. This accelerates the circle of time and leaves the space of life without vital inputs" (p.122, own translation). The loss of control over time is one central example for temporal violence. The authors and my informants attribute this loss of control also to larger cultural changes, especially the loss of yachay (knowledge), that are occurring in Kichwa culture since the colonization of the Amazon and the expansion of the road network. This reaffirms my argument of a "continuum of violence" (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgeois, 2004), a simultaneous occurrence of different forms of violence, I will discuss later in-depth.

Nancy Munn (1983, p.280) suggests that socio-cultural systems themselves could be conceptualized as time; that is to say as relations. Consequently, the very difference that is immanent to intersubjectivity (and onto-epistemologies) can be understood as:

> a mutually constituted system of movement. It is grounded in the philosophical premise that time is not an essence but a relation. Time is not a substance that 'flows' or an area that 'begins' or 'ends'. It is not a thing but a relation between things (Ssorokin-Chaikov, 2017, p.7).

Time understood as relations should consequently pose the question of the role of power in these relations. For Michel Foucault, force relations are inherently unbalanced and therefore, unequal and tense resulting in unstable relations of power that are in constant movement: "it [power] is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation [...]. Power is everywhere; not because it comes from everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault, 1990; 1978). This contingency, immanent to intersubjectivity, points to "[p]ower's condition of possibility" (ibid.). It structures a field of possible actions (Foucault, 1990; 1978, p.93; 1982, p.789) – and hence, mobilizes future pathways. Consequently, power is not just a repressive, punishing and coercive force in society which is exercised from above; it is also a creative, resistant, subversive or productive force against the status quo that "comes from below" (Foucault 1990; 1978, p.94).

This conceptualization has some similarities to muskuy (power, but also dream) in the Kichwa cosmovision. Muskuy is endowed to human beings to create visions (or dreams) and to defend oneself from spiritual threats. It is intimately tied to life itself and is "property of no one"; it is of the whole community i.e.,

traversing the ancestral, present and future community (Andy Alvarado et al., 2012, p.130). For the study of temporal violence, the analysis of power is therefore an interesting point of departure to examine along this continuum of power, dominion[2] and violence[3] the role time, and in particular the future, take to maintain, strengthen or subvert present relations.

The temporal turn grasps this productive-destructive tension and opens a new perspective on how time works as a technique to uphold states of dominion or relations of violence, and influences planning for the future: "By paying attention to time, we can critique and measure inequality in new ways. A focus on the varying ability to plan a life across classes, genders, and racial groups has much potential" (Bear, 2016, p.489). As Laura Bear highlights, however, this inquiry is not purely informed by an analytical interest, but by social reality:

> Anthropologists in their fieldsites have increasingly encountered temporal insecurity or conflicts in time as a crucial element of experiences of inequality. [...] They attribute this loss [of future's utopian qualities] to the emergence of radically unpredictable, evacuated near futures or to nostalgias for modernity (pp. 488-489; see also Piot, 2010;Guyer, 2007; Rosenberg & Harding, 2005).

In Deleuze's words: the future is the essence that constitutes time (Deleuze, 1994, p.89; Yinon, 2016, pp.212-213). Without a future, there is just a closed-up temporal system of past-present, unable to perform change. This is one facet of what I call temporal violence; contained movement and continuity suggesting a timelessness or even an elimination of a future.

Futures as Open but Colonized Timespaces

Arjun Appadurai agrees with Max Weber that "we cannot design the future exactly as we please" but that it is crucial to "find the right balance between utopia and despair" (2013, p.3). In this endeavor, anthropology should foster "a politics of possibility over a politics of probability" (ibid.). This is in line with Samuel Collins' (2020, p.235) plea to take "our informants' desires for better lives as indictments of the impoverished timespaces that have left them with truncated expectations and empty speculations as they contemplate the abyssal plane of neoliberal teleologies".

This discussion about futures as simultaneously colonized and open is a core feature of futures studies (Van Asselt et al., 2010, p.8). Drawing on Nikolai Ssorokin-Chaikov (2017, p.8), I take this simultaneity of the future as 'at the same time' colonized and open as a "mode of relatedness" (p.127): futures are relational concerning multiple competing imaginations, aspirations, plans, and projections. Despair and hope towards futures are closely related and in flux. They can be described as "orientations [that] make the future appear malleable, open to manipulation, or set in stone, implacable. Orientations capture the flux of experience, the rollercoaster of aspirations and fear that inhabits every one of us" (Bryant & Knight, 2019, pp.192-193).

An illustrative example for the effect of orientations was a community leader's reaction to a possible extractivist future scenario for Arajuno, a small town of 2000 inhabitants in Pastaza Province which is barely intervened by oil extraction so far: "Hopefully, this will not happen. [...] But I think that we are still on time to change something". These simultaneous feelings of fear and hope capture the situation felt during my first stay there in 2022, as there was a constant threat that the neighboring oil company will enter and start operating in Arajuno's territory. When I returned in 2023, the majority of the members of ACIA-AKAT, the Indigenous organization to which the territory belongs, favored a candidate with a pro-oil discourse in their internal elections. This change in the orientation towards the future can be analyzed in many ways. I want to highlight here the observation of an "economization", or more specifically "marketization" (Çalışkan & Callon, 2009; 2010), of futures.

The main reasons to convince the general assembly of ACIA-AKAT to shift from an anti-extractivist resolution a few years earlier to negotiating again with the oil company were of a material nature. The anti-

extractivist orientation towards the future did not appear attractive anymore for the majority of the members facing daily struggles to satisfy their basic needs. In the winning narrative of these elections, conservation efforts were portrayed as not paying the bills, tourism not being viable for every community, and in general, the projects and support from international cooperation or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) not being enough and too slow. This was contrasted by a promise for an accelerated pathway towards a desirable future, fueled by oil.

A desirable vision of the future, also in non-extractivist narratives, involved access or 'successful' integration into (inter-) national markets, as the results from my workshops in Arajuno showed. The central question raised during the workshops has always been how to get to these desirable futures? Many participants got frustrated or at a loss by this question due to the lack of economic resources, they experience in the present – a complex situation I will discuss later using the notion of "continuum of violence" (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgeois, 2004).

Two conclusions can be drawn from the case of Arajuno and the question of why oil keeps being the most persuasive option for many people. On the one hand, the relations of violence follow a logic of temporalization. This makes velocity an important aspect influencing future-making and hence, decision-making. In other words, how fast can we achieve our desirable future is decisive. This seems obvious but has not been analyzed further. On the other hand, it shows that there is a nexus between the marketization of future visions, the existing relations of violence and the velocity of reaching a desirable future. Oil convinces in this correlation with a fast-paced change – imagined, of course, for the better. It trumps any alternatives with a speed-up transition towards a future in which all needs are imagined to be satisfied. An equal seat at the negotiation table is imagined to be possible. This imagination overlooks, however, power issues that lay at the core of relations of violence.

To conclude, competing future visions produce a tension between "temporal dynamism and stasis" (Bryant & Knight, 2019, pp.19-20) with oil potentially accelerating the pathways towards future imaginaries. The next chapter examines the role of planning and its material dimension for the realization of future visions to establish a tangible link between the violent present and desirable futures.

Planning the Future: By whom and For Whom?

Planning in its most simple definition can be described as "the possibilities that time offers space" (Abram & Weszkalnys, 2011, p.3). This "inherently optimistic and future-oriented activity" (ibid.) is a promise for something better to come. Inevitably, this evokes the idea of progress and "suggests that planning time is inherently modern" (Abram, 2014, p.129). There is much research that has explored these modern temporalities at work by conceptualizing its connection to governmentality (Foucault, 1990; 1978), so that "even in acts of resistance, people [would] find themselves implicated in systems of government and power" (Abram & Weszkalnys, 2011, p.6). As Simone Abram observes: "Planning is in fact a particular form of governmental technology through which social discipline, ritual, and rhythm are made present in social life, and in which time is materialized, mediated, or brought into conflict" (2014, p.129). Thinking about the future as "the actual playing field of power" (Van Asselt et al., 2010, p.7) is thus, fruitful to understand planning as a contested social practice through which "such temporalities are doubted, contested, and mediated" (Abram, 2014, p.129). To assess policymaking and planning critically, it is therefore crucial to ask, "Whose future is being planned, by whom, for whom and to what ultimate end?" (O'Brien, 2016, p. 341).

A growing body of literature on Indigenous planning is challenging the planning of post-/neo-colonial nation states (Hibbard, 2022; Jolly & Thompson-Fawcett, 2021; Jojola & Shirley, 2017; Porter et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2016; Prusak et al., 2016; Matunga, 2013; Walker et al., 2013; Jojola, 2008; Lane & Hibbard, 2005; Sandercook, 2004). Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, mainly from settler states, trace "the resurgence of Indigenous planning as a vehicle for Indigenous peoples to determine their own fate and to

enact their own conceptions of self-determination and self-governance" (Hibbard, 2022, p.17). More than just an inclusion of Indigenous "voices" or "stakeholders" (Porter, 2017; Walker, 2017), they seek to draw attention to Indigenous sovereignty. In Ecuador, and Latin America more generally, academic debates on planning are rather limited to the (critical) analysis of national plans and technocratic planning, but do rarely analyze Indigenous forms of planning. Even to the planes de vida (life plans) of Indigenous nationalities and organizations in Ecuador academia has not paid much attention yet.

So far, official planning in Ecuador is rather used to maintain the status quo than to decolonize governance practices. Whether petroleum drilling or mineral mining: the (neo-)extractivist state in its role as planner ties extractive activities directly to its development plans and social spending (Sánchez & Polga-Hecimovich, 2019) and gains in turn (enough) social and political legitimacy for the continuation of natural resource exploitation (Gudynas, 2012). According to Andrew Curley, resources are, therefore, "just another word for colonialism" (2021, p.79). They are a "violent project of world making" (p.86) as "the idea of resources is colonial constructions consistent with genocide, displacement, exploitation, and capitalism. Colonialism creates colonialscapes and displaces Indigenous ontologies" (2021, p.79, emphasis in original). This adds another, more violent quality to the definition of extractivism as a resource-driven, resource-centric or resource-dependent model that is totalizing and, in its absolute commodification of Nature, leaves no space for divergent ontologies or alternative human-nature-relations (Koch & Perreault, 2019)[4].

Over the past decades, the dialectical relationship between the Ecuadorian state and people in "sacrifice zones" [5] has intensified as environmental and socio-cultural impacts start to show – while the hoped for economic promises in form of jobs and infrastructure projects remain for most of the affected communities unfulfilled. Especially, the leaving of private companies with 'good' community relations due to neo-extractivist policies and expiring contracts led to conflicts between the state-owned oil company Petroecuador and the neighboring communities in disagreement with their approach to corporate social responsibility. These critical voices, when becoming too loud, the state knows how to silence, oppress, ignore or appease.

A utilitarian equation unfolds in which territorial planning for the national future turns into a tool to designate sacrifice zones for the "greater good" (Silveira et al., 2017) [6]. The extrapolation of these present trends into the future through planning tools colonizes the latter (Ossewaarde, 2017). It impedes the envisioning of alternatives of the yet-to-come and an enlarged perspective of what is possible: "Colonization aims at ruling out openness, with the aim of shaping the future (preferably one that seems to be the product of predetermined trends that cannot be altered by human decisions) in which the current status quo is preserved" (Ossewaarde, 2017, p.83). In other words, state planning is used to create and maintain states of dominion characterized by repetition and inertia – or put more positively, stability. Time is used here as a technique (Bear, 2016). It temporalizes power relations into the future. In this context, planning loses its 'optimistic' and 'future-oriented' qualities by turning into a token "evacuating the near future" (Guyer, 2007).

As a reaction to continued oil exploration, Indigenous nationalities in the Ecuadorian Amazon started to organize themselves since the 1960s. This was a novelty: neither the figure of 'the community' nor 'the organization' have previously existed in the Amazon. Social, cultural, political and economic life revolved around the ayllu, the extended family (Altmann, 2018; Grefa Andi, 2014). Encountered with some suspicion at first, this process picked up pace and resulted in the creation of various local, regional and national organizations in the 1970s and 1980s e.g., Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENAIE), Federation of United Communes of the Kichwa Nationality of the Ecuadorian Amazon (FCUNAE) etc. It culminated in the early 1990s with the registration of collective land titles, and in 2008 with constitutional guarantees for collective rights and the declaration of the plurinational state. This process in search of self-determination can be framed as a performative way of planning; a form of counter-planning to

resist government plans of resource exploitation and to defend Indigenous territories. The central political proposal for an alternative future is the plurinational state (Lalander & Lembke, 2018; Schavelzon, 2015; Altmann, 2012).

It should be highlighted though that there is an important schism between the regional/national orientations of the indigenous movement (CONFENAIE/CONAIE) and the actions taken at the grassroots level (e.g. FCUNAE/ACIA-AKAT etc.) nowadays. For the latter, there is not always a clear anti-extractivist line identifiable. FCUNAE, for example, was founded to resist (oil) interventions in the territory. Nowadays, however, most communes focus rather on the negotiation about the terms of co-existence with oil companies or (illegal) mining in their territory – with every commune autonomously deciding on the matter. As highlighted above, a marketization of the future paired with an urgent need for a sped-up process heavily influences these decisions and orientations that eventually inform planning and concrete actions in the present.

By exploring the issue of planning and its dimensions of violence, I want to add new insights from the Ecuadorian Amazon to the academic debate. In the following, I will turn to the different dimensions of violence and discuss their confluence in what I call "temporal violence", to come back later to the example of planning, and discuss whether planning should be considered a mechanism of violence or a tool for decolonization.

The temporality of violences and the violence of temporalities

The pioneer who first conceptualized indirect and invisible violence beyond the direct and physical one as "structural violence" was Johan Galtung (1969). He built on ideas of the civil rights movement in the US [7] to define this form of violence as "built into the structure and show[ing] up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (Galtung, 1969, p.171)[8]. Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) developed these ideas further through the analytical lens of "intersectionality" unveiling the overlapping and interdependent systems of discriminatory categorization, such as race, class, and gender, leading to different forms of violence. In his later work, Galtung explicitly added "exploitation" to the "vocabulary and discourse" about structural violence: "The archetypal violent structure, in my view, has exploitation as a center-piece" (1990, p.293). In this regard, he also included violence against Nature into his conceptualization: He takes the example of global warming as a structural form of the more obvious direct violence of burning down something. Galtung describes the invisibility of the consequences of this depletion and destruction to the perpetrators, and criticizes economic growth backed up by the capitalist structures of commodification and industrialization as a legitimation of this form of "cultural violence" [9]. An idea that Robert Nixon (2011) has built on in his work "Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor".

A central element of the concept of structural violence is its persistence over time, showing "a certain stability", and that it "may not very often be changed that quickly" (Galtung, 1969, p. 173). Structural violence is "a process, working slowly in the way misery in general, and hunger in particular, erode and finally kill human beings" (Galtung, 1985, p.145). The procedural and slow change required to alter profound relations of violence is contrasting with the eventful and fast change promised by oil. It suggests, on the one hand, the incompatibility of deep alterations of inequalities and oil, and on the other hand, a vicious oil cycle nurtured by the promise of fast change and a newly created dependency of communities on companies.

The stability of structural violence resembles "tranquil waters" (ibid.), however, as I argue, it can be just explained by active mechanisms of dominion. Galtung (1990, p. 295) uses the illustrative example of slave trade to exemplify the changing guise, but persistence, of violence:

> This massive direct violence over centuries seeps down and sediments as massive structural violence [...] producing and reproducing massive cultural violence with racist ideas everywhere. After some time, direct violence is forgotten, slavery is

> forgotten, and only two labels show up, pale enough for college textbook: 'discrimination' for massive structural violence and 'prejudice' for massive cultural violence. Sanitation of language: itself cultural violence.

This resembles the Spanish conquista, genocide and colonial history of the Americas – and the complex realities of post-colonial societies nowadays, in particular the situation of Indigenous people, still facing internal colonialism (González Casanova, 1969)[10]. Furthermore, the "sanitation of language" brings back what Curley (2021) observed about the idea of resources as a violent project of world-making, i.e. a world in which Nature just exists as a commodified resource legitimizing extractivist endeavors.

It seems tautological, but the term "structural violence" leans towards being structuralist. This deterministic outlook is one of the main criticism of the concept as it assumes temporal persistence of violence [11]. It seemingly reduces agency, could lead to fatalism and "imperil those who are less interested in more macro-analysis to the extent it seems to overcomplexify the situation, enervating them in the process or adding to their sense of powerlessness" (Weigert, 2008, p.132). The challenge for (action or engaged) research is then "to diagnose structures in such a way that individuals can see their positions in them but can also perceive the possibilities for change" (ibid.). Therefore, Parsons (2007, p.173) calls for a more thorough examination of "the relations between organized patterns of activity (that is, structures) and the level of agency of subordinate, oppressed or marginalized groups" as these analyses are "under-theorized in terms of struggles over unjust relations of power and relations of violence".

To this end, it is necessary to conceptualize power not as a resource that can be equally distributed, as Galtung did, but in Foucaultian terms. This allows a more nuanced analysis of "the ways that agents are situated and the way that people are affected by these relations" (Parsons, 2007, p.178). Foucault (1984, p.144) notes that a state of domination is given when, instead of experiencing agency "allowing different partners a strategy which alters them", one finds oneself

> firmly set and congealed. When an individual or social group manages to block a field of relations of power, to render them impassive and invariable and to prevent all reversibility of movement – by means of instruments which can be economic, as well as political or military – we are facing what can be called a state of domination.

Recognizing the fine and fluid line between domination and violence, it is crucial to pay close attention to the struggles of subordinate groups: "An increase in the quality of agency in terms of organized collective action can then affect structural changes designed to reduce violence" (Parsons, 2007, p.181). Successful examples for such an alteration of the structure – or as Marshall Sahlins (1985) would argue, the structure of the conjuncture – are e.g., the social mobilizations in 2019 and 2022 lead by CONAIE (Schwab, 2023), the influence of the Indigenous discourse on plurinationality and interculturality (Whitten & Whitten, 2011; Altmann, 2012), and legal trials (see Sarayaku vs. Ecuador in 2012; Waorani communities vs. Ecuador in 2019; Sinangoe vs. Ecuador in 2022).

To conclude, structural, institutional or indirect forms of violence have a temporal continuity to them while power is the potential motor of change, turning permanents into ruptures, and accelerating or decelerating processes through agency. As a call for action, structural violence condemns and points to the roots of the "vicious violence cycle" (Galtung, 1990, p.295) at play.

Shades of violence: a continuum of violence

Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgeois (2004, p.1) note: "Violence is a slippery concept – nonlinear, productive, destructive, and reproductive. [...] Violence gives birth to itself. So we can rightly speak of chains, spirals, and mirrors of violence – or, as we prefer – a continuum of violence". They highlight its mimetic quality, but conclude that even after an expansive study of the matter, they "cannot say that now we 'know' exactly what violence is" because

> It can be everything and nothing; legitimate or illegitimate; visible or invisible; necessary or useless; senseless and gratuitous or utterly rational and strategic. [...] Rather than sui generis, violence is in the eye of the beholder. What constitutes violence is always mediated by an expressed or implicit dichotomy between legitimate/illegitimate, permissible or sanctioned acts (p. 2, emphasis in original).

This underlines the socio-cultural quality that is inherent to violence and underlines that

> the most violent acts consist of conduct that is socially permitted, encouraged, or enjoined as a moral right or a duty. Most violence [...] is defined as virtuous action in the service of generally applauded conventional social, economic, and political norms (p. 5).

This is in line with Ryan Walker's (2017) observation, that planning in line with official regulations and done for the 'public good' can still be a violent practice – even though practioners do not perceive it as such. Everything that maintains the status quo by blocking "avenues for change and resistance" (Parsons, 2007, p.78) can be defined then as violence.

In the following, I draw attention to the confluence and interconnectedness of symbolic, epistemic, axiomatic/anticipatory, and slow violence i.e., the continuum of violence, to highlight their connection and confluence to what I call "temporal violence".

Symbolic Violence

The term "symbolic violence" was coined by Pierre Bourdieu (1977) to account for the invisible power that is exercised through "the order of things" i.e., the unconscious values, judgements and collective expectations we attach to material qualities such as clothing, looks, and the way of speaking. These symbolic systems are mechanisms of communication, make societal consensus possible, and are crucial for the (re-)production of the social order (Bourdieu 1979; 2002). However, they are also instruments of domination through exclusion and Othering (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2002). Yet, the latter is not perceived as submission because symbolic violence "cannot be practiced without the participation of those who suffer it, does not necessarily mean that it is voluntary" (Civila et al., 2021, p.46).

Oil itself is a prime example for symbolic violence. In the guise of development, oil has been believed to bring 'progress' and wealth to the communities in the Ecuadorian Amazon for the last fifty years. Nowadays, many of my informants do not believe this narrative anymore and oil turned for them – at least partly – into a symbol of destruction. In a fictive oil future, a workshop participant from Arajuno imagined the following:

> There will be contamination. And our rivers are going to be super polluted and then we are going to be left without forest [selva], without river, without our animals and people: of course we are going to have a good house, maybe, if we plan well. I know that oil, extractivism, if we plan well, maybe, we can be like Dubai but unfortunately in this country where there is no respect, where there is corruption, unfortunately we are not going to be able to. They are simply going to destroy us, our country, our land, our pacha mama. So what is going to happen? We will be left in a destroyed house and maybe if we don't study, without studies, in more extreme poverty (Workshop Participant, April 7, 2022).

Even though there is awareness about the detrimental environmental impacts and the peril of community divisions, in all my workshops on fictive oil futures, people first associated oil extraction with possible economic benefits and better infrastructure. In one interview, a community leader said, as well, that she would prefer "for the youth, not for me, for the new future generation, a good, long-term agreement with the oil company. If we accept we need to be well prepared [...] and be a part of the company" (Community Leader, interview, April 7, 2022). As they have learned from their "brothers up North", it would necessary to be well prepared and negotiate well, according to her. This inner turmoil is also reflected in the following account:

> Oil extraction is in itself ecological damage and damage to the human being, generally speaking. But one can negotiate in an amicable way, looking at the opportunities, looking at the advantages and disadvantages. [...] The oil company is

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> not excellent: it came and everything is fine, period. No. In my opinion, the oil company has never brought development. Development does not exist. Mostly there is total destruction. Massive destruction. [...] Because most of the time it comes in without planning. That is why we think that if [the oil company] wants to enter, if we allow it, there has to be a healthy proposal, there has to be a debate with the people who live here [...] I would say that we can negotiate, but always when we see the advantages for ourselves. [...] We can't say 'no, no, no' either, but we have to negotiate well, seeing above all the advantages for us (Workshop Participant, May 14, 2022).

To conclude, oil still evokes hope for a better future. Not just one time the analogy to the Gulf States was drawn. Even though there is more awareness regarding the downsides of oil extraction, the socio-economic necessities i.e., the structural violence, people are experiencing inclines them to believe, that oil could lift them out of their precariousness – with "good agreements" and "negotiation".

Epistemic Violence

Epistemic (or discursive) violence is "exerted against or through knowledge" (Galván Álvarez, 2010, p.11). As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak observes: "The clearest available example of such epistemic violence is the remotely orchestrated, far-flung and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as Other" (1994, p.76). In an extensive literature review, Claudia Brunner (2020, pp.274-275) concludes that epistemic violence has a specific origin (Europe), a specific history (colonialism and capitalism), a specific functioning (racism and sexism as the basis of the global division of labor and resources) and produces specific subjects who are involved in these processes in different degrees and positions. She draws on the coloniality of being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007), the coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000) and the coloniality of knowledge (Lander, 2000) to underline that epistemic violence is a condition of possibility, a component and a product of colonial modernity. Brunner (2020, p.274) specifies that this modernity is not genuinely non-violent because it is 'progressive', 'democratic' and based on 'scientific knowledge', but rather evokes violence through these normative categories that tie to a violent past and present.

A striking example for epistemic violence is planning practice per se. To include Indigenous organizations and communities into the "nested hierarchy of powers or plans" (Brownill, 2017, p.146; see also Bulkeley, 2005) within the state, the Technical Secretariat of the Amazon Special Territorial District (CTEA) co-opted the community plans known as planes de vida and incorporated them into the governmental logic. There are regulations to follow and elements to include to validate a plan as such – otherwise, the CTEA will not recognize it. As one Kichwa leader claimed: "They want to do it their way and submit us to their way" (personal communication, November 17, 2022).

Axiomatic/Anticipatory violence

Axiomatic violence is a term coined by the anthropologists Stavroula Pipyrou and Antonio Sorge (2021). Following their observation that "violence has colonized the everyday" (p.2), they conceptualize axiomatic violence as a "new spacetime" that "describes the long-term status quo in the contexts of settler-colonialism and structural inequality" (p.4). They define an axiom as:

> an indisputable truth whose legitimacy is based exactly on its incontestability. [...] Precisely because axioms are 'timeless', or the foundations of when, why, and how they gained hegemonic status have been 'lost in time', they are notoriously difficult to challenge (pp.5-6).

One form of axiomatic violence is colonialism itself, in all its shapes: "colonial power continues to deliver axiomatic violence in multiple guises" (p.6). By normalizing interconnected forms of discursive, epistemic and symbolic violence, it "can become naturalized, undetectable, uncontested, uncannily woven into everyday life to emerge at specific times and in particular contexts" (ibid.).

This underlines the seemingly seamless reproduction of the continuum of violence across time. In fact, the authors highlight the multiple temporalities of axiomatic violence: sometimes emerging as explosive and event-like, and in other cases appearing as slow-burning processes – but importantly, violence is always present. Axiomatic violence even reaches into the future:

> he anticipation of not-yet-realised violence, felt in the present but always located just over the temporal horizon, waiting to happen. The violence punctuates the present since the groundwork has been laid for its actualization (for instance, through political rhetoric or past experience); [...]. Violence is axiomatic here in punctuating the present even in times of peace with anticipation becoming an inherently violent temporal orientation (Pipyrou & Sorge, 2021, p.8).

Anticipatory violence is hence, the "fear of the threat of violence" (Datta, 2017, p.174). This fosters feelings of resignation and cynicism towards one's own agency – and what to expect of one's future (see also Bryant & Knight, 2019; Koselleck, 2004).

An example for anticipatory violence is the continuous threat of oil spills in the Ecuadorian Amazon. As one informant from the community San Pedro next to the Coca river reported: "I remember how we just started to go fishing again [after the oil spill in 2019]. We put the fishing net and we were so happy that we caught fish there again. And then the next oil spill came [in 2022]". There is a record of 900 oil spills between 2015 and 2021 (Rojas Sasse, 2022), underlining that these events just make it to the news when the oil spills are dramatic enough as in 2019 and 2022. In these occasions, oil pipelines broke and thousands of liters of crude oil entered the neighboring Coca River, an inflow to the larger Napo River.

Slow Violence

Robert Nixon (2011, p.2) introduced the concept of "slow violence" to describe

> a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all. [...] a violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales.

In distinction to the concept of structural violence, Nixon highlights the temporal dimension of slow violence "to foreground questions of time, movement, and change, however gradual" (p.11). Through the work of time, violence is disconnected from its original causes. Crucial for this conceptual elaboration has been the experience of the politics of time, namely the notion of the Anthropocene and technological innovations: "to render slow violence visible entails, among other things, redefining speed: we see such efforts in talk of accelerated species loss [or] rapid climate change" (p.13).

Thom Davies (2022, p.409) complements the notion of slow violence by asking: "'Out of sight to whom?'". By tying epistemic violence and slow violence together, he concludes that "slow violence does not persist due to a lack of arresting stories about pollution, but because these stories do not count, thus rendering certain populations and geographies vulnerable to sacrifice" (ibid., emphasis in original). In addition, Chloé Ahmann (2018, p. 144) notes that "Slow forms of violence are not only environmental". This extension towards an enduring violence over time resembles what Pipyrou and Sorge (2021) later have coined "axiomatic violence". It also connects to what Galtung (1996, pp.31-32) in his later work unspecifically called "time violence" i.e., "negative impacts on future life generations", defined by the speed of violence (and peace) processes.

During the past decade, Nixon's idea of 'slow violence' has been crucial to critically uncover (environmental) injustices and draw attention to these slowly unfolding collateral damages of capitalist modernity. However, Nixon's plea to "turn the long emergencies of slow violence into stories dramatic enough to rouse public sentiment and warrant political intervention" (2011, p. 3) has just partly succeeded. The produced stories are uncovering the asymmetric power relations of the past and present but often seem

rather pessimistic bearing "the potential to paralyze us" (Mauch, 2019, p. 3) instead of leading towards the intended action.

My argument here is to show that in all of the above cases a confluence of violence is acting. These forms of violence are tied to historical inequalities and colonial injustices that have translated into continued relations of power, states of dominion and eventually into relations of violence. Oil extraction plays a central role in these power relations as it is a continuance and intensification of previous extractivisms and colonizations of the Amazon. In this regard, as shown elsewhere (see Schwab, 2023), it accounts for structural violence, symbolic violence, slow violence and anticipatory violence. Oil extraction, hence, induces violence – sometimes accelerated, sometimes slower moving. More generally, what can be taken from these debates is that violence can just be understood across scales, space and time.

Temporal Violence

Temporal violence is the eradication of contingency, that is to say the very condition of power to play out in manifold ways, opening up paths for different futures, and new possibilities. It is deterministic and fixes a pathway towards a future, which is as bad as, or worse than the past and present experience. This violent future goes down in a linear way, in the worst case possible culminating with either or both genocide and/or ecocide. On this pathway, the future turns into the impossibility of life.

On the one hand, temporal violence describes the continuum of violence across time. To secure this continuity (state) planning maintains the status quo and the power relationships in place, that is to say to sustain historically grown states of dominion into the future and foster (or even exacerbate) existing inequalities. Temporal violence cannot be thought of without planning, if planning is defined as the general activity of future-making (see Abram & Weszkalnys, 2011). On the other hand, temporal means also temporary. The term temporal violence can indict the persistence and outlasting of violence, but at the same time put a question mark in the room: will the violence remain temporary; can something change in the future?

This recalls the internal turmoil of some of my informants whether to allow oil extraction in their territory or not. The question if something might change for their benefit in the future (or not), is central to imagine the future and consequently, make a decision in the present. At the same time, the experience of the present e.g., the observation to what happened to 'the brothers up North' in the extractive zones, actively shapes future imaginations as well.

By temporal violence I mean then, forms of violence that have been persisting over a long period of time and are seemingly going to persist in the future – as far as state planning goes. Through a trick of time (see Hicks & Mallet, 2019; Fabian, 1984), the future is believed to be immobile – or worse, inexistent. Importantly, future here is not just a temporal category but must be understood as a temporal space – the possible discontinuity of the territory, the culture, the language, and the Kichwa runa (people) themselves. This trick works very well, as the accounts above of anticipatory violence has shown. As one expert shared with me when I asked her about what she thinks of the Ecuadorian Amazon's future: "It's like the Amazon does not have a future [...] I see the Amazon devastated [...] completely colonized in 20-30 years" (personal communication, June 14, 2022).

The analysis of power makes a crucial difference here, shedding light on the agency and resistance of 'Others' shaping alternative futures. No doubt, environmental impacts and phenomena as climate change or pollution, emphasized by the notion of slow violence, will persist into the future. However, as I argue, violent power relations must not.

Dan Hicks and Sarah Mallet (2019) specifically mentioned the term "temporal violence" to describe the impermanence of the so-called Calais Jungle, a refugee camp at the French-UK border: "This is a cosmopolitics of differential access to time, a mode of existence that produces difference through the

withholding of duration" (p.51). They describe the camp as a "place [that] can shift location and be repeatedly destroyed and announced to have been destroyed but still remains somehow present, timeless, ephemeral – a permanent emergency" (p.50). This complements my own coinage of the notion of temporal violence, as in the case of the Amazon, rather than a withholding of duration, it is the seemingly timelessness of the violent present experience that is at play. As one (non-Indigenous) informant in Aguarico mentioned: "It is like a people on pause, like there wasn't pressed play again". Another (Kichwa) informant shared a similar impression about Arajuno: "This Arajuno will always remain the same".

What is new about the term I propose here, and how does it connect to the other forms of violence discussed above? Temporal violence is connected to the continuum of violence by highlighting the violence of temporality and the temporalities of violence. Structural violence characterized by its stability over time and states of dominion, points toward a pre-condition of temporal violence. Temporal violence is introducing the temporal turn and the analysis of power to the study of violence. However, I explicitly distance myself from a structuralist argumentation, while still highlighting the historicity that is intrinsic to power relationships.

Slow violence adds further to this temporal stasis (or entire discontinuity) with the impacts of long-term and potentially exponential contamination that extrapolates into the future: "slow violence provokes us to delve into the past to unearth the violent structures of inequality that saturate contemporary life, and may well lay waste to the future" (Davies, 2022, p.410). In addition to this, temporal violence focuses on how violence, agency and contingency confluence in the future. It conceptualizes the future as a timespace that is simultaneously colonized and open to alteration, something possibly 'otherwise' (Povinelli, 2012). Epistemic and symbolic violence are reflected in subtler ways. They mark the space of possibility of how people can think and talk about the future and the past (Brunner, 2019, p.115, p.137). "Fact-like" and enduring truths are produced, sometimes more or less noticeable as axiomatic violence suggests, pointing to the confluence of epistemic and symbolic violence in the axiom of colonialism. For example, Indigenous communities become subjected to the governmental and capitalist planning logics through the expansion and intensification of capitalist modernity in the guise of both extractive projects, but also climate action. Future imaginaries are, hence, in one way or another subject of marketization.

Temporal violence builds on these mechanisms, which add to the persistence of violence. In contrast to anticipatory violence underlining pessimistic or fearful orientations towards the future, temporal violence highlights the political dimension of the future as a 'playing field of power'. It operates and unfolds at the same time as practices of resistance are present and practiced.

Planning: Mechanism of Violence or Tool for Decolonization?

There is an increasingly "complex web of planning" to manage governmental (time)spaces and keep state-society relations in order (Österlin & Raitio, 2020, p.3; Abram & Weszkalnys, 2011, p.3). This growing 'nested hierarchy of powers or plans' (Brownill, 2017, p.146; Bulkeley, 2005), is what Carl Österlin and Kaisa Raitio (2020) call 'planscapes'. These planscapes are not necessarily coherent as their nested quality might suggest. They are rather heterogeneous and contradictive but, nonetheless, hierarchical. As a community leader has analyzed "The state says and contradicts" (El estado dice y contradice). On the one hand, the state wants to protect the environment and the biodiversity e.g. by prohibiting Indigenous people to hunt for certain species, and by promoting the conservation program Socio Bosque [12]. On the other hand, the state is extracting oil from the same territories it means to protect (see Schwab & Combariza, in press). President Lasso's announcement to double oil extraction in the face of climate change further underlined this contradiction. This green light from the government is also connected to the level of insistence and harassment, the community leaders in Arajuno are experiencing from the neighboring oil company Pluspetrol. A community leader from Arajuno described this tension:

> The state here in Ecuador, the state is the entity that lives through the oil companies, selling oil, [also relying on] mining. So, the state in the law says that three meters beneath the land, the owner is the state. Therefore, it means that the oil belongs to the state. Nevertheless, we have to understand that we live three meters above [the ground], don't we? We are a people who have been working for millennia, we have been fighting, we have lived here, we are the owners of our territory. Although our grandparents have died, we continue generation after generation doing, living, and also fighting for our territory. [...] There is a constant threat here that the oil company is going to prepare this place to enter. [...] So, we are in this struggle. And we are always going to be in this constant struggle, even if the oil company comes [and starts its operation], we are here, fighting for our territory [en pie de lucha] (Community leader, March 24, 2022).

To keep the resistance up and change the course of the present towards a more desirable future, Indigenous organizations, however, need money. I want to focus here on the material claim that is often dismissed by analysis of future-making and planning. Something that is utterly important to all the organizations I talked to, was "realizing projects". This 'realization' has to be understood holistically: realizing their way of doing things, realizing their future visions, realizing resistance, realizing territorial defense, realizing counter-violent practices (see for the latter also Nixon, 2011). Even though some of these imagined projects people wish for respond to the capitalist system, the material dimension and needs of people on-site cannot be just dismissed – this would be romanticizing and paternalistic. As the leader of the community organization in Arajuno states: "Today, in order to live, people need money".

Of course, it is important to be critical and see the implications and orientations that these decisions and developments would involve, however, my point here is to underline the importance to respect the right to Indigenous self-determination. Leonie Sandercook (2004, p.120) describes a similar experience of her colleague who did research on more inclusive planning in Australia:

> For Aboriginal people, the issue was not about participation or inclusion, it was about rights and the material benefits that would flow to Indigenous nations when those rights are recognized. Inclusive planning practices cannot 'shift the effects of (post)colonial structures and relations of power on Indigenous nations without a fundamental recognition of rights'. [...] Resistance to this internal colonization manifests itself in sovereignty claims that seek to reconfigure the terms of Indigenous - state relations.

For this reason, talking about the future, or rather how to get to a desirable future was difficult in Arajuno: For many people the lack of funding or bad administration of funds is too real to imagine the overcoming of the violent structures of the present. Their reality is marked by this lack of economic resources: on the one hand, the chronic underfunding of the municipality [13] and, on the other hand, the lack of funding for Indigenous organizations – not even mentioning the prevailing socio-economic precariousness (ca. 95% of the population is considered "poor" according to the Territorial Development Plan of Arajuno, 2020). For any of these scales – individual, community or municipal – money and access to funding is key to induce change. This was one of the repeatedly mentioned obstacles identified by workshop participants. There were also other obstacles mentioned, which go, however, beyond the scope of this article to discuss [14].

For now, all the Indigenous grassroots organizations I have talked to do not administer any funding, even though they technically have the legal status to do so. The reasons for them not receiving funding are manifold according to my workshop participants: they lack structure, experience, and knowledge in managing larger sums of money. That is why the funds are rather channeled through the provincial or municipal governments or NGOs and foundations. As one participant remembers

> I think there was once an NGO that wanted to support the association in something. But the association had nothing ready, they had ideas but no structure, no plan, no structured project. [...] And I think that this is also a failure of the associations, not having an elaborated project. Because sometimes if the organizations arrive, they ask 'how can we help?'. However, the association doesn't have anything ready, it only has ideas, but it doesn't have a plan. [makes gesture to take something out of a drawer] 'Here I have my projects; how can you help? [...] We are not ready or prepared on the part of the association.

If for all these reasons, funding agencies are not willing to give money to Indigenous organizations, this leads in the end to a circular reasoning, a logical fallacy. If there is no structure to administer, no funds will be

received. If no funds are received, there is no possibility to build up such a structure. I argue even further, and claim that this is another example of epistemic violence, as the community organizations are not recognized as even players and capable, maybe with some additional support, to receive their own funding. Analyzing this situation herself, the leader of ACIA-AKTA in Arajuno said:

> We need a person here to write down all the projects to present. That is a little bit what is needed here. We know that in the COP26 there are these Green Funds but nevertheless we have not been able to access this because we are not able to do these projects. But nevertheless, we are here fighting, seeing how we can be beneficiaries of all this (Community leader, March 24, 2022).

She goes on addressing the goal of the organization to conserve the forest, but also provide an economic income to families: "If we conserve the forest we also have to look out for the economy of the families. Sometimes we contradict ourselves: we want to conserve but how does the family sustain itself, right?". This is when the community organization decided some months later to put together a plan de vida to address both conservation and economic opportunities, but also their territorial defense: "plan de vida is a form of defense against extractivism" (personal communication, November 17, 2022). The idea is that if there is an economic alternative, people will be less convinced by the oil company's promises. This was also one of the main results of my workshops – and turned out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

When asking the participants about the main benefits of an oil company coming into their territory, the reasons were solely of economic nature. Taking into account, however, the negative consequences on an environmental, social and cultural level, many participants understood that it is key to think about economic alternatives in order to avoid the entrance of an oil company in their territory. The leader of the community organization underlined that in contrast to the imposed vision of the CTEA, "a plan de vida has to be based on the reality of the community. It has to be born out of the people, out of the community. I have to feel that it is born from our needs" (personal communication, November 17, 2022).

Additionally, the increasing politicization due to a lack of employment opportunities and the consequent polarization of the population in Arajuno are an additional reason for the Indigenous community organization to elaborate their own plan de vida. In an early (unpublished) draft of the plan it reads:

> Poverty, unsatisfied basic needs, put pressure on the social fabric and weaken the traditional ties of governance and governability. Even more so when the main source of employment to obtain money is public employment [...]. That is why having political influence and participating in the local government becomes more important than volunteering in the Kichwa social organization. [...] That is why it should be the other way around: the focus [of us] as a people should guide the actions of the GAD, the national government and private companies that potentially have an interest in operating in the territory. This development of governance denominated with cultural pertinence [...] is what is required to recover authority and to direct all the expenses, investments, technical assistance, infrastructure, that will be implemented (ACIA-AKAT, 2022).

To conclude, planning – as portrayed in the idea of the community leader of ACIA-AKAT – can take the form of decolonization. While the organization plays along the epistemologically hegemonic regulations of the CTEA in order to elaborate their plan de vida and have it formally and legally recognized, the content and aim of the plan would be rather subversive. It was meant to be a manifesto against the central state's extractivist logic, the municipality's undermining of Indigenous self-organization, and private oil companies taking advantage of the vulnerable situation of the local communities [15]. With the recent developments in 2023 and ACIA-AKAT's election for a pro-oil leader, however, these planning efforts might reach deadlock.

In sum, the material dimension motivates but also undermines decolonial planning efforts. Therefore, the relation between the economic situation, decision-making and planning processes, and the continuum of violence is key to analyze to understand the struggle for Indigenous self-determination and deserves more attention in academia.

CONCLUSION

In 2022, Coordination of the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA) has launched a campaign titled "Without the Amazon, there is no possible future" (Sin la Amazonía, no hay futuro posible). This article discussed the conditions of such possibility by merging futures studies with an analysis of power. This provided a fruitful tool to unveil the obstacles in the present, holding back alternative futures for the Amazon and beyond. At the same time, it pointed to the open, however colonized, characteristics of the future. I have introduced the concept of temporal violence to highlight, on the one hand, the seemingly deterministic linear pathway the future might take if power relations remain inert and the continuum of violence is replicated. On the other hand, I argue this violent orientation of the future is never absolute, and possibly temporary. It always leaves a space for agency and resistance towards the status quo. This productive-destructive tension is best witnessed in planning of the rentier state vs. planning of grassroot Indigenous organizations. While the former tries to secure the extractivist development model for the future by means of internal colonization, the latter uses resistance as a planning instrument to claim its right to self-determination. In this regard, the material dimension of future-making and planning is key to understand the power patterns at play preventing such decolonial endeavors. The Ecuadorian state is threatened by Indigenous self-governance and the realization of plurinational state; but also by the global energy transition and declining demand for fossil fuels. In the face of climate change and an increasing flow of (international) funds to the Amazon, there is a chance for Indigenous organizations as 'guardians of the planet' to step up and start to administer their own funds.

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Notes

[1]Whether or not there are scientific explanation for these phenomena as e.g., climate change, they make sense to my informants within their experience.

[2]Foucault describes a state of dominion as "permanent, repetitious, inert, and self-reproducing, […] the over-all effect that emerges from all these [power] mobilities, the concatenation that rests on each of them and seeks in turn to arrest their movement" (1990/1978, p.93).

[3]Foucault clarifies in his later work again that "power is not violence; nor is it a consent which, implicitly, is renewable. It is a total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains or forbids absolutely" (1982, p.789).

[4]Emblematic for this is the case of Tagaeri and Taromenane (Indigenous Peoples Living in Voluntary Isolation) vs. Ecuador before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The latter is accused of threatening the former's "territories, natural resources and way of life" with extractive and infrastructure projects (Organization of American States, 2020).

[5]The term "sacrifice zone" denominates the contamination suffered by local communities for the sake of "some other interest, whether the 'common goods' of security or development or simply the private interests of short-term profit" (Holifield & Day, 2017, p.269). It is a plea for political ecology. Within the sacrifice zones in Ecuador there prevails internal disagreement about extraction, and whether to welcome or oppose it (see e.g. Lyall, 2021; Eisenstadt & West, 2019; Valladares & Boelens, 2017; van Teijlingen et al., 2017; Billo, 2014; Davidov, 2013; Warnaars, 2012). Agrawal and Gibson (1999) highlight the importance to perceive 'the community' as a diverse group having different interests. This heterogeneity is, of course, also true for Indigenous communities: "lack of consensus within Indigenous groups disconfirms the assumption of primordial group unity of multiculturalism" (Eisenstadt & West, 2019, p.80).

[6]For a critical discussion on the "public interest" see e.g., Fainstein and DeFilippis (2016, pp.1-19), Abram and Weszkalnys (2011, p.10) or Weszkalnys (2010, p. 115).

[7] Stokeley Carmichael (1968, p.151) defines a similar form of violence, institutional racism, as "less overt, far subtler, less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts, but is no less destructive of human life. […] [It] is more the overall operation of established forces in the society and thus does not receive the condemnation that the first type receives".

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[**8**] Kenneth Parsons (2007, p.179) specifies that in “intentional and unintentional ways [...] certain structural arrangements benefit dominant groups and disadvantage subordinate groups”

[**9**]Galtung (1990, p.291) defines cultural violence as “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere or our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) – that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence”. This ties into conceptualizations of epistemic violence (Spivak, 1994) and symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1977).

[**10**]Paul Farmer (1996), a doctor and medical anthropologist, was one of the first who used the term “structural violence” to examine the complex inequalities that post-colonial societies are facing.

[**11**]In his later work Galtung (1996) is focusing, however, more on the transformation of these structures and how to overcome violence.

[**12**] Both of these examples are controversial among the communities. On the one hand, hunting is an intrinsic part of their way of living, this prohibition is taken as an affront to their culture. On the other hand, Socio Bosque is seen as an intervention and possible seizure of the state into Indigenous territories. Furthermore, one contact reported that sometimes the program pays them months later – without any notice or compensation. Another informant claimed: “Precisely the Socio Bosque is for conservation but they have authorized an oil company in the past to enter an [area of the] Socio Bosque. That happened!”.

[**13**] The architect of the municipality told me that the municipality receives its budget according to the number of inhabitants, which is just above eight thousand. After covering running costs, not much is left to really make a difference, which is quite frustrating for them as planners. For this reason, the mayor has visited COP26 in order to reach out to international NGOs and development agencies to complement and amplify the muncipality’s budget (see also Schwab, 2023, in press). Arajuno is surface-wise the biggest canton of the country, located in the middle of the Amazon rainforest. Therefore, the architect also suggested that it would make sense to allocate more budget for conservation projects or projects that foster non-extractive business idea such as tourism – especially thinking about the long-term future of the canton, beyond oil extraction.

[**14**] These internal obstacles, such as alcoholism or polarization for political reasons, correspond to what some participants referred to as ‘the struggle within’ (la lucha hacia adentro), in contrast to the more known and vocal fight against extractivism and the defense of the territory (la lucha hacia afuera).

[**15**]So far, the plan has not been written yet, as there a lack of funding for its elaboration. The community organization in Arajuno as it is not a second or third level organizations (e.g. FCUNAE, CONFENAIE) needs to acquire funding themselves to hire professionals, and for mobilization within the territory during the consultation of its member communities.