Vitality, peace and happiness: an ethnography of the Waorani notion of living well and its contemporary challenges along oil roads.

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I, Andrea Bravo Díaz, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

This research explores the Waorani notion of *waponi kewemonipa* (living well). The Waorani are indigenous people from Ecuadorian Amazonia. The anthropological fieldwork that informs this thesis was carried out among Waorani people living in settlements along oil roads, a particular milieu which is highlighted by Waorani as a contemporary marker of intraethnic difference.

In this context, I investigate how the Waorani conceptualize and perform their *living well*, and how they respond to contemporary challenges, notably: liquor-related conflicts, oil-related pollution and inequalities for accessing external resources. Thus, this research endeavour is a contribution to the growing literature on Amazonian notions of living well and wellbeing. Chapter 1 introduces the notion of *living well* and its main dimensions which are further explored in relation to: health and vitality (chapter 2), environment and infrastructures (chapter 3), livelihoods (chapter 4), relations with the encroaching society (chapter 5), death and engagement with social media (chapter 6).

Peaceful conviviality and collective happiness are at the core of the Waorani *living well*, these ideals require healthy people and abundance of resources for sharing among those who live together. Both health and abundance imply the constant replenishment of vitality, which I call the generative dimension of *living well.* There is also an ecological dimension: the Waorani relate *living well* with the forest of plenty as opposed to the road of "heat" and noise.

Strategies for *living well* include aspects as varied as: opening of new settlements far from the roads, promoting football tournaments, State public services, and for some even new Christian conversions. But overall, what Sahlins called the hunter-gatherer 'Zen road to affluence', is ubiquitously present among the Waorani, and it has a background of laughter, encouraged through the narrative style *anka totamonapa* (how much we laughed) and other forms of collective happiness.

Impact Statement

When finishing the writing up of this thesis, indigenous people across Ecuador were leading a new *Paro Nacional* (national strike); they protested against governmental austerity measures but were severely repressed. This protest resembles their historical mobilization in the 1990's. During these three decades, Ecuadorian laws and Constitution have recognized some indigenous claims. Resonating with indigenous and other social movements' proposals, a recognition of rights for Nature or *Pacha Mama* (Mother Nature) was included in the Art. 71-74 of the Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008; the latter also establishes a developmental regime called *Buen Vivir* (living well). The implementation of this regime during the last decade has not managed to integrate the variety of *living well* notions that coexist in the Ecuadorian plurinational country. Therefore, a thesis offering in-depth ethnographic material about an indigenous notion of *living well* has the potential to contribute to the process of rethinking the national *Buen Vivir*, which so far has relied heavily on oil extraction. While this research is not about oil interventions, it is set in an oil field, and indigenous voices included throughout this thesis show that environmental and social damage is beyond the calculation of "permitted" levels of pollution that are considered in technical impact assessments in Ecuador. Moreover, the way in which the so-called "social compensations" are delivered in Waorani territory does not have a positive impact for indigenous *living well*. Finally, this thesis presents a preliminary study of sensorial ecologies of *living well*, an approach that might also prove to be helpful to rethink the debate regarding the rights of *Pacha Mama* in Ecuador.

The impact of this research for academia is within Amazonian studies. This thesis contributes to anthropological studies of indigenous notions of good life in Amazonia, taking the discussion beyond the sphere of conviviality, and offering a consideration of how a series of relationships with the environment have effects on people's willingness to engage in convivial *living well.* To do this, the thesis also offers an innovative methodological approach – including an art-based research method– to explore indigenous conceptualizations of *living well*.

CONTENTS

List of acronyms and abbreviations

AMWAE Waorani Women's Association of the Ecuadorian Amazonia

CONAIE Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador

NAWE Waorani Nationality of Ecuador

OED Oxford English Dictionary

SIL Summer Institute of Linguistics

YNP Yasuní National Park

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A note on Waorani orthography and the typography

The orthography of the *Wao terero* is not stabilised, for example, their name can be written Waorani or Huaorani, although most Waorani in my fieldwork use the first spelling. The Summer Institute of Linguistics developed a study of the *Wao terero* grammar (Peeke 1979), but in this thesis I follow the most common spelling used by my collaborators with formal education, who write each word based on Spanish vocabulary. I also use Cawetipe Yeti's (2012) book on Waorani grammar when including examples of other equivalent spellings in *Wao terero*. This means that the pronunciation on the ground would not be exact to the written version, but with the following guides, the reader should have an accurate enough idea of the vocabulary used in this thesis.

All words in *Wao terero* are in italics, and I use "w" instead of "hu". The vowels used also follow Cawetipe Yeti's work for the four short vowels: a, e, i, o. When the sound of the vowel is extended in *Wao terero*, my collaborators write it with double vowels: aa, ee, ii, oo. When the sound of the vowel is nasalised some of my collaborators prefer to include an "n" by the side of the vowel. These vowels sound closer to the Spanish language; for English speaking readers I found Londono's (2012:xiii) explanation helpful:

"a" should be read as the English "ah"

"e" as the sound "eh"

"i" is similar to English "ee"

"o" is like the first vowel in the word "order"

The consonants used are the: b, g, k, m, n, ñ, p, r, t, w, y. The letter "ñ" follows the Spanish alphabet, it resembles the "ny" sound of the word canyon. Cawetipe Yeti's (2012) grammar includes "d" instead of "r", but my collaborators often use the latter.

Map 1. Map of Ecuador with rectangle highlighting the approximate area of fieldwork.

Edited by Andrea Bravo, based on Map Plus software.

INTRODUCTION

Como donar sangre, así donan la fuerza cuando vienen con sudor, pero castigando.
It is like donating blood, in that way they donate strength when they come sweating, though punishing.
—Juana Enqueri, Waorani woman.

…la función de la Fiesta es más utilitaria de lo que se piensa; el desperdicio atrae o suscita la abundancia y es una inversión como cualquier otra. Sólo que aquí la ganancia no se mide, ni cuenta. Se trata de adquirir potencia, vida, salud.
... the function of the Feast is more utilitarian than what you think; the waste attracts or generates abundance and it is an investment like any other. Only that here the gain is not measured, nor does it count. It is about acquiring strength, life, health.
—Octavio Paz, *El Laberinto de la Soledad*

This research explores the notion of *waponi kewemonipa* (living well) among Waorani people living along oil roads in Ecuadorian Amazonia. *Living well* for the Waorani is epitomized in the form of peace (*watape piyene*) and collective happiness (*anka totamonipa*). These two expressions of *living well* do not necessarily occur together, although a combination of both seems to be encouraged in ordinary life through narrative styles such as *anka totamonapa* (how much we have laughed). The peak of collective happiness is seen during the feast. It is expressed through euphoria, as in the *toki beye* (for laughing) dance, whereas daily life offers a more delicate balance between peace and joy. These expressions of *living well* are analysed in the light of what in studies of wellbeing is known as hedonic (based on senses and affects) and eudaimonic (virtue-based) wellbeing[1]. Laura Rival (2016:147-168) has emphasised the hedonic aspect of wellbeing among the Waorani, whereas High (2015b: 17,61,77,152-160) has studied ways in which they ensure the maintenance of peace as part of their *living well*; while building on these previous works, my ethnography highlights an intrinsic relation between these spheres of *living well*. The Waorani *piyenekete* (making peace) is often woven through forms of *toki* (enjoyment).

[11] I acknowledge that Amazonian notions of happiness and tranquillity do not fully correspond to these Western notions, but the comparison is helpful for analytical purposes. While these notions have roots in philosophical debates about happiness and life fulfilment, they have been reconsidered for studies of wellbeing in psychology (Ryan and Deci 2001); for a discussion of these notions among Amazonian people see Walker (2015).

When Waorani people are asked what it means to live well, they often refer to living without problems. This is more an aspiration than a constant; it requires keeping at bay cosmological evils as well as historical ones –more recently Ecuadorian public force and oil-related pollution. Thus, *living well* is not a fixed state but something that is continuously enacted, it requires virtue-centred[2] "moral people" (eudamonic) willing to share their vitality in the form of laughter, knowledge and generative skills and also to defend their kin when needed. At the same time, sensorial joys (hedonic) including those related to the forest, contribute to the willingness of "moral persons" to engage in the maintenance of a prosperous and peaceful life. An example of the latter is discussed in chapter 3, in which a young man deals with his lack of strength, felt as an ailment, by walking into the forest and sensorially experiencing the *durani bai* (ancestors' way) relation with the forest; the young man recovers his vitality while reaching a deep part of the forest; after that he goes back to the village along the road, where he is willing to help out his father in the building of a house, therefore engaging in a generative activity. Here, a Wao[3] (person) willingness to collectively live well does not only depend on harmonic convivial relations (Overing and Passes 2000), but also on harmonic relationships with the places where they dwell. One can even say that *living well*, more than a set of moral evaluations, is a way of being or dwelling (chapter 3), which is sensed. Furthermore, while noting the relation between hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing, as has been discussed among other Amazonian indigenous people (cf. Walker 2015), this research suggests that sensorial experiences are an intrinsic part of people's ethical life[4].

Even when the forest is by no means a homogenous place, Waorani living along oil roads develop generalizations for contrasting the forest and the road; the former is more often linked to what can be called a place-based (cf. Sarmiento Barletti 2016) *living well*. Here, while relying on Amazonian studies of virtue-based morality and conviviality (see Overing and Passes 2000), this study reflects upon ecological relations that are mostly expressed in a sensorial language when referring to *living well*. My proposal here is to consider that the senses, instead of being unreliable perceptive

[2] I am referring to Overing and Passes's (2000) analysis of Amazonian morality as virtue-centred.

[3] *Wao* is used as an adjective but also as the singular form of "person", whereas the plural is *Waorani.* I also use the expression "Waorani people" which is redundant, but in this case, I am using the word Waorani as the name of the ethnic group.

[4] I use the notions moral and ethical interchangeable, resonating with Lambek's (2015) definition of ethical life, where 'ethical is an intrinsic dimension of human activity and human life worlds' (ibid:18), the ethical is then 'manifest in living, in talk and action' (ibid:18).

channels[5], for the Waorani are part of what makes beautiful, good and knowledgeable people. When evaluating what is good or beautiful, Waorani people take sensorial perceptions quite seriously. By perception, as I further discuss throughout this thesis, I do not mean a "point of view" as in the theory of Amazonian perspectivism (Lima 1999; Viveiros de Castro 1998), although the Waorani do refer to that sort of perception when talking about dreams, shamanic visions and myths. By perception, I mean a sensorial but also a subjectival perception. Amazonian perspectivism suggest that humans, animals, and other beings who have a soul, share a similar, given subjectivity which is related to the soul, and the "point of view" varies because the bodies are different. In contrast, Waorani people consider that there are different subjectivities, which are not given but made during a life time, and are not exclusively related to the soul, resonating (though not entirely) with what Conklin (2001b) calls agency (chapter 2). For the Waorani the body is a container and channel of skills, knowledge, strength or force that in this thesis I call vitality.

The kind of subjectivity that the Waorani see as conducive to *living well* is, therefore, not a fixed state of being. This subjectivity is carefully crafted, developed over time through ordinary sharing of substances such as food and sweat, but also through intentional rituals directed towards the acquisition of certain plants, objects, and animals' subjectivities. This subjectivity is not equal to the soul that allows people to dream (*onowoca*) but is heavily informed by the body and the vitality that it channels. The notion of vitality, developed in detail in chapter 2, is the thread that connects this thesis, perhaps resembling how vitality connects Waorani people's lives with the forest (space) and through generations (over time). I first came across this notion when conducting research about Waorani health, under the logic that health is present in definitions of wellbeing cross-culturally (Conklin 2015:60). Waorani people do not include health as a category in their reflections of *living well* unless they have faced a situation that has challenged their own health. However, it is rarely present in young people's *living well* narratives, who instead would say that *living well* is about having fun[6]. But one has only to join one single football match with young people to understand that vitality and fun are closely related. Thus, for the Waorani as among other Amazonian people (see Conklin 2015), wellbeing is a collective notion that requires people full of vitality, which is to say healthy people with generative skills.

[5] See Shepard (2004) for a discussion on how rationalist Western thought has been particularly reluctant to trust the senses.
[6] "Having fun" does not refer to an individualist category, it is mostly collective.

Therefore, I suggest that beyond the convivial dimension, there are at least two other dimensions of *living well* for the Waorani; one related to ecological relations; and other that I call generative (chapter 1), which includes health and circulation of vitality.

Given this approach to Waorani *living well* as place-based, and deeply connected with a notion of vitality that relates to Amazonian understandings of beinghood, I rely mainly on Amazonian studies for making sense of the ethnographic material presented in this thesis. In recent decades, Amazonian studies have produced in-depth ethnographic accounts of indigenous notions of living well, wellbeing and the good life (e.g., Grotti 2007; Izquierdo 2009; Santos-Granero 2015a; Sarmiento Barletti 2016); a revision of this literature is complemented with broader Amazonian debates that illuminate specific discussions in the course of this thesis, such as: the centrality of the body for social identity; sensorial ecology; the processual character of the houses; relationships with alterity; death and the use of social media.

While discussing Amazonian literature I avoid drawing distinctions between hunter-gatherer and hunter-gatherer-horticulturist societies, except when the Waorani ethnographic material seems to be directly informed by their egalitarian hunter-gatherer ethos. I agree with Rival (2002) in considering that Waorani are hunter-gatherers, but in this regard, I also understand James Yost (Beckerman et al. 2009:8135) – who while working with the Summer Institute of Linguistics was the first ethnographer among the Waorani– who openly disagrees, suggesting that the Waorani are hunter-gatherer-horticulturists, based on the fact that they used to have crops before contact. Rival (2002) relies in her analysis on the centrality of trekking among the Waorani and their skills for surviving exclusively from non-cultivated forest resources for long periods of time; they also practice slash-and-mulch agriculture rather than the widespread slash-and-burn (see Zurita 2014). Furthermore, their economy is based –with few exceptions[7]– on immediate-return (Woodburn 1982:432); Waorani ethos is fiercely egalitarian, which is expressed in their appreciation of autonomy, freedom of mobility, and equal access to resources as major values. Nevertheless, I do not fully agree with Rival's (2002) suggestion that the Waorani in general cultivated manioc mainly for feasts (ibid:2) and 'only sporadically' (ibid:19); my interviews with elderly people with historical memory prior to contact, suggest that families who were not fleeing from

[7] Their gardens imply a delay in the return for labour, nevertheless, when harvesting, food is consumed and shared in the same day or following days, without storing it.

internal wars[8], frequently cultivated manioc and plantain which were part of their diet except in the peach palm season, when they relied entirely on non-cultivated crops.

At the same time, Waorani history resonates with what has been described in studies of *forest people*, hunter-gatherers in Amazonia, see for example the Makú case (Århem 1989; J. E. Jackson 1983; Silverwood-Cope 1972), or the Akuriyo (Brightman 2007:215-220). During the colonial expansion these *forest people* have managed to maintain autonomy through a very mobile life-style within inter-fluvial forest, while isolating themselves from powerful neighbours; whereas when peaceful relations have been established with their sedentary neighbours, those relations tend to be asymmetrical, because the latter have considered *forest people* to be "wild" and morally inferior (Århem 1989; Brightman 2007). The difference between Waorani and other hunter-gatherer situations (cf. Widlok 2015), which is consistent from my interviews, is that in times of peace Waorani moved between houses when a cultivated crop was ready for harvesting, to the house in which they would dwell a few months[9]; in contrast, the cultivation of manioc or other crops was not practiced among other *forest people* such as the Akuriyo in Guiana (Grotti 2007, 122-161), the Awá-Guajá in Brasil (Garcia 2015); whereas among the Siriono (Bolivia) their horticulture is described as 'incipient' (Jordán 2011:55), and among the Makú (Colombia) it is said to be 'rudimentary' (Århem 1989:10). Waorani cultivation of manioc encompasses their historical narratives of long distance trekking for searching out new hunting areas, which seems to have been part of their forest management strategies; Rival (2002) has rightly described them as a trekking society. The Waorani emphasis on movement also goes beyond forest trekking; small but continuous movements are seen within the village (chapter 3); in addition, they allocate enormous amounts of time and resources to visiting other Waorani villages and places beyond the forest; these trips even when challenging – such as for elderly people dealing with city public transport and with no money – generate good material for *anka totamonapa* (how much we laughed) story telling (chapter 4). But before expanding on the ethnographic material, I should properly introduce the Waorani and their recent history.

[8] Particularly in the Shiripuno area and what is nowadays the Yasuní National Park.

[9] Similar to what Fausto (2012:59) describes in the Parakanã case, Waorani divided their time between different houses located at long distance from each other, only fully abandoning or setting fire to a house when it began to rot or when they moved for good in times of misfortune.

The Waorani people.

Waorani people's recent history is marked by the beginning of peaceful contact in late 1950's, when the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) started a process of pacification and evangelization. Until then, Waorani people had remained in relative isolation, occupying mainly inter-riverine territories, which seem to have favoured their survival of colonial impact, contrary to their riverine neighbours who perished (see Rival 2002: 20-45). The Waorani are the most recently contacted indigenous people in Ecuador, whose population at the moment of contact was estimated to be 500 people living in an area of around 20.000 km² (Yost 1981b:679). The current Waorani population that maintains peaceful contact is estimated to be between 2500 (High 2015b) and 3000 people[10]. Waorani have land rights in what is known as the Waorani Ethnic Reserve, encompassing 6,125.6 km², a territory that overlaps with the Yasuní National Park over which the Waorani have rights of use[11]. The number of Waorani people that still remain in voluntary isolation is unknown. The Waorani process of contact has been gradual; I have met people who came into contact in their childhood or adolescence in the late 1960's and early 1970's[12]. However, their emergence from isolation has been marked by the State's need to extract oil from their territory, which also allowed a process of encroachment through colonization in their territory, facilitated by the opening of oil roads; this process continues in the present. During the first decades of contact the SIL promoted a relocation of the Waorani into one village, meanwhile the oil business expanded into Waorani land[13].

The Waorani mass conversion to Christianity, promoted by the SIL, was a temporary post-contact circumstance rather than a spiritual conversion (High 2016: 274). After the SIL were expelled from Ecuador in the early 1980's, the majority of Waorani people gradually abandoned the Christian identity (ibid:274). While the ethnographic data presented throughout this thesis focuses only on two Waorani

[10] Lu, Valdivia, and Silva (2017) estimate the population between 2000 to 3000, based on the work of Beckerman et al. (2009) and Almeida and Proaño (2008).

[11] 'To date, the amount of territory conceded to the Waorani is 6,791.3 square kilometers' (Lu, Valdivia, and Silva 2017:20) apart from their rights of use over the YNP. For an account of the Waorani territorial rights and the loss of control over some of their land see also (Finer et al. 2009; Rivas and Lara 2001: 27-47; Trujillo 2011).

[12] I am referring to the family groups known as Babeiri, Baihuairi and Ñiwairi. The family group is named by adding the suffix "iri" to the name of the head of the group. There are records that underlying this process of contact was intense harassment towards these families promoted by the missionaries (see Cabodevilla 1994:341-393; 2004: 104-111).

[13] For an account of the role of the SIL and Catholic missions in the process of contact with the Waorani see (Cabodevilla 1994: 341-410).

villages, Epepare and Yoweno, this research offers an insight into an ongoing second wave of Christianization, now promoted mainly by Ecuadorian Baptists who have established churches in Amazonian cities. There is a link between these Ecuadorians churches and Christian organizations based in the United States of America – names of the latter appear in donation boxes that reach Waorani territory – however, I was unable to conduct further research on this aspect. In Epepare, at least half of the population consider themselves to be Christian and frequently attend Christian events, including Sunday mass. In contrast, Yoweno, which experienced internal tensions during my fieldwork, seemed less committed to Christian activities, particularly in times of village tensions.

The first reliable historical accounts that differentiated the Waorani from other ethnic groups date from the XX century[14], and are related to a process of encroachment first by rubber tappers and later by oil explorations (see Cabodevilla 1994; Wasserstrom 2016). The Ecuadorian State allowed oil exploration in Waorani territory from the 1940's; the Waorani, who were known by outsiders as *aucas*[15], responded by attacking *kowori* (non-Waorani) people, killing some of them and getting hold of goods, such as metal tools (Cabodevilla 1994: 204, 287-299). Waorani killings of outsiders from oil workers to missionaries, and most recently isolated people, have been newspaper headlines, portraying them as fearless warriors. Early ethnographic accounts focused on internal warfare described the Waorani as 'the most violent society on earth' (Robarchek and Robarchek 1998:vi). This image of Waorani warriorhood has been already demystified in High's work (High 2006, 2010b, 2015b; Reeve and High 2012). High (2010b) has noted intergenerational differences that position the potential to kill as something that belongs to *durani* (ancestors) times. Furthermore, High suggests a continuity between the Waorani regard for a peaceful life with the new ideal of living

[14] Historical accounts from before the XX century have generated diverse interpretations. Taylor (1999) and Cipotelli (2002) note the impact of earlier centuries of colonialism in the region, which might have caused Waorani withdrawal to inter-riverine lands. But there is disagreement about whether the Waorani were previously part of a riverine society, for example, Taylor suggests that Waorani 'are probably the descendants of the complex Abijira riverside society' (1999:232). Whereas Cipotelli (2002:115) suggests that the Waorani might be descendants of several groups that fled the colonial encroachment. Cabodevilla (1994) and Rival (1992; 2002) provide extensive analysis suggesting that the Waorani are an independent ethnic group that survived the contact through their relative isolation, which is reflected in their language also being unrelated with other Amazonian groups. Based on extended historical analysis, Rival (2002:38-45) convincingly argues that the Waorani are a 'different group altogether'(ibid:40) that remained around the Tiputini watershed and expanded towards the West only after the decline of Zaparoan populations in XIX century.

[15] A Kichwa word used to refer to "wild" people (Cabodevilla 1994:150).

peacefully in a "community"[16] which includes former enemies, such as Kichwa[17] people. Likewise, Wasserstrom (2016), through a historical analysis of the region, concludes that there was not a "traditional war complex" (2016:3) among the Waorani, but warfare was linked to 'periods of heightened external pressure or opportunity'(ibid:15).

By the time of their emergence from isolation the Waorani seem to have been divided into four main territorial groups (see Cabodevilla 1994:272); the differences between these groups are marked by their mutual acknowledgement of humanity while describing each other as *warani* (Other). Rival (2002:55, 62-63) notes that those considered *warani* (unrelated others) were potential enemies with whom marriage alliances were avoided. Waorani people lived in longhouses formed by a single household group (*nanicabo*) – normally a couple with unmarried children and married daughters with their husbands– each *nanicabo* was located at considerable distance from other *guirinani* (extended kin) longhouses, with whom relations were consolidated during feasts and warfare alliances; these endogamous groups of *nanicabo* were called *waomoni* (we people), and marriage alliances were preferred within *waomoni.*

In recent decades, while an identification and solidarity as an ethnic group has been reinforced among the Waorani, they still present several intra-ethnic differences (High 2015b: 7-8). One of the differences that they acknowledge is between those who live along Amazonian roads, and those who still live in places with no access by road. This ethnography is focused on two villages located along oil roads. The roads is a *locus*/actor that has witnessed/enacted the emergence of new Waorani ways of life, which have not been fully documented yet (Rival 2016:261). This contemporary geographical differentiation is encompassed by others such as the province in which the village is located. Waorani territory extends over three Ecuadorian provinces: Napo, Pastaza and Orellana. The villages in which I conducted research are located in Orellana and its border with Pastaza. People from villages located in Pastaza have recently won a lawsuit against the Ecuadorian State; they denounced irregularities in the process of consultation for accepting oil exploration. Their win means that they have managed to

[16] Waorani people use the Spanish term *comunidad* for referring to contemporary settlements, which is a post-contact form of organization in which several cognatic groups live in a single village that is "recognized" as a *comunidad* by the Ecuadorian State. More recently some Waorani communities are changing their denomination to that of *comuna* following recent Ecuadorian regulations. In this thesis, I prefer to use the notion of village to embrace both, regardless of their changing denomination from *comunidad* to *comuna*.

[17] Ecuadorian indigenous people with whom the Waorani have a history of confrontations and alliances (see Reeve and High 2012; Taylor 2007).

stop the advance of the oil frontier in Pastaza; whereas in Orellana there is ongoing oil extraction.

The Waorani in anthropological literature.

The most extensive ethnographic account of the Waorani is Laura Rival's study (1992, 1996b), initially focused on the effect of schooling among the Waorani. Rival's work describes Waorani social organization and the values that informed their cycles of peace and war, as well as their relative isolation and egalitarian practices; she has continued to expand her work (1993, 1996a, 2002, 2005, 2016, among others), exploring almost all areas of Waorani life, which throughout this thesis is discussed in the light of the ethnographic material along the oil roads. Rival's ethnography contrasted with earlier and parallel anthropological accounts among the Waorani (e.g., Beckerman et al. 2009; Boster, Yost, and Peeke 2004; Robarchek and Robarchek 1998; Yost 1981a, 1981b); the latter tended to reinforce the missionary thesis that Waorani peaceful relations were an effect of contact and evangelization[18], without recognizing the Waorani own values regarding peace. As noted above, High's ethnography contributed to understanding the relationship between ideals of warriorhood, peace, and their intergenerational variations, noting the contemporary Waorani emphasis on maintaining peaceful relationships with outsiders (High 2006, 2010b, 2015b). While Rival noted that Waorani assume a perspectival position of prey[19] rather than predator (2002: 177-188) in relations with *Kowori* (non-Waorani). High (2015b) has expanded on how, for Waorani people, on the one hand, the prey position is expressed as a victimhood ethos which permeates Waorani narratives of past violence, meaning that elderly people position themselves as victims rather than actors of violence; but on the other hand, young people perform and reinforce ideals of warriorhood, engaging with national imaginaries of the "wild" but also highlighting Waorani values of strength and autonomy. High has also introduced a debate about contemporary young Waorani ideals

[18] An image of the Waorani as violent and "savage" people was also often present in popular culture and missionary literature, for a discussion of this see Rival (1992:2) and High (2015b: 28-33).

[19] The language of predation is widespread in Amazonian studies of alterity, where engagement in predatory relationships with outsiders is described as essential for Amazonian reproduction of society (Descola 1993; Carlos Fausto 1999, 2012; Vilaça 2010; Viveiros de Castro 1992b, 1992a; among others). Rival's study among the Waorani offers an alternative view in which predation is not at the core of social reproduction, instead the Waorani 'profess through their cosmology that living is the source of life, and affirm through their rituals that their own social reproduction does not depend on cannibal appropriation'(2002:184).

of masculinity, which includes representations of warriorhood inspired by their ancestors as much as by global media heroes such as Bruce Lee (2010b).

High (2015b) has suggested that the Waorani position of prey, as victims of external violence, also offers a possibility of identification with other victims of violence; this identification is expressed in a form of mutuality that actualizes or constitutes kindred relations, which, High argues, was the case of early relations with missionaries[20] and currently with isolated people. Throughout this thesis, I note that Waorani victimhood ethos informs the ways in which Waorani share news of ailments in daily life and over Facebook; under this logic they also share images of recent deaths of kin over this social network. In this regard, Alvarez (2010) in an ethnography of contemporary Waorani death rituals, notes how Waorani weave national society notions into their own ways when performing contemporary funerary rituals.

Flora Lu's (1999) work, focused on Waorani behavioural ecology, has analysed changes in Waorani management of resources; she combines an analysis of ecological resources with household allocation, noting modifications in Waorani hunting practices, which now include a greater variety of prey and fish. She also discusses Waorani integration into the market economy, though without expanding into what it means for indigenous people (Lu 2007). Lately, Flora Lu's research has explored conservation and socio-economic changes among several indigenous people in Ecuadorian Amazonia; this research includes collaborations with Ecuadorian anthropologists (Alvarez 2013; Doljanin 2013; Flora and Sorensen 2013; Hidrobo 2013; Lu, Bilsborrow, and Oña 2012); their data about Waorani villages located along oil roads shows more ecological, socio-economic changes and integration to the market than villages located far from oil roads. These studies, largely based on surveys, fail to integrate indigenous understandings of these changes. In a recent study about the Ecuadorian extractive developmental model under Correa's regime, Flora Lu, Valdivia and Silva (2017) note that the national model of "wellbeing" has not been translated into "improvement" of indigenous people's lives; on the contrary, they have caused social and environmental damage.

A recent extensive study among the Waorani by Zurita (2017; 2014; Zurita, Jarrín, and Rios 2016) focuses primarily on ethnobotany, agro-ecological relations and historical landmarks. Colleoni develops a discussion of the notion of "becoming

[20] The missionaries who first established peaceful contact with the Waorani were the surviving relatives of other missionaries that were killed by the Waorani. For a detailed discussion of those events see High (2009b).

civilized", analysing different perspectival positions that, she suggests, the Waorani take within asymmetric relations with outsiders (2016). In relation to Waorani health, Fuentes (1997) offers an early account of Waorani relations with biomedicine, and Alban (2009, 2015) has focused her ethnographic work on Waorani maternal care practices and more recently on "teenage" pregnancy. On Waorani shamanism see in particular High's work (2012b, 2012a) and also Wieruka (2015). There are also recent publications by Waorani intellectuals covering a variety of topics (Baihua and Kimerling 2018; Ima 2012; Nenquimo 2011, 2014), I engage particularly with Ima's (2012) work on wellbeing.

Finally, there is a blooming literature on conservation, oil, activism and political organization (e.g., Colleoni 2004; Escobar 2015; Gondecki 2015; Trujillo 1999; Ziegler-Otero 2004) especially in relation with the Yasuní (YPN). Several anthropologists and other intellectuals in Ecuador have documented oil extraction in the Waorani territory and denounced its damaging effects (Almeida and Proaño 2008; Rivas and Lara 2001); they also offer detailed descriptions of recent violent encounters with isolated people (Cabodevilla, Aguirre, and De Marchi 2013; Narváez 2016, 2018; Rivas 2003; Trujillo 2016). The emphasis on denouncing the pervasive effects of the Ecuadorian extractive developmental model is rarely accompanied by in-depth ethnographic analysis of how Waorani cosmologies and daily life aesthetics are expressed on the oil frontier; instead, some portray Waorani recent history as an "acculturation" process (see for example Rivas and Lara 2001:18). This approach is nuanced by an emphasis on advocating for better public policies to prevent encroachment in the lands of isolated people (Cabodevilla 2013; Rivas 2006, 2007).

Fieldwork context.

This research was conducted in two Waorani villages, which I have anonymized, following British ethical conventions, to protect the privacy of my informants. My closer collaborators have agreed and insisted on having their full names included in this thesis, without anonymisation, which I have respected. However, most of the names in this thesis are anonymized. My research was carried out for a period of 14 months between 2017 and 2018. Previous to this fulltime research, in 2014, I worked and lived for one year in one of the villages that is part of this research; at that time, I was collaborating with a NGO that received funds from the Swiss Red Cross, and my work

was related to a health promotion programme. In this research, I distanced myself from my early role as part of a health team, by avoiding spending time at the health post during my early fieldwork and engaging in daily activities that were unrelated with health issues, although this early experience also informs my interest in better understanding Waorani wellbeing.

Alongside fieldwork within Waorani villages, I also spent time with Waorani people in Ecuadorian cities, and on two occasions hosted them in my hometown in the Andes; one of these "reverse" hostings was to support Waorani women in an event that they had planned, the other occasion was to fulfil a promise to Minta, my young host mother in Yoweno who has cared for me since 2014. Minta's visit to my home with her four children and new husband was cherished by all of us, despite the hardships of an 18 hour road trip; it also unexpectedly improved my relationship with the whole village.

While I am able to understand and engage in daily convivial interactions in *Wao terero*, I am not fluent in this language and most of the interviews and conversations that I include here were developed in Spanish, with bilingual Waorani. Interviews in *Wao terero* were mostly carried on with the help of my collaborators. Materials in Spanish and *Wao terero* were both carefully analysed with my collaborators.

This research was authorised and supported by the Waorani national organization NAWE and the women's organization AMWAE, and was approved in village assemblies in Yoweno and Epepare. Before introducing my research methods, I consider it important to highlight key differences between Yoweno and Epepare. Yoweno is a larger village with a population of 273, in contrast to the 134 Epepare inhabitants. Yoweno, which has a community high school and a health post, allowed me to conduct ethnography about the co-residence dynamics with "the Others". I remained for longer periods in Yoweno for paradoxical reasons; my long term relationships with Minta and her children felt like home, and at the same time, I needed more time there for solving difficulties with the rest of the village, which I will explain later.

Elderly people from Yoweno have a historical memory of dwelling over a vast area around Yoweno, most of which was lost to colonizers after accepting peaceful contact in the late 1960's. Upon accepting the contact, Yoweno people joined the missionary settlement in the south of the Waorani territory, but their arrival coincided with an epidemic. Those who survived the epidemic attempted to go back to their land, but only in the late 1970's did they manage to open a new settlement in an area closer to their ancestral territory. In the late 1980's, Yoweno people decided to move further

north, claiming back the land that is now Yoweno, and their relocation was facilitated by the oil company; from then on, Yoweno's local economy has included periods of more or less access to oil-related money and goods, but also logging and tourism.

While Yoweno territory extends over a vast forest area, four hours down river and two up river[21], the settlement is located in an oil field in which oil exploitation started in 1971. When Yoweno people returned to their land, the area along the oil road was already occupied by *colonos* (colonizers) and cleared for cattle raising. Accounts of Yoweno recent history, collected by missionaries and scientists, describe a heated frontier, including internal tensions and confrontations with outsiders. Local memories recall the role of the late warrior Babe, a leading figure, in defending what is still a heated frontier in the Waorani territory. The reasons why Yoweno people waited two decades before claiming their land are unclear; however, their return to Yoweno coincided with a need to put physical distance between some misfortunes that Babe's family faced in the late 1970's; at that point, they also had news of an oil road being built in their ancestral land, which in turn favoured oil-related colonization.

Epepare was formed in 1998, from a group of people who fled confrontations in Yoweno village. Their territory was also part of ongoing oil extraction and colonization, but they settled in an area that was still largely forest. Furthermore, Epepare is located in the Yasuní (YPN)[22] and the village centre is connected to the main road through a smaller road (see appendix 3). Throughout this thesis, Epepare is described as a more cohesive and peaceful village, in comparison to Yoweno; since the latter is dealing with ongoing oil-related tensions. Nevertheless, Epepare people have also asked the Ecuadorian state to declare a 'state of emergency' (chapter 4) due to a depletion of the forest near the village, and difficulties in accessing external resources.

At the beginning of my fieldwork, my host family in Yoweno – the leading family – was at the core of the village disputes; this meant that it was difficult to navigate relationships beyond my host family cluster. When feeling trapped within Yoweno's internal divisions, heightened by unequal distribution of oil drilling

[21] I did not come across an estimate in kilometres.

[22] There is an ongoing national debate regarding the YPN (see Finer et al. 2009; Fontaine and Narváez 2007; Narváez 2009, 2013; Pappalardo, Marchi, and Ferrarese 2013; Rival 2010), with a strong activist movement campaigning against oil extraction; chapter 5 includes a brief account about how Waorani people from Epepare engage with this activist movement. The popularity of the Yasuní debate grew after a governmental attempt to stop oil drilling in this Park, through what was called the Yasuní-ITT Initiative by which Ecuador would stop oil extraction in the Yasuní in exchange for an economic compensation supported by the international community; the Ecuadorian government announced the failure of the Yasuní-ITT Initiative in 2013, when the Correa government decided to continue oil extraction in the Yasuní-ITT, arguing lack of international support.

compensations in 2017, I decided to ask several young people from different clusters to be research assistants and translators in this project, which was welcomed to the point that the wife of my closest collaborator called me 'my white-lipped peccary' when I arrived in the village with the gifts that she had requested. I understood this not to be an insult because she said this while caressing my hand and taking me for a 'holding hands' walk along the oil road. On another occasion, her elderly mother also took me for a holding hands walk when I carried some printed pictures that people had asked for. In short, my research was only possible when acts of mutual care were developed with clusters beyond my host family. I should now note the contrast with Epepare village, which is important to illustrate key differences that are described throughout this thesis.

In the Epepare case, I was hosted by a very young couple, 22-23 years old with two children. During my fieldwork, the young mother was pregnant and ill many times, so she could not actually "care" for me, instead the whole village adopted me as if I were an orphan, they fed me and invited me to spend time at their houses each time I went back to the village. In contrast with the difficulties of integrating into clusters beyond my host family in Yoweno, in Epepare navigating among clusters was effortless, I was fed and cared for without asking by virtually all the clusters; they would not fail to invite me to their houses to catch up with the latest news and sharing seasonal food every time I was back in the village. Epepare is not without gossip or sporadic disagreements among clusters, but they did not seem to last long or to affect what, throughout this research, was a very cohesive village. I am inclined to think that this is largely due to the strong commitment to peaceful relations that the elderly village founder has; likewise, his children have been open to sharing "leadership" with younger people from different clusters. The young village president does not belong to the family that founded Epepare; this young leader is very energetic and proactive in sharing with the whole village the outcomes of his "*gestiones*" (management), which are directed towards obtaining resources from outside. In contrast, the family that founded Yoweno are less proactive in sharing leadership and promoting equal distribution of resources. Perhaps also the size of Yoweno (about to reach three hundred) contributes to unavoidable disputes (see Riviere 1984:74).

The differences between these villages may also be related to what in chapter 3 I analyse as *sensorial ecology* and to the daily dealings with the oil company that Yoweno people face, which has also an effect on people's willingness to live well together. Life in Epepare has a flavour of isolation that is not currently felt in Yoweno;

this was pointed out by Waorani who have been in both villages. Yoweno centre is located along the road (see appendix 2) and several cars pass along the road every day. These cars are mainly from the oil company which has a camp at one end of Yoweno road and some oil pipes at the other end, and also in the next village. In contrast, only the end of a small road reaches Epepare village's centre, and so it is a calm road used only by those who want to visit the village. In Epepare, the proximity to the oil business is not felt on a daily basis, apart from some distant noise; in Yoweno, at the beginning of my fieldwork a new drilling started in the village centre, by the side of the school. The time and efforts that people from Yoweno dedicated to get "fair" oil compensations are a main part of my 2017 fieldwork; there, I witnessed long and tedious negotiations with the oil company and State representatives, whereas in Epepare I met more environmental activists, scientists, tourists, and State environmental workers who carried out activities related to the YPN.

While both villages are close to oil roads, Yoweno village, at least during my fieldwork, presented a closer relationship with the oil business. As their village president says: the oil company is on their doorsteps. Yoweno people often express their disappointment with the oil business, noting that it has depleted their lands and brought no good to their people; they also express distrust towards oil representatives, and often complain about oil-related pollution (chapter 3). At the same time, oil-related works and oil compensations are an important part of Yoweno local economy. During my fieldwork, each cluster in Yoweno had a least one person – men and women – working for the oil company in a temporary job, whereas most of the leading families have at least one man with a permanent position within the oil company. In Epepare, which has a more distant relationship with the oil company, people also complain about a lack of forest resources near the oil road, which means that none of these villages can rely exclusively on hunting and foraging for food (chapter 4). Both villages presented important variations (see appendix 1) in their consumption of *kowori* food – particularly rice and canned tuna – that was directly related to their access to temporary jobs.

While both villages share a similar approach towards their livelihood activities – a combination of frequent gardening, foraging, hunting, alongside temporary access to external resources – the solutions that they have found for ensuring egalitarian access to external resources are somehow different. In Yoweno, the main source of external income – six to eight permanent jobs on the oil company, and six positions within state institutions – is mostly on the hands of the leading families, whereas the other clusters

rely on temporary jobs, which last an average of a month per year. In Yoweno, during the 2017 oil drilling, all the clusters received a monthly provision of processed food, but when the drilling finished, the provision of food stopped. In Epepare, leadership is more diffuse and access to external resources is evenly distributed among clusters. There are around two to four oil-related positions offered to the village each year, and the village assembly has decided to distribute these posts among all clusters, which is achieved through an annual rotation, this means that each cluster has an external income at some point. Epepare's radical egalitarian approach to accessing external resources can be seen also in daily life, which in turn favours their village cohesion; whereas in Yoweno, village tensions are often related to failures in ensuring egalitarian access to external resources.

The differences between Yoweno and Epepare that I perceived during my fieldwork were confirmed when visiting the villages 10 months after I finished fieldwork. I had carried with me some gifts that different families asked for and decided to visit them. In Yoweno, while people were happy and welcoming when I visited their homes, I was joined in the "visits" around the village only by Minta (my host mother) and her children, and two or three other people joined later to catch up. In contrast, in Epepare, no later than 5 minutes after I arrived in the village at least thirty people came for the welcoming and many of them walked with me as a big party, visiting other houses around the village. The lack of Yoweno cohesiveness is also one of the reasons why they put so much effort into organizing the annual Yoweno party, which in the last years has been extraordinary for its display of abundance and for attendance from other villages.

If I had to sum up the Epepare and Yoweno local economy, I would highlight their unpredictability. In both villages, I witnessed several cases of crop failure, but also Epepare people were helpless in dealing with a plantain disease. Access to external resources was also unpredictable, with considerable variations during the same year. Then, one question that is somehow elusive throughout this thesis is why the Waorani remain in these settlements. When asking my Waorani collaborators about why they decided to remain along oil roads, while complaining about pollution and effects on their livelihoods, they could not agree on a single answer to this question, but several responses were provided over the duration of my fieldwork. A first reason for remaining along the oil roads is related to what Waorani people express as *'ome gompote'* (defending the forest), villages like Yoweno and Epepare have acted as frontiers for

stopping further colonization on Waorani land (chapter 3). A second reason why Waorani people remain along oil roads is because they see these settlements as strategic places for negotiating access to external resources; nowadays, this negotiation is primarily done with Ecuadorian state representatives (chapter 5). A few young people also mention easy access to Amazonian cities as one reason for remaining in these villages. However, most of the families from Epepare and Yoweno also maintain houses in settlements located far from oil roads, which they visit particularly when children have school holidays (cf. Rival 1996b).

Finally, while acknowledging some historical enmity between the Waorani and other indigenous people, particularly with Kichwa indigenous people, chapter 5 offers a brief analysis of contemporary friendships (see also High 2015b), which are also extended to *colonos* and other non-Waorani people. These relationships are normally externalized, meaning that they are developed outside the convivial sphere; both villages still refuse to welcome marital alliances with non-Waorani people. Epepare has only one household formed through an inter-ethnic marital alliance, and Yoweno has six inter-ethnic marriages, including one old couple; however, when alcohol-related or sorcery conflicts arise, Waorani people tend to relate them to those non-Waorani residents. When translating interviews of elderly people with my young collaborators in Yoweno, they preferred to use the Spanish term *amigo* (friend) for translating *guirinani or guiri* (extended kin), which in the previous section I explained was at other times connected with the *waomoni* (we people) group. This led me to conduct a survey and interviews about how families in both villages understand this notion, from which I learnt that they currently use *waomoni* (we people) for referring to the whole village and some would use it for the whole Waorani nationality, whereas *guirinani* was used for referring to people with whom they have cognatic links that were actualized through many forms of sharing, within and beyond the village, but not everybody in the village is considered *guiri*. In addition, the terms *guiri* or *guirinani* are also used for relations that resemble the notion of 'friend'[23] (chapter 5). Having described the context of my fieldwork, I will now provide some brief detail about the methods.

[23] Rival also includes a semantic change in her translation of *guirinani* as 'kin by blood or by residence' (2002:183) to 'relatives and friends '(2016:207).

Methods.

During fieldwork, the main method of research was participant observation in daily life activities. Since my young host families were not great trekkers, we all spent more time in the village rather than trekking. I tended to join treks with close collaborators and their families. In Epepare, trekking was more accessible because at least one person of my extended family went to the forest daily, most of the time in groups. They went hunting, fishing, foraging or to the garden, all activities that are not necessarily separated. A fishing trek could turn into hunting, for example, if footprints of peccaries are seen nearby the village. A visit to distant gardens can include some foraging. Normally foraging, hunting and fishing imply longer treks, as the forest of plenty is farther than the gardens in Epepare. In Yoweno, there are gardens located at as much as two-hours distance by canoe, and one normally goes there by canoe. My host family in Yoweno has two main gardens along the river, where I joined in sowing and harvesting.

Apart from participating in communal daily life, I conducted in-depth interviews with approximately half of the adult population in each village, including a representative sample of ages, genders and the main families. The topics approached within the interviews included: wellbeing, water quality, cement houses, notions of health, pollution. In Yoweno, in part because of the difficulties in navigating village life, I had –over different stages of my fieldwork in this village – the contribution of 11 young and middle aged Waorani research assistants (7 men, 4 female), three of them developing their own reflections and research recordings of forest treks. Those recordings were shared with me and are an important part of this thesis. In Epepare, the young (male) president of the village was my research assistant, and I had extra help with a few recordings and translations from three other men; the lack of a female research assistant was overcome with friendships with Epepare women who opened their homes to me. All the research assistants in this work had good knowledge of both villages, which are related by cognatic links, and therefore the reflexions that are contained throughout this thesis as collaborative research often include considerations beyond their villages. In this text I refer to the research assistants as collaborators. As they used to say, they were also anthropologists, who engaged in reflection on the ethnographic material with me; they also took on the role of the anthropologist in some interviews with elderly people, whereas I was the assistant. These collaborators are: Juana Enqueri, Daniel Ehuengei, Juan Pablo Enomenga, Namo Ima, Byron Ima and Manuela Gaba.

In addition, a survey of the weekly dietary intake was conducted in half of the households in each village. These surveys were developed in two different seasons, and one includes details about the location and number of gardens that each family maintains. With State and para-State actors, when possible, I conducted interviews regarding their perceptions of Waorani wellbeing, but also their personal and institutional stories of relations. Among these interviews, the ones developed with the doctors at Yoweno health post proved to be particularly helpful.

A participatory method, painting t-shirts and taking photos and videos under the theme of *living well*, was conducted in both villages. In Yoweno, I organized one participatory meeting that was joined by young men and women. In Epepare, two meetings were developed. The whole village was interested in painting t-shirts, but only young men were motivated towards recording videos and pictures; however, the whole village showed interest in watching and criticising the videos and pictures. Epepare village's cohesion facilitated the development of these research methods, in contrast with Yoweno where participatory methods were welcomed by few young people. Finally, chapter 6 relies on research conducted about the social network Facebook.

Thesis outline.

I introduce the notion of *living well* in chapter one. Noting the flourishing literature on the topic in social sciences, this chapter engages particularly with Amazonian ethnographies that have dedicated attention to wellbeing, whether in the form of happiness or conceptualizations of good life and living well. I discuss how Waorani reflections about their vernacular notions that translate as *living well* vary when approached through different participatory methods. In making sense of the variety of aspects of *living well* mentioned by Waorani people of different generations, I suggest that *living well* for the Waorani has at least three dimensions: one convivial, another ecological and a third generative. While the convivial dimension is focused on humans, the ecological and generative dimensions show how intertwined are Waorani lives with their socio-biological forest milieu.

Chapter two addresses Waorani health, considering its relationship with the notion of vitality or life force. In this discussion, I engage with Amazonian debates on personhood and subjectivity, which allows me to say that for Waorani people being healthy is related to their identity, and with being *teemo piyengue* (strong, courageous). This form of being Waorani requires high levels of vitality channelled through their bodies and enhanced by their soul.

The third chapter engages with a place-based wellbeing, explored in the form of *sensorial ecology*. Waorani people use a sensorial language when referring to their environment in relation to *living well*, but they also suggest that other beings in the forest have similar notions, which make them withdraw to deeper areas in the forest and far from the road. This chapter explores contrasts between the road and the forest milieu for Waorani *living well*. In addition, Waorani dwelling in palm houses and cement houses is discussed in the light of their sensorial ecology.

The fourth chapter discusses Epepare and Yoweno's local economies in relation to the notion of generative living well. A Waorani egalitarian ethos informs their performance of *living well*, which is epitomized in the feast and its collective happiness. This chapter attempts to make sense of how Waorani wellbeing is challenged or reinforced when integrating post-contact goods, money and practices such as football.

The fifth chapter explores the role of contemporary relationships with outsiders in the maintenance of Waorani *living well*. I suggest that while dealing with the State and the oil company Waorani people develop *strong speeches;* these are discursive devices for navigating "anger" while avoiding warfare, while reaffirming themselves as courageous people. This form of relationality is contrasted with friendships developed with other outsiders. This chapter also attempts to make sense of a new wave of Christian evangelization and why Waorani are open to this conversion, abandoning it again when internal conflicts arise.

The final chapter addresses the death of close relatives, which arguably is the most challenging event for the collective *living well*. The way in which the Waorani announce the death of kin over Facebook, posting even pictures of funerals, inspires a reflection of the role of social media in the contemporary performance of young Waorani *living well*.

CHAPTER 1: LIVING WELL

This chapter introduces the study of *living well,* first as a general category of enquiry and then in the specificity of the Waorani case. As a general category, I suggest that *living well* is a notion with 'blurred edges'[24] whose less blurred aspects reveal themselves in different ways depending on the focus or the method that one uses to explore it. In other words, even among people like the Waorani, who have a lively concern for what it means to live well *waponi kewemonipa* –and its many variants that will be further discussed– there is no neat homogenous definition. The more one asks about and reflects on this notion, the more "innovations" one finds among different generations, villages and families. This does not mean that a systematic exploration of *living well* is out of reach, but it means that one needs more than one method to explore common patterns on this notion, and even then, I should acknowledge that the definition of *living well* that I present in this thesis is blurred at its edges.

The chapter starts with a review of how wellbeing has been addressed in anthropological literature with emphasis in Amazonian studies, after which the Waorani notion of *living well* is presented. I explore different layers of meaning that are not accessible all at once through one single method of enquiry. *Living well* is then presented as having at least three dimensions: a convivial, an ecological and generative one. These dimensions of *living well* are related; for example, the generative, which is concerned with healthy people and thriving households, has at its core the notion of vitality. This vital force stands out particularly in what the Waorani call courageous people, individuals who contribute to good conviviality by sharing expressions of their vitality. The same individuals, full of vitality, affirm that they renew their energy by ecological relations, for example, by the sensorial experience of trekking and eating fruit from the forest. Thus, these dimensions of *living well* are connected, but not always expressed at the same time, or reflected upon with the same emphasis. This also means that the image of *living well* as divided into "dimensions" is a methodological outcome from the field, as well as my personal epistemological choice for deconstructing *living well* into comprehensible pieces.

[24] I take this notion from Veena Das's (2015) analysis of Wittgenstein's theory of concepts.

Anthropology of *living well*.

Anthropological studies on well-being, happiness and good life have flourished during recent decades (see Fischer 2014; Corsín-Jimenez 2007; Mathews and Izquierdo 2009; Santos-Granero 2015a:5; Gregory and Altman 2018; among others)[25]. Nigel Rapport (2018) identifies three main approaches in the anthropology of wellbeing. A first approach sees variations in notions of wellbeing as closely related to cultural differences (Mathews and Izquierdo 2009); a second approach is more social-structuralist (see Corsín-Jimenez 2007), and explores notions of wellbeing that vary within a single society and are traversed by differences within that society (socio-economical, ideological, religious and so on); a third approach offers a phenomenological exploration (see Jackson 2011), in which differences in wellbeing notions and practices are related to the variety 'contained in the sensorium of an individual human life' (Rapport 2018:28). Before the recent trend in social scientific interest in wellbeing, in-depth ethnographic accounts among Amazonian people (e.g., Descola 1994; Gow 2000; Overing and Passes 2000; Rival 1992, 2002) had already mentioned indigenous notions of good life (see also Walker 2015), whereas ethnographic accounts focusing particularly on the study of wellbeing in Amazonia are more recent (e.g., Gordon 2016; Grotti 2007; Izquierdo 2005, 2009; Santos-Granero 2015a; Sarmiento Barletti 2016). This literature will be further considered in relation to the Waorani notion of *living well*.

Studies of happiness are also linked with ideals of wellbeing (see Kavedžija and Walker 2016). Throughout this thesis I engage with a popular debate that considers subjective happiness as differentiated from a virtue-centred good life, and I suggest that among the Waorani this differentiation is blurred, or one follows the other. This discussion is dominant in psychological studies of wellbeing (see Huta and Ryan 2010;

[25] This trend in anthropology resonates with changes in other disciplines. It is worth noting the late 1980's shift in the discussions of development, where the notion of "human wellbeing" and the capabilities approach were introduced into a debate dominated until then by economic constrains (see Foster 2010; Nussbaum 2011; Robeyns 2017; Sen 1985). Several notions of wellbeing and how to assess it can be seen across academic disciplines and public policy (e.g., Galvin 2018; Gough and McGregor 2007; Griffin 1988; Stiglitz et al. 2010). A notion of wellbeing, although contested, has also informed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (see Manning, Harland Scott, and Haddad 2013). In the last few decades, the concern for assessing wellbeing (see Diener 2009; Harvey and Taylor 2013) has generated developmental indexes; see for example, The United Nations' Human Development Index (HDI), and the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2005 Quality of Life Index. In addition, there have been attempts to measure subjective wellbeing, see for example the Gallup 2009 Happiness Index and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ). I am not interested in determining how "well" or "happy" the Waorani living along oil roads are, rather my aim is to provide a detailed description of what it means for the Waorani to live well.

Ryan and Deci 2001), which in turn draw on classic philosophical debates. Psychological studies differentiate – although they also explore complementarity– between subjective hedonic happiness, which is normally short-term and different from a more objective eudaimonic sense of 'self-realization' (see Waterman 1993:678). The latter is related to people's values and 'the actualization of human potentials' (Ryan and Deci 2001:143). Walker (2015) suggests that these Western understandings of wellbeing do not fit neatly in the study of Amazonian societies, but still one can find notions that resemble hedonic (sensuous) and eudaimonic (moral) wellbeing. Thus, Walker's ethnographic account of the Urarina suggests that their ideal of *living well* is based on a combination between, on the one hand, a tranquil life (eudaimonic) which includes the enjoyment of daily creative activities, and on the other hand, short-term moments of intensified joy. The latter resembles a "social fact" in a Maussian sense which 'condenses the meaning of the long-term, more objective concept of living well, in all its complexity, into an enjoyable subjective experience' (Walker 2015:180). The Urarina case resonates with the Waorani, except that Waorani short-term happiness is not only experienced in extraordinary moments, but it is recreated through ordinary acts.

As analytical categories, notions of wellbeing and the good life have been useful for approaching indigenous ideals of conviviality, ethics and aesthetic values (e.g., Gow 2000; Overing 2000). More recently, Amazonian wellbeing has been explored by focusing not only on convivial aspects but also on predatory relations with outsiders (Guzmán-Gallegos 2015; Santos-Granero 2015b). It has been studied even when there is no term that could be directly translated as wellbeing, e.g. Conklin (2015) among the Wari'[26], and Izquierdo (2005) for the Matsigenka.

In this thesis I use the expression *living well*, which is the literal translation of the Waorani notion *waponi kewingui*, but I also use the term wellbeing, and the expression *waponi kewemonipa* (we live well)[27], as the latter is more commonly used by the Waorani. While taking part in participatory research, people used these interchangeably. In addition, I agree with Fischer's (2014) suggestion that the perception of wellbeing is informed by what a society considers as good life. Therefore,

[26] I am using the spelling suggested by Conklin.

[27] Rival translates the notion *huaponi quehuemonipa* as 'we live well' (2016:149). High (2015b:198) suggests a different spelling: *waponi kiwimonipa*, and throughout his last book (2015b) he refers to 'living well'. I use High's spelling, changing the 'i' for 'e' following the suggestion of a Waorani intellectual, but overall there is no agreement about the correct spelling of this and other Waorani words.

references to "good life" are further considered as valid comparative material for the Waorani notion *living well*.

The "good" life and living "well" both refer to moral evaluations of what constitutes a fulfilling life. It should be recalled here that in Amazonia, ethics (the good) are often associated with aesthetics (beauty)[28], it follows that 'well-being is often expressed through terms that might be translated as *good life, beautiful life,* or *living well*'(Santos-Granero 2015a:25). This is precisely the Waorani case in which *waa* and its emphasised version *waponi,* depending on the context, means good and/or beautiful and pleasant. For example, if I ask someone *ebano imi* (how are you?) the response could be a plain *waponi* (well, beautiful). In another context, when a child stopped our trek to pick up flowers, she said − extending the first the "a"− *waaaaponi*, in this case she clearly referred to the beauty of the flowers and the pleasant activity of picking them. In addition, whenever I did something well, particularly behaving generously, people would say to me *waa kebi* (you do well) implying that my action was pleasant and good. Thus, the beauty and the good are associated, although the emphasis might vary regarding the context.

For some Amazonian people the aesthetic dimension seems to be broader than the moral one; for example *Sumak Kawsay* (beautiful life force) is not equivalent to but broader than good conviviality (Whitten and Whitten 2015:193). For others, good and beauty are synonyms, as in the case of the Suyá/Kïsêdjê: *aji betxi pa* 'we live morally well or beautifully together'(Seeger 2015:54); and the Ashaninka *Kametsa asaiki:* 'to live well/beautifully/peacefully' (Sarmiento Barletti 2015:142). In a broad sense, Amazonian notions of wellbeing embrace 'mostly intangible goods with high use value, such as vitality, conviviality, health, happiness, and the knowledge to ensure them'(Santos-Granero 2015a:28). In this thesis I consider both vitality and health to be part of the generative dimension of *living well*. For the Waorani people from Epepare and Yoweno, health is considered to be a synonym of *living well.* This resonance between health and wellbeing is noted also by Izquierdo (2005) who observes that among the Matsigenka health is not only the absence of illness, but it corresponds to a more holistic notion of wellbeing (2005:780).

Among the Matsigenka (Izquierdo 2005, 2009) and the Trio (Grotti 2007) the notion of well-being is closely linked with happiness. Trio *sasame wehto* is described as a state of contentment that is generated through social interactions and has effects in

[28] This relation is observed by Overing and Passes (2000:4).

social reproduction, which could be 'understood as 'being communally content'' (Grotti 2007:41). Among the Suyá/Kïsêdjê, Seeger (Seeger 2015:51) notes that music and dance performances are related to a sentiment called *kin* (to be happy/euphoric/ or to like)[29] which is at the core of their wellbeing. Furthermore, he argues that indigenous 'ideas of a good life may be expressed and experienced through sound and movement'(Seeger 2015:55), a dimension of life not often observed in ethnographic interviews carried out in quiet domestic spaces. Seeger's suggestion is present in this thesis particularly when approaching Waorani sensorial ecology in chapter 3.

Overall, Amazonian notions of wellbeing seem to be focused on keeping the 'good life going'[30] and/or integrating vital forces in such a way that the reproduction of society is secured, rather than "progressing" towards ideals of prosperity. But there is an interface where nation-state ideals of progress meet those of indigenous well-being. In Ecuador it was carried out in the name of *Buen Vivir* (living well). In this interface indigenous people are impelled to conceptualize or translate their 'needs', which includes a variety of aspects from social services (health care, education) to engagement in productive projects. While this research privileges indigenous conceptualizations and performance of wellbeing, it also includes several descriptions of its contemporary negotiation and translation in interactions with outsiders (see chapter 5).

Living well among the Waorani.

This section offers an overview of the Waorani notion of *living well* explored through different methodologies. A first dimension of *living well*, called here convivial, was expressed in almost all semi-structured interviews carried on with Waorani about the notion of *living well*. It was also pointed out in village assembles and in some daily life conversations. The second dimension, which I call ecological, was expressed by the Waorani most prominently while taking part in an art-based participatory research, and ecological aspects of *living well* were also noted in daily life, particularly while trekking in the forest. The third dimension, called generative, which includes health and activities that are conducive to the circulation of vitality, was pointed out in some

[29] Seeger (2015:51-52) notes that the generation of euphoria within a performance is not only generated by the act of singing and dancing, but it requires the observance of other factors such as sharing food, universal participation and certain interpersonal relationships.
[30] I refer to Ingold's (2005:173) description of the hunter-gatherer attitude towards life.

interviews but was primarily expressed by the Waorani when the absence of health was felt as a disturbance to their *living well.*

Convivial living well.

> *Watape kewemoni, moni mani wakete kewenkete ante monito kewemonipa mani ome.* Living well, like that living doing good, like that we live in our forest. (Wina, elderly Waorani woman)

While the notion of *'watape'* was mentioned several times during interviews with elderly people about what it means to live well, my young collaborators generally translated it as a synonym of *waponi* (good, beautiful). Whereas the word *wakete* whose literal meaning is 'doing good' was often translated as 'to live without problems'[31]. It follows that another notion that was mentioned in these reflections was *piyenekete* (doing or practising peace), other times expressed as *watape piyene* (peace). This suggests a Waorani emphasis on an eudaimonic notion of wellbeing. However, elderly and young people also included in their definitions of *living well* aspects related to collective happiness (*anka totamonipa*). Almost all elderly people related collective happiness to abundance of food and *durani bai* (like ancestors) feasts; but this is also a marker of peaceful relations. Therefore the eudaimonic notion goes hand in hand with a hedonic wellbeing. In addition, young people would often mention trips and playing football as *anka totamonipa* events. Few people talked about sex when referring to *living well*, but from the lives of my friends, it was clear to me that it was an important part of the hedonic notion of wellbeing. This narrative of *living well* connected with convivial harmony was also present in speeches uttered in village gatherings.

The discursive emphasis that the Waorani put on convivial aspects of *living well* is perhaps the reason why previous ethnographic analyses of *waponi kewemonipa* are focused primarily on its convivial aspect, although they tend to emphasise either the hedonic aspect of this notion, or the eudaimonic, without reflecting on how these are related. Laura Rival (2016), in a recent revision of her extensive work among the Waorani and other literature produced over the last decades, offers two definitions of the Waorani *waponi kewemonipa*. On the one hand, she dedicates a chapter to

[31] The words *waponi* or *waa* (beautiful, good) followed by conjugations of the verb *kewingui* (to live) are the most common ways for referring to *living well.* In addition, they often use the word *waemo*, which means good, beautiful, few people translated it as 'to be clean', and in some contexts was translated as 'to be healthy'. There are other words with the same roots, that were used by a minority of people, also accompanied by the verb 'to live': 1. *Wadebo* and *wadete*, translated as 'being grateful'; 'loving or caring' for others; 'to respect each other' or 'to be affectionate'; 2. *Watape kewingui*, to live well without generating problems; 3. *Wakete kewenkete ante*, to live well without problems.

describing Waorani wellbeing as the delight of living together, a sort of pleasant convivial sensuality (hedonic). On the other hand, she glosses *waponi kewemonipa* as a contemporary 'good life project' (Rival 2016:219), which is developed in villages that have not embraced oil projects and live far from the roads; villages that have integrated in their communitarian life project the *durani bai* (like the ancestors) way of life. Such articulation includes 'both ancestral tradition and nature' (Rival 2016:219).

If we define *waponi kewemonipa* as a 'good life project', then one might wonder how it looks along the oil roads. Is the ethical practice that informs the Waorani *living well* along the roads different from the autonomous and flourishing villages that Rival describes far from oil camps and roads? I am inclined to think that the ethics informing different Waorani 'good life projects' are the same, even when dealing with very different material conditions and channels for incorporating outsiders' resources. The difference might not be in the "good life project" *per se* but in the likelihood of actually performing it, given the challenges that villages located along the roads face – such as the increasing distance between the forest of plenty and the village, and the proximity with "dangerous" outsiders.

The other definition of *waponi kewemonipa* as a form of sensuality, or 'promiscuous well-being' (Rival 2016:125) emphasises key aspects that are at the core of convivial joys. Rival presents the longhouse pleasant conviviality as the epitome of the Waorani values, which she connects with playful intimacy – and with which I fully concur:

> [T]he Huaorani are gregarious fun lovers. Sensual bonding, as diffuse as food sharing, unfolds as one aspect of the pleasure of living in each other's company. Love and care are social relations that create solidarity through bodily practices. These sensual practices constitute, manifest, and reproduce love as a form of collective well-being and happiness or the value of living as one content body. Sensuality is neither centered on genitalia, nor is it the exclusive domain of adult heterosexuality. (Rival 2016: 163)

Rival notes that such sensuality responds to the Waorani need for developing an 'intimate knowledge' (2016:156) of each other's bodies, to care for each other's wellbeing, to become 'the same' or 'one body' while maintaining their values of autonomy, differentiation and freedom. Casey High (2015b) defines the Waorani notion of *waponi kiwimonipa* as linked with a relaxed and peaceful atmosphere, abundant in food and kin (2015b:17,61,48), therefore placing more emphasis on the eudaimonic aspect of it. Colleoni (2016) also perceives *living well* as connected to periods of peace and expansion. Colleoni does not provide further analysis of the

Waorani *living well* beyond connecting it with peace. High (2015b) expands the notion of *living well* by considering the current Waorani aspiration of having peaceful relationships also with non-Waorani, including former enemies such as indigenous Kichwa people. This change of attitude that High calls 'from enemies to friends' also has overtones; for example, most shamanic attacks are perceived as coming from Kichwa shamans, but the Waorani look precisely to Kichwa shamans to heal shamanic-related ailments (chapter 2).

This convivial dimension will be analysed throughout this thesis when addressing different aspects of *living well*: consumption of manioc beer as opposed to strong liquor (chapter 2); village organization (chapter 3); egalitarian relationships and collective happiness (chapter 4); incorporation of outsiders into village conviviality (chapter 5); and the use of virtual social networks for actualization of kinship relations (chapter 6). This conviviality includes the hedonic and the eudaimonic wellbeing. However, the desire for *living well* with the *guirinani* (extended kin) and the need for avoiding confrontations with those who live in the same village is sometimes not solved, and then the solution is fission (see chapter 3). While there is a tendency in Epepare and Yoweno towards village growth, during my fieldwork there were some families who abandoned those villages to avoid confrontations. Overall, when asking people about an epoch in which they lived in a better way, or in a particular beautiful way, many responses pointed to a time when they lived in smaller settlements, or in the same village but when they were 'only few families' and there was less gossip. Even when most of the people said that they live happily and peacefully with their *guiri* (relatives), they often pointed out that "others" do not live "that" well, that "some" gossip[32] and drink liquor. In extended interviews with Waorani who were willing to reflect with me about what it means to live well, the concern for behaving in a proper way so to avoid problems was often pointed out:

> To live well the Waorani have to share with everybody, if I have [I have to share], the Wao people have lived like that, if something arrives for him, that must be for everybody, then people is well. Otherwise if they see that only one person have, uuuuu they see you with a bad face. […] It would be good if everything is for everybody, to have equality, equality for all. (Omi, young Waorani woman, Yoweno)

Omi chooses to talk about the Waorani egalitarian ethos at the core of *living well* because the maintenance of egalitarian relationships is a main challenge in Yoweno (see chapter 4). Thus, good conviviality is not only about the hedonic pleasure of living

[32] Ewart (2008:511) notes that among the Panará gossip is considered a form of 'ugly speech'.

together, but it is also about the maintenance of Waorani egalitarian values. If these values are not respected, as Omi says people 'see you with a bad face'. The opposite of a tranquil life is *wiwa kewingui* (living badly). The convivial dimension of *living well* requires a moral disposition towards *waa keka* (doing or behaving well). This virtue-centred morality (see Overing and Passes 2000) should also be considered in relation to the environment. In the next section I suggest that people's willingness to live well is enhanced or diminished by their sensorial ecology.

Ecological living well.

By ecological *living well* I am referring to a place-based wellbeing, related to the forest as a socio/biological milieu. Sarmiento (2016) among the Ashaninka in Peru presents a compelling account of a challenged place-based *living well*; Ashaninka people think that "earth is angry" because of how disrespectfully it was treated during the civil war (1980-2000). Ashaninka wellbeing relies on relationships with this sentient being, so that while earth is angry Ashaninka could not thrive. Therefore, a conceptualization of a place-based *living well* should be understood while having in mind indigenous ontological recognition of non-human beings as sentient beings and persons.

Waorani call the forest *monito ome* (our forest), *memeiri ome* (the forest of our ancestors) and they emphasise this relation as *ome gompote* (to care for or to defend the forest). Throughout this thesis, different aspects of Waorani place-based *living well* are analysed: in relation to Waorani health (chapter 2); sensorial ecology (chapter 3); and local economies (chapter 4). For now, I will introduce the methodology through which I approached this ecological *living well*.

Waorani refer to this ecological *living well* when talking about defending the forest; it is also often pointed out while trekking. However, the forest-related *living well* was made clear to me when developing participatory methods with the Waorani. I developed three participatory methods: art-based research method; video and photo recording; audio journals from forest treks. In this section, I will address the first method for supporting the idea of an ecological *living well*.

After conducting interviews about what it means to live well among the Waorani of Yoweno and Epepare villages, I perceived that some young adults, even when open to talk, did not seem to find the words for answering my questions. Some of them were in general quiet, but some others were more expressive in different contexts, such as when trekking in the forest, walking together on the road or even "visiting" the waiting

room of the health post. In other words, the idea of sitting and answering open questions to an anthropologist was not conducive for spontaneous talk. Thus, I recalled that while working with the Waorani on a health project in 2014, I had been struck by the enthusiasm and skills with which Waorani of all ages engaged in painting. I decided to try an Art-based research method ABR (Major and Savin-Baden 2010; Wang et al. 2017) for exploring the notion of *waponi kewemonipa.*

Since I did not plan to conduct this method before arriving to do fieldwork, I chose a method based on painting T-shirts, which was something I had already envisioned when working with the health project[33]. Painting T-shirts was a convenient option for me because fabric paint was easy to find in the nearest Amazonian city, but also because each Waorani would bring their own T-shirt if they wanted to join the activity. Besides, I have no qualifications as an artist and the use of other possible materials or techniques for painting – e.g. watercolor – was not an option.

This method was developed in a simple way: I brought the painting materials, basically paints and brushes, and let people know that on a certain day we would be painting T-shirts, so if they wanted to join the activity, they should bring a T-shirt. When they arrived, I provided the materials for them and explained that this activity was part of my intention for understanding *waponi wekemonipa*, so that would be the topic of the painting; then, each person decided how to do the painting[34]. I realized that the colours provided by me were not enough; for example, I was not able to get a brown colour in Amazonian shops, and the Waorani pointed out the "lack of brown"; some young people with formal education mixed colours so to obtain the brown paint. Beside this limitation of colours, the Waorani developed their painting in the most spontaneous way possible, bearing in mind that I suggested the topic[35]. By this I mean that I avoided giving any "suggestion" of technique or features. At the end of the activity each painter developed a speech about the meaning of their pictures.

[33] I coordinated a health programme from a NGO which had funding assigned for giving T-shirts as part of some health promotion activities, so I thought we should be able to make the T-shirts more personal and more connected to the Waorani perspective by painting them with the Waorani people. So I had already applied this method in 2014-2015, not as a research activity, but as a health promotion technique, at that point focusing on the topic of health as a general category.

[34] This research method was mostly based in Epepare, where people of all ages embraced the activity effortlessly. Some of them preferred to paint their T-shirts individually, but others chose to paint in groups. I did not pursue a reflection on the group dynamic, which resembles the daily life equilibrium between autonomous and collective activities. Instead, the reflection was focused on the meaning of each picture as expressed by the artist.

[35] I suggested *'waponi kewemonipa'* but the Waorani from Epepare used several different spellings, which can be seen in their creations. This diversity in the Epepare case might be due to differences in participants' formal education background. Yoweno's greater homogeneity in the spelling could be also due to a power point presentation that I showed, which contained the spelling on one slide.

Interestingly, while I spent more time living in Yoweno, and was much more integrated to my host family, this participatory research was better embraced in the smaller and more cohesive village of Epepare. In Epepare, almost the whole village took part in the activity that was directed towards young people. In Yoweno, there were mainly young people with a few mature adults who were both criticizing and celebrating the creations of the youths. Here, I present a selection of pictures to allow me to discuss their aesthetics and also Waorani insightful explanations of their meanings.

Picture 1.1 Epepare 2017. Photographer: Byron Ima.

Picture 1.2 Epepare 2017. Photographer: Byron Ima.

Picture 1.3 ¡WAA KEWINGUI! 2017. [36]

Picture 1.4 Epepare 2017.

[36] I have obtained informed consent from all the Waorani artists who appear in the pictures. When there is no reference to another photographer, the photo was taken by the author.

The choice of what would be the first feature to be drawn is very telling about people's priorities. Picture number 1.1 and 1.3 are Manuel Ima's drawings, a young Waorani whose father is a skilful hunter and himself is developing hunting skills. Manuel, who very often complained about pollution in the village river, decided to first paint a tree. He chose the spelling *´waa kewingui´* which is translated in Spanish by several young Waorani as *Buen Vivir* (living well). This painting could be read as a visual representation of the forest's highly appreciated abundance. The drawing includes a river with fishes and reptiles, but also water coming from rain, a sun, a butterfly, birds in a tree and a flower. At the bottom are forest animals surrounded by green, the biggest one 'is a tapir, he is eating', Manuel explained.

When Manuel developed a speech in Spanish to the participants about the meaning of his painting, he started by describing the features, and added: 'each one has its life, the tree has its life, the water, earth, the animals'. He then discussed a point of view of the village president (picture 1.2 and 1.4) saying: 'Juan says that only humans have rights, but I think that everybody has, animals have rights, trees also have'. This shows how Waorani with formal education translate their values into the sphere of 'rights', and this translation is developed for explaining their values to outsiders[37] (chapter 5). These differences in points of view seemed to be appreciated among the Waorani, for whom diversity and autonomy is important (see Rival 2002, 2016).

Manuel finished his explanation by pointing out at the right bottom of the picture, there is a *durani onko* (traditional Waorani house). At the right-hand side of the *durani onko* is one of the most important forest beings for the Waorani, the peach palm tree, which apart from being a seasonal main staple represents an abundance that links the Waorani through generations (Rival 1993, 2002). Manuel explained 'there we have the peach palm, and people in the hammock enjoying without pollution, free from oil'. At the end Manuel explained himself with a poetic phrase: 'if you take all the blood from our body we cannot live, the same, if they take all the oil from here, one day the Yasuní is going to be desert, that is why I have drawn this'[38].

[37] I acknowledge that the formal education which the Waorani receive at school has an effect on the verbal and visual language people use, this is evident in the variations of painting techniques and the speech. I have not managed to differentiate between specific effects that formal education might have in people's attitudes towards *living well*. Nevertheless, the pictures that were created by elderly people who took part on this activity in Epepare, without formal education, offer similar features that those contained in those of young Waorani with formal education. The main variations between elderly and young people's pictures were seen in the use of colours and the techniques; elderly people used a more minimalistic approach with traces that resemble their skills for body painting. More research would be required to expand a reflection about these aesthetic differences.

[38] Epepare is located in the Yasuní (YPN).

Picture 1.2 is the drawing by the village president, Juan Enomenga, whose main activity is to obtain resources from external Others, particularly from the State. Thus, it is very telling that he decided to first paint an Ecuadorian flag and by the side of it a football pitch. Only after that, in picture 1.4, he included forest features that are very similar to picture 1.3: a tree, water in a river with fish and water coming from rain, a bird, a *durani onko.* He also included a peccary explaining that 'there is no good living without this peccary, this is good food'. The preference for white-lipped peccary was pointed out to me by a number of young Waorani women who mentioned their appreciation for the peccary's abundant meat which allows "sharing with everybody" as they say, although monkey meat still has a higher value as proper food for making strong people[39].

Juan's explanation of the painting started with a reference to the need for sun and water from the rain for trees to live well. After that he noted the football pitch saying 'in Epepare we cannot live without *deporte* (sport)', an activity that will be further analysed as a mechanism for the maintenance of health (chapter 2) in villages where trekking in the forest is reduced among young people; but also it actualizes social bonds (chapter 4). Juan connected the Ecuadorian flag with the need for formal education, which he like many young Waorani see as essential for thriving after peaceful contact[40]. At the end of his speech, he said that another aspect of *living well* is to have couples, husband and wife, living happily in the village.

Juan (picture 1.4) does not place people resting happily inside the *durani onko*, as Manuel does. The Waorani in Juan's painting are happily playing football at the football pitch, which is a central aspect of his painting, and a central aspect of village life. Juan is indeed referring to an activity that is performed daily by several young people, much more often than trekking into the forest. Therefore, Juan shifted the focus of *living well* from the pleasures of living together in the longhouse, to an extended socialization in village life. Juan's speech also confirms what Rival (2016) notes regarding the development of an economy of obtainability near oil camps (see chapter

[39] Rival (1996a) noted that the Waorani preferred hunting animals who inhabit the trees, such as birds and monkeys; the consumption of peccary was done in a sort of orgy and was done only sporadically. Kelley and Yost (1992) already registered a flexibilization in relation to food restrictions after peaceful contact, so that now the Waorani eat many animals that before were regarded as not being proper food for humans.

[40] Rival (1992, 1996b, 2002) noted Waorani willingness towards engaging with formal education, which was also a main device for incorporating the Waorani into the national society.

4), but the 'natural abundance'[41] economy is still at the core of the Waorani values along oil roads.

> …the economy of procurement, which constitutes the forest as natural abundance, tends today to be relegated—or at least confined—to hinterland communities. With the expansion of the oil frontier, I argue, it is the logic of "obtainability" that structures the claims of communities settled along the oil roads. (Rival 2016: 202-203)

Despite the parallel existence of these two economies, the place-based *living well* for the Waorani is primarily connected to the forest. However, as I argue in chapter 3, the "beautiful" forest of plenty is shrinking, and getting far from the road.

Picture 1.5 Football pitch near *durani onko* 2017.

Picture 1.6 Waponi quewemo 2017.

Paintings from picture 1.5 and 1.6 belong to Doris, a young woman who also includes a small football pitch and an Ecuadorian flag, the latter she explains as a symbol of formal education. Doris included these features only when the forest priorities were already drawn – and perhaps after being reminded of this by Juan (pictures 1.2 and 1.4) who was painting by her side. Doris used a different spelling *waponi quewemo* for the same notion, and at the end of her speech she said: 'this is all we need for living free and in peace'.

Most of the pictures that the Waorani created in Epepare had the forest as the central feature, with the exception of one that developed a picture of the whole earth. However, after finishing the painting, people were making jokes about aspects that they

[41] The reliance on an economy of procurement from the forest abundance is discussed in chapter 4.

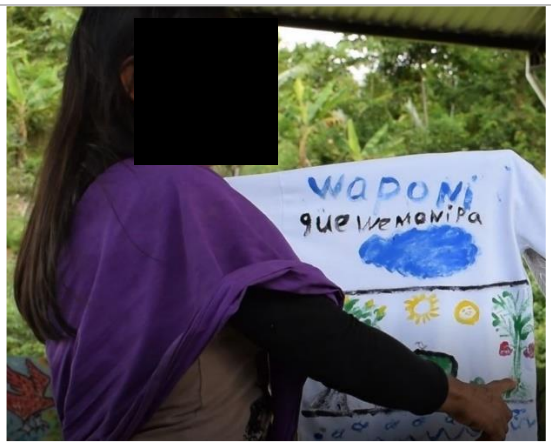
did not include, such as sex. They explicitly said that it is important to enjoy it with the partner. Also, Juan complained, partly joking, partly serious: 'Why have you painted only forest? Where is the potable water that we need?' and people laughed back. This means that the *waponi kewemonipa* in these pictures contains what intuitively most people feel are the dearest aspects of their *living well*; it does not mean that they do not also share Juan's aspiration for public services, through the obtainability of external resources. Furthermore, it is the president who takes care of that negotiation with the "outside", while the Waorani care for the daily life "inside" (see also Rival 2016:247)

Picture 1.7 Waponi Kewemoni 2017.

Picture 1.8 Waponi Keguimamo 2017.

What is particularly interesting from these pictures is the similarity of features that can be seen in the paintings by young, mature and elderly Waorani participants: rain water, *durani onko*, sun, animals, trees, flowers, the river with fish. Martha (picture 1.7) explained that she wanted to include every single detail that the Waorani need for *living well,* in *Wao terero* she said *'toma'* (all, the whole). Another woman, Rufina, reacted to these paintings saying: 'Nowadays, the oil company is finishing (with this), in the same way trees are disappearing'. Monka from picture 1.8 noted: 'this is what we need for living, this should not be polluted'. Monka, who is one of the best young hunters of this village, includes at the top of the painting the peach palm and at the bottom a Waorani carrying a spear.

Picture 1.9 Waponi 2017.



Picture 1.10 The peach palm 2017.

Juana, an elderly participant, from pictures 1.9 and 1.10, presented her painting in *Wao terero* in a voice tone that the Waorani praise as *strong speech* (chapter 5). This is a kind of speech that women and men use particularly in big gatherings, their voice is attuned with pitches that recall anger, euphoria and courage. Juana used the *strong speech* as a way of saying: 'this is how it must be'. She described each feature of her painting in relation to each other, but emphasising the notion of *toma* 'the whole', 'all':

> […] We live with rain water, without it we die, the trees also die. There are the sun and the moon likewise, *tomanani* (all of them) in this way for us to live. The trees are the same […] like this for *tomamo* (us), animals, *tomamo* (everybody) living. What else? The fish, in the water that we drink, without water they die, we also feed ourselves with the fish. With water *toma kewemo* (we all live). The trees also drink the water from the rain. In the same way, the peach palm, we in the same way keep drinking and drinking *daguenka* (peach palm fruit), this is for us. We *toma (all)*, fish, birds, *toma onkoiri* (all the houses), we in this way, *kewemo tomamo* (we all live) like this […] in this way we do, *waa kete kewingui* (live doing well).

The notion of *toma* is discussed in chapter 4 as part of the generative dimension of living well. As I have noted before, these dimensions are intertwined or refer to the same thing from different perspectives. Here Juana refers to the notion of *toma* (all, the whole) in relation to the forest. She uses the word *toma* (all) for describing a highly relational *living well*. She compares the way in which humans and other sentient beings live, while stressing they 'drink the water from the rain', and in a similar way, Waorani drink peach palm (in the right hand side of the picture) beverage. After describing a series of ecological relations that make life possible, such as 'we live with rain water, without it we die, the trees also die', Juana concludes by saying 'we live doing well'. This phrase is often used in interviews about living well with Waorani people, normally referring to convivial aspects of their lives. At the end of the art-based research activity, I asked the Waorani participants whether they agreed with the definition of living well

that the artists presented; in Epepare, Juana's explanation was selected by the majority of people as the explanation with which they agree the most.

Picture 1.11 One longhouse 2017.

Picture 1.12 Several Waorani houses 2017.

Picture 1.13 Other style of house 2017.

Picture 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13 are all from Waorani women, all of them perhaps influenced in one way or another by formal education since these three women have attended at least a few years of primary school. I prefer to read them as intuitive reflections on *living well* informed by individual life stories. The first, from left to right, is a middle-aged woman with a life story that emphasises continuity with the *durani* (ancestors) ways, and she actually has a longhouse in Epepare and another longhouse located deep in the forest; this woman draws this "continuity" in her *living well* by including a peach palm on the hills and a palm house, but this longhouse is located by the river, which is different from how the *durani* used to live, and more how they live nowadays. The second is a young woman in her twenties who enjoys life in the village with extended kin; she not only paints one longhouse but also two small palm houses by the side, in this way showing that her *living well* is collective. The final picture is by a young woman whose mother is Kichwa and her father Waorani; she prefers a house with wood walls and corrugated iron roof, perhaps resembling contemporary Kichwa houses.

During this participatory research most of the people included houses as part of their representation of *living well*. However, the centrality of the house varies, as well as the style. This ubiquitous and diverse house, located in a detailed forest background, points towards an interconnection between the convivial dimension of *living well* and the ecological dimension. Putting this differently, *living well* is indeed about the pleasure of living peacefully together, but not only this. My understanding here is that the Waorani painted a "big" picture of *waponi kewemonipa*, in which the convivial

living well is located at the core of a variety of ecological relations, which together draw the whole picture: including *toma* (all) the necessary relations for *living well* within a bio/social forest milieu. Moreover, in chapter 3 I suggest that a 'proper' sensorial ecology has effects on people's willingness to engage in convivial *living well.*

Generative living well.

In this category, I consider activities that are conducive to the circulation and replenishment of people's vitality[42]. For the Waorani, people's health and strength are expressions of vitality. However, the dimension of vitality is seen within and beyond the forest. I have seen Waorani people expressing an abundance of vitality in the most diverse situations: after a good hunt; during and after an enjoyable trek in the forest; during and after an exciting football match; during a feast; but also after visiting distant cities and being fed with different food, news and amusing events. Likewise, the arrival of abundant external resources or generous foreign visitors seems to mobilize Waorani vitality towards a sudden rise of energy, expressed in active attention and laughter.

The volume edited by Santos-Granero (2015a) about wellbeing in Amazonia shows a widespread regard for the 'abundance' of vitality in its different forms, including: 'life-giving substances, health, beautiful life force, bio-power, generative capacities, or productive skills' (2015a:15). As we will see, Waorani people admire and encourage the replenishment of this vital force among people and the forest (cf. Strathern 2018).

Ideas of a generative[43] *living well* are explored throughout this thesis in relation to the notion of vitality expressed in healthy people (chapter 2); vitality related to a sensorial ecology (chapter 3); generative activities related to Epepare and Yoweno local economies (chapter 4); and *strong speech* (chapter 5). Overall, my use of the notion 'generative' refers to the process or action of sharing and channelling substances so as to maintain or create healthy people, who in turn contribute to the maintenance of collective living well. As will be discussed in chapter 2, these substance-sharing processes among the Waorani in daily life produce different subjectival beings (Santos-Granero 2012a) rather than different perspectival persons (Viveiros de Castro 1998).

[42] Chapter two starts with a theoretical discussion of this category, which in general terms refers to the Waorani notion of *pii* (fuerza).

[43] My use of the notion generative does not draw on generative linguistics, instead it refers to a general sense of the verb 'to generate' understood as 'to produce from other substances or as the result of some process or action' (OED). Santos-Granero (2015a:18) uses the notion "generative" for referring to wealth that is incorporated from outside, but my use of the notion refers to processes happening within the Waorani society, which does not exclude the incorporation of substances from outside.

Waponi kewemonipa as a whole.

In this chapter I suggested that there are at least three interconnected dimensions essential for the Waorani *living well*: convivial, ecological, and generative. The division between conviviality and ecology should not be confused as a distinction between nature and culture; far from that, by ecological, I am referring to a socio/biological milieu that also permeates convivial relationships. The convivial dimension is reflected in Waorani oral narratives of *living well*, which emphasise peaceful relationships among those who live together, heavily informed by egalitarian values and bodily pleasures. This clearly resonates with Overing's (1993, 1999; Overing and Passes 2000) analytical style that is broadly known as 'moral economy of intimacy' (Viveiros de Castro 1996:189). However, when approaching the Waorani notion of *living well* through different participatory research methods, the image –quite literally– that they provide about *living well* is beyond conviviality. In other words, the separation between dimensions of *living well* is merely methodological and analytical. In the convivial dimension the lens is focused more on moral relations of intimacy among the Waorani, whereas in the ecological dimension the lens expands towards a sensorial ecology, and in the generative dimension, I pursue an understanding of how the Waorani life force is affected – increased, continued or declining – by convivial, ecological and cosmological relationships, and how those relationships influence the Waorani *living well*.

In addition, there is a dimension of time that is somehow perceived differently depending on the focus on conviviality, ecological relations or vitality. Good conviviality happens in present time, informed by Waorani egalitarian values and ancestors' ways, but performed "now". The ecological dimension draws a line between past generations and the future replenishment of people and forest beings. Replenishment, as Strathern (2018) puts it, is related to vitality (the generative dimension), as an immanent quality of life that extends over time. A sort of "immortality" in the form of immanence has been conceptualized by Kengowento, a Waorani philosopher from Yoweno, who argues that 'the Waorani should be like earth, earth never dies'. When Kengowento talks about Waorani people not dying, his emphasis and examples include references to his grandchildren rather than himself; he is concerned about the 'replenishment of people' (see Strathern 2018). When he talks

about the immortal quality of earth, he does not refer to earth as the planet, but earth as “the soil”. Kengowento is conscious of a variety of life cycles, including the organic decomposition of forest beings, and even Waorani bodies, that enable soil regeneration. This notion of vitality that connects life over time is the focus of the next chapter, in relation to Waorani health.

CHAPTER 2: HEALTH, VITALITY AND COURAGE

> For what I have seen in my journeys, I think that these couple from X[44] are the only really healthy people [pointing out a picture]. […]
> Their *carácter* (character/temper) is like *durani* (ancestors) people, they have strong voice, but when they talk [with me] they have a very soft voice tone. They are very active.
>
> —Alfredo, middle aged Waorani man.

Alfredo and I were visiting Yoweno's health post, and a display of health brigade pictures caught his attention, as he has taken part in many of those brigades. Unexpectedly, pointing to a picture of an old Waorani couple, he uttered a health diagnosis in Spanish: 'the only really healthy people'. When I asked what makes them healthy, Alfredo developed this idea of health connected with a *durani bai* 'character', whose main features, he suggested, are a strong voice, but also the capacity of being soft, gentle; a lack of tiredness, a vitality that maintains them 'very active'. This chapter addresses health as suggested by Alfredo, not as the absence of identifiable diseases but as a way of being, a character, which is perceived to be an expression of people's vitality.

While ideas of how to "live well" vary across cultures, the maintenance of health or at least keeping at bay major ailments is a universal requirement for *living well*; as Conklin (2015:60) has noted, what varies is the consideration of whether health is an individual or a collective concern. In the Waorani case, health is a collective concern, and it not only refers to physical health but includes moral, social and spiritual considerations. Even when there is a characterisation of healthy Waorani people that refers to individual subjectivities, as I discuss in the first section of this chapter, those subjectivities are collectively made.

For this chapter, I collected detailed information about the Waorani definition of health, contemporary health-seeking dynamics and Waorani relationships with disease treatment providers. This was done mainly through participation in daily life. When possible, I conducted interviews with people who had experienced diseases that were commented upon during my fieldwork. One of my collaborators had worked for biomedical institutions for five years and was able to talk about health-seeking behaviour with historical knowledge. I did not work closely with any Waorani healer, but they were open to talking with me in extended interviews. I also conducted interviews with doctors working in Yoweno.

[44] A remote village located at approximately 7 hours by canoe from Yoweno.

The chapter starts with a general analysis of the Waorani notion of vitality and its relation to the Waorani body and soul. Next, I suggest that a particular kind of subjectivity called 'courage' is closely connected with vitality and the Waorani perception of healthy people. This is followed by an exploration of cases in which vitality and health are seen to be disrupted; this section illuminates the challenges that peaceful contact poses for Waorani health. Finally, the chapter addresses the relation between strong liquor consumption and harmful expressions of vitality; the pathways that Waorani people have developed for dealing with this are particularly telling about how *living well* is related to Waorani health.

Vitality and health.

I came back from fieldwork in 2018 convinced that a form of vitality or vital energy was at the core of Waorani understanding of health, and that they have a mechanism for its maintenance and increase, which is what I call the generative dimension of *living well*. After listening to a lecture given by Marilyn Strathern (2018) in which she uses the notion of vitality in relation to an immanent quality of life that allows the replenishment of crops and people, it became clearer to me that in their notion of vitality the Waorani are not talking about a metaphysic quality of the soul, but are literally pointing to a substance that is channelled through the body and informs a certain kind of subjectivity, or perhaps different subjectivities. If we consider that within the well-established Amazonian literature on personhood (Conklin and Morgan 1996; Pollock 1996; Santos-Granero 2012a; Seeger, DaMatta, and Viveiros de Castro 1979; among others), subjectivity is related to the soul, a condition that we share with non-humans, and what provides a particularly social identity and perspective is the body, then the logical question is how vitality relates to the body and the soul. This is a question that I shall address here, before considering the direct implications of vitality for health.

Amazonian theories of beinghood.

In this introduction to Amazonian theories of personhood, I follow Santos-Granero's (2012a) approach; instead of *personhood* the notion of *beinghood* is used to consider subjectivities beyond the person (ibid: 184). Since the publication of Seeger, Da Matta and Viveiros de Castro's (1979) seminal work, which offered a comprehensive theory

about the centrality of the body for the 'social production of people' (ibid:3), there is a general agreement in Amazonian studies in terms of the social construction of the body and the bodily construction of society (Conklin 2001a; Mccallum 1996; Taylor 1996; Turner 1995; among others). Nevertheless, ethnographers of Amazonia differ in terms of how body and soul relate to a certain kind of subjectivity, which is to say, how *beinghood* is expressed. There are two main theories that have been developed in this regard, namely, Amazonian perspectivism (Lima 1999; Viveiros de Castro 1998, 2001), and what Santos-Granero (2012a) calls constructivist or constructional and Walker (2009:81) describes as 'processual' theories (Gow 1991; McCallum 2001; Overing 1999; Overing and Passes 2000; among others). For the latter body of work, I would use the notion *generative* that I have introduced in chapter 1, which embraces processes that generate different subjectivities as opposed to "given" subjectivities.

For Amazonian perspectivism, any being who has a soul has a consciousness similar to humans. This is a form of subjectivity which does not vary, but is pretty much a fixed condition. What differentiates humans from other beings is the body, which is the locus of the identity. In other words, we have similar subjectivities (culture) as other beings, but the perspective that we have of the world varies among different bodies (nature). Viveiros de Castro (1998) notes that while the body is an external cloth-like form that differentiates humans from animals and other beings, the 'internal form is the 'soul' or 'spirit' of the animal: an intentionality or subjectivity formally identical to human consciousness, materializable, let us say, in a human bodily schema concealed behind an animal mask' (ibid:471). The perspectivist approach is abundant with descriptions of predatory relationships between different subjects including animals, spirits and humans, in which humans are at risk of adopting the Other's point of view; for example, Lima (1999) describes how the soul of a hunter could be captured by peccaries, in which case the hunter is mistaken by his human fellows and becomes a peccary himself. While the perspective changes in these encounters with alterity, the soul remains the same. Within perspectival theories there have been bridges towards a more *generative* approach, particularly in the work of Fausto (2007a) who suggests that the soul is not "given" but 'it is also constructed along with the person's biography' (2007:509); he suggests that subjectivity should be considered in terms of agency or intentionality. Perspectival explanations are particularly concerned with the risk that an animal's agency (see also Vilaça 2002:357-358) might prevail over the human; the risk of becoming other comes into account also

in predatory encounters with Other humans, Fausto (2012) notes that warfare relationships entail the appropriation of the 'enemy's agency' (ibid:260) or subjectivity while dealing with the risk of becoming the Other.

Generative theories can be found mainly in studies of conviviality, moralities and medical anthropology (Conklin and Morgan 1996; Londoño Sulkin 2005; Mccallum 1996; Overing and Passes 2000; Pollock 1996; among others). For these theories body and soul are interconnected in such a way that subjectivity can be enhanced, diminished or shared through substances; thus, for these theories, sharing of substances with other persons and beings entails a sharing of subjectivity that does not necessarily lead to a perspectival change (Santos-Granero 2012a:189). *Generative* ethnographies are more focused on humans than on animals or spirits, and even when they engage in a dialogue with perspectival theories, they challenge the idea of a "similar" subjectivity between humans and other beings (e.g., Londoño 2005). Walker (2009, 2013b) in a study of baby hammocks and stone bowls go a step further, suggesting that for Urarina people subjectivity 'is potentially available to both persons and things, is inherently gendered and relational, and does not presuppose the presence of a soul' (2009:82). This analysis of a generative or processual subjectivity is illuminating for the Waorani case, for whom humans are able to incorporate subjectival capacities or agency from other beings, such as stinging nettles and feline teeth, without meaning that these beings have the same human subjectivity but acknowledging their subjectival potential.

Santos-Granero (2012a:202) suggests that perspectival and constructional (*generative*) theories of beinghood are not mutually exclusive, although most ethnographies tend to emphasise one of these approaches. My ethnographic material resonates more with the *generative* approach. Waorani people develop in ordinary life a series of practices in which subjectivity is "crafted"; the study of vitality that I explore in this chapter is a particular good example of this. By enhancing people's vitality a certain kind of subjectivity is achieved. At the same time, Waorani myths, dreams and shamanic visions recognize that animals and other beings are persons (cf. Descola 2013; Pálsson and Descola 1996); there is a tale in which even stones become persons in the night to have parties such as the Waorani do. During the time that I lived with the Waorani, I only knew of one case in which a woman had an encounter with a non-human "point of view"; she met a jaguar spirit in the forest, after which she managed to

go back to the village, but this encounter was experienced as an ailment[45]. Therefore, while the possibility of ontological predatory encounters is acknowledged, I suggest that Waorani people, considering that subjectivities are not "given" but crafted over a lifetime, guide their daily activities focusing more on the incorporation of subjectival substances. Furthermore, perspectival approaches suggest that game meat for human consumption should be absent of the prey subjectivity or "agency", therefore transformed into an "object" by ritual practices and by the process of cooking (see Fausto 2007a). But Waorani people embrace the idea of acquiring, for example, monkeys' capacities in the form of strength by consuming their cooked meat[46].

Vitality in Amazonia.

My use of the notion of vitality resonates with Conklin's (2015) description of the Wari' notion *Hwara opa'* (the closest notion that they have to the English term 'health'). She uses the word vitality to embrace the physical, social and moral dimensions of the *Hwara opa'* notion, noting that such vitality is contained in individuals but channelled towards collective wellbeing (2015:66-67). However, unlike the Wari' , the Waorani do not seem to pursue predatory relationships or warfare with outsiders to enhance their own vitality (see Conklin 2001b). Furthermore, Conklin's (2015) description of vitality in the Wari' case places a strong emphasis on "productivity" and collective work, which I understand is related to Wari' horticultural practices; whereas Waorani vitality, expressed as being healthy or being courageous, is not necessarily channelled through collective work[47]. Vitality is enhanced in collective acts such as feasting, and people's individual vitality is shared – e.g., a man hunting on his own[48] comes back to share his game and even its sweat through a ritual act– with effects on collective *living well*. Vitality is often channelled through bodily substances,

[45] I was unable to explore details about how this ailment was treated in the following days, but she was expected to remain at home while ensuring her bonds with the world of humans through convivial acts.

[46] While people currently hunt less with blow-pipes, this appreciation of monkey meat should be understood in the light of what Rival (1996a) observed regarding game meat; Waorani people's use of blow-pipes for hunting monkeys was not referred as killing but as "blowing", the latter being without violent connotations and different from the spear killing needed for hunting peccaries. Therefore, the monkey's subjectivity was not acquired through warfare or predation. Waorani also practice a sharing of vitality and skills between hunters and children connected with peccary hunting, which will be discussed in chapter 4.

[47] In chapter 4 when analysing the ritual sharing of sweat, I describe a case in which a parent said he will not ritually share his sweat (vitality/energy) with his children, because he has been working in a team, which he labelled as 'friendly work', gentle work; he would have practised the ritual if he was hunting, or working in the garden only with his wife, implying an energetic effort.

[48] I refer to an individual performance, while aware that in Amazonian societies one is perhaps never "on one's own", but always part of a collective, unless one isolates oneself and becomes Other.

increasing or diminishing people's agency or capacities (Conklin 2001b). In this chapter, I build on Conklin's processual or generative (2001b:160, 2015:72) analysis of vitality as related to agency, without the focus on collective work or predation on the outsider's vitality. My use of the notion of agency is informed by Amazonian studies that consider the possibility of different humans and non-humans having "processual" capacities or agencies that are enhanced through convivial and ritual practices; Conklin (2001b) uses the notion of agency when describing gendered capacities for action related to people's vitality. High (2010b) offers a study of non-antagonist gendered agency among the Waorani, focusing on the 'production of specific generational forms of masculinity'(ibid:755). Walker's (2009) study of Amazonian objects' agency suggests that 'the hammock's own agency necessarily exceeds that of the baby in order to effectively imbue it with the requisite qualities of a gendered, social person' (2009:94-95), while stone bowls are only 'fully subjectivized' (2009:95) with human intervention[49]. In a study about Waorani shamanism and agentivity, High (2012b) notes 'that Waorani people struggle to reconcile the moral implications of different forms of agency and intentionality that transcend 'human' and 'animal' kinds' (2012b:132); the analysis of these different forms of agency allows High to challenge the idea of a similar subjectivity between humans and non-humans.

Ethnographers in Amazonia have noted the relation between wellbeing and notions of vitality, through terms such as 'vital energy', as early as the 1980's. Crocker's ethnography among the Bororo suggested:

> The Bororo term for the source of life and well-being is *raka*, associated generally with all natural vigor and fructification. *Raka* is the animating force which endows living things with the capacity to continue their existences. It empowers the rains to fall, jaguars to kill, men and women to work, sing, and procreate. It is animate, yet insentient. While intimately tied with the *bope*, it is neither their agent nor their exclusive possession. For *raka* drives the soul, *aroe*, whose connection with the material body swells and diminishes with the growth and loss of *raka*. (1985:41)

In the next section in which I discuss the Waorani notion of vital force, the resemblance with Crocker's descriptions will become evident. Nevertheless, the Bororo seem to be much more concerned with notions of "shame" related to the visibility of their *raka;* for example a father would consider it a sort of incest to be near places where he might "smell" his son's copulation, whereas for his son, having sex with a woman is part of their sharing of *raka* (ibid:108). Descriptions of this "vital" element in Amazonia tend to relate it to bodily substances. Conklin notes its relationship with blood and semen

[49] For a review of different Lowland South America approaches to agency see High (2010a:4-7).

(Conklin 2001b). In a comparative analysis of ethnographic material from Melanesia and Amazonia, Roscoe (2001) notes that in both regions people – he focuses particularly on men – consider bodily avoidances, such as sex abstinence, before engaging in activities that are closely related with people's "vitality" or "strength" – such as hunting – noting also that 'excessive or inappropriate sexual activity is commonly depicted as a threat to this "strength," "power," or "vitality."' (2001:290) Whereas Jolly (2001), in a comment on Roscoe' focus, suggest that 'avoidance produces a more vital and empowered self for both men and women' (ibid:204), suggesting that continence is also 'seen as *generative* of fertility and growth' (ibid:178).

Nahum-Claudel's (2018) work among the Enawenê-nawê in Brazilian Amazonia notes that vitality is related to health, and suggest that 'life is a positional quality and a sliding scale, perennially threatened by predatory agencies who would appropriate human vitality and thus cause sickness and death'(2018:12); therefore, people take care while engaging with the circulatory nature of vital resources which often 'implies that economic activities entail care, negotiation and reciprocity' (2018:12). References to Amazonian notions of vitality are often found in ethnographic descriptions of 'vital breath'(see Walker 2013b:38), which is broadly defined as a force that animates beings and spaces. Walker (2013b:40) describes vital breath while examining a chant that includes a 'sudden burst of breath at the end of each stanza' as 'the decisive moment in which enters the full force of the words intoned'(ibid:12); this force is associated not only with people's personhood, but also with the making of protective spaces.

The relation between vitality and bodily substances, as well as that of vitality and health is present throughout my ethnography. In addition, an important aspect, which is repeatedly found in the literature on indigenous notions that could be translated as vitality, is that vitality very often has a limited circulatory character. Among the Kayapo, Fisher (2001) notes:

> [*Ĩ*] is a universal source of vitality. It is obvious to the Kayapo that all living things contain *ĩ* and that it is circulated through something akin to a food chain. It is pointed out that the vegetation consumed by a deer supplies it with *ĩ* while deer meat when consumed, in turn, infuses Kayapo with new *ĩ*. (2001:118)

At the same time, Fisher notes that the consumption of deer meat can cause human illness, because of the distinctive soul (*karon*) of this animal. It follows that the circulation of vitality is subject to careful management within social relations. Fisher argues that Kayapo sociality is not modeled on ideas of "natural growth" but 'in the

artifices that use natural vitality for its own ends as the currency for social transformations that preserve human well-being' (2001:137). Fisher adds that the 'circulatory character' (2001:118) of vitality is linked with ideas of depletion and replenishment, which can be due to human activity but also to animal agency. Fisher's observation resonates with an earlier analysis of Upper Xingu societies, in which Menget (1985:137) suggests that energy – including soul or vital force – is finite, it is in constant circulation and unequally distributed among living beings. Similarly, Santos-Granero (2015b) notes that for Yanesha people vitality or vital breath is 'subject to important imbalances as the result of interspecies predation' (ibid:93). Thus an equilibrium in predatory relationships means a balance in the distribution of vitality. Santos-Granero also engages with the notion of vitality as part of what he defines as the 'political economy of life'(2009:196-217). There are variations regarding how predation and the restoration of vital equilibrium are understood. For example, among the Makuna, Århem (1996) suggests that predation is linked with exchange between humans and non-humans, involving 'acts of reciprocity' for which 'life and vitality on the level of the individual are exchanged for renewal and essential continuity on the level of the category (clan, species)'(ibid:189). In contrast, as described by Descola (1992 in Rivière 2001), for the Jíbaro the act of hunting does not involve exchange, whereas predation over humans is responded to with revenge. Regarding this predation/reciprocity debate, Rivière (2001) introduces the Guianas case, for whom predation does not contribute to the renewal of life, but whether predation is considered an act of exchange depends on the context. That is, an act of negotiation is more likely to be seen when relations involve supernatural mediation (e.g. the spirit owners of the animals).

Amazonian people who assume the position of prey rather than predator in relations with outsiders, which is the Waorani case, offer different approaches to engagement with life resources. For example Bonilla (2016) suggests that for the Paumary 'living well' is not only related to ideas of good conviviality but also implies predatory relations, although they assume a perspectival position of prey engaging in what Bonilla calls "subjection-parasitism" (ibid:125), through which they have access to the wealth of external Others, while their 'weapon' for protecting themselves 'against voracious enemies is the transformational power of shamans, and above all their trickery and cunning' (ibid:123). The Waorani also perceive themselves from the perspective of 'prey' rather than predator (Rival 2002, High 2015b) and share the

trickery approach towards powerful others. Waorani people acknowledge that there are predatory forces that might cause their life force to be depleted (Rival 2005), but for ensuring the replenishment of their own vitality, the Waorani seem more concerned with "gathering" vitality and enhancing it through ordinary and ritual practices rather than "predating".

Waorani vitality.

Rival (2005) has analysed the relationship between body, soul and the Waorani life force called *pii*. Rival notes that the Waorani soul *onowoca* is acquired through supernatural forces during pregnancy (2005), when the mother dreams about the soon-to-be-born child's soul. In contrast to this supernatural soul which is "given", the body is made through a continuous sharing of substances and care (Rival 2002), first from the mother's blood and the father's semen (Rival 1998). Rival also suggests that the attachment of the Waorani soul to the body is different between male and female. This is related to the way in which the male soul is loosely contained in the body. Because of this condition, men are also vulnerable to transformations that connect them with cosmological Others – for example, the shaman who is perceived as the father of jaguars – and also disconnect them from the kin group – when men become *piinte* (homicidal anger) they can attack even their own kin, they become other (Rival 2005). Whereas women's bodies have a quality of 'containers' (ibid:302) related to the womb, the hearth, the house in which they are buried after death, and the whole uxorilocal Waorani social organization. Thus, women whose bodies are "containers" maintain a more stable attachment of the soul to the body; women have *pii* (life force) but they do not become *piinte* (to experience a homicidal rage), they do not "kill" other humans (ibid 2005:303), although they might let them die. My ethnographic data resonates with this analysis developed by Rival, and in chapter 4, I suggest that these bodily differences might be the reason why the Waorani have chosen to share vitality from adults to children also in a gender-specific way, as in the sweat sharing practice.

While I agree with Rival's analysis in general terms, I suggest that her interpretation of *pii* (vital force) as a 'physical expression' of the soul (2005: 295-296) does not fully account for the way in which the Waorani understand this life force or vitality. Rival admits that her knowledge about the Waorani soul is 'not complete' (2005: 302) because the Waorani are generally not open to talk about 'esoteric matters' (ibid: 306). While at some point Rival glosses vitality as a 'transcendental soul-force

pïï' (ibid:294), when she defines *pii*, her definition is closer to an immanent energy rather than a transcendent soul:

> *Pïï* is raw energy or vitality that dwells in all people alike, adults and children, men and women. Everyone has *pïï ñenga*, that is, *feels* the 'energy' or 'life force' which animates the body. But only men can become *pïï inte*, that is, become the fit of rage itself (Rival 2005: 295).

In an earlier study in which Rival (1993) analyses the growth of trees, she notes that the Waorani 'assimilate bodily maturation to the vital energy contained in leaves or shoots, and the process of aging to vegetal decay. The high energy of fast-growing plants is used to stimulate the physiological development of toddlers' (ibid:639). As Rival notes, young children are perceived to be 'full of vitality' (ibid:639), which is expressed in their fast growth. For my collaborators, vitality in the form of *pii*, *piñe* or *piente*[50] is a form of life force that is contained in the body[51]. Their concern for this vitality is not only focused on the process of growth, but it is also managed in adults' daily life as an expression of their health and vigour. It is different from other more esoteric energy or power which is referred as *enempo;* the latter is more soul-like and is normally acquired through a shaman after surviving a severe ailment. It could be said that *pii* or *piñe* is also soul-like because it is intangible, but it is mainly described in corporeal terms; for example, when a woman came back from a trek she said she had eaten a lot of fruit in the forest which had the effect of *teemo pienkete ante* (giving more energy). This

[50] There is no word in *Wao terero* that could be translated exactly as vitality; my use of this word is intended to embrace a series of references to what my collaborators, who have formal education, translate as "energy". This is often expressed as *piente* (life force) which is different from *piinte* (homicidal anger). When asking for different spellings for the same definition I came across the following: *nangui piyenga* (he has a lot of strength); *piiñe* (force); *piñente* or *piyena* (to make an effort); *piñemamo* (force); *nangui piente* or *nangui pie* (a lot of force or power); *teemo piyengue* (strong or courageous). Some people also referred to the notion of *paguena* (force); people explain this form of force as 'when someone has a strong speech'. In general terms, this last notion seems to be more connected with the act of *pangi*, which is often translated as the Spanish *castigar* (to punish). But it is an improper translation because to punish in Spanish has negative moral connotations, whereas the Waorani often used the same notion for referring to an act of care, as when someone was "punished" by being fed food from the forest, because they had forgotten to eat properly when living along the road. High (2010b) has also discussed the notion of *pangi*, not as an act of punishment, but as an act that allows people to share abilities and make stronger bodies. There is also the word *pangiñei* (to break) as when one cuts wood into pieces. In this case, it refers to an intentional use of strength, and that is why people connect it with the act of *strong speech*, whereas life force *piente* is more a noun rather than a verb. Finally, a better understanding of *Wao terero* linguistics would be required to analyse coincidences between *piiñe* (force) and *piyene kete* which means to be calm, the state that people connect with times of peace as opposed to war.

[51] Rival (2005:289) uses the word *bao* which means body but more in terms of flesh. My informants preferred the use of the word *aya*, which refers to the whole body, although when one asks a Waorani how to say body it is very likely that they would respond with the words *bao* or *aya* interchangeably. While refering to the body as the place of vitality, some point to the head and others to the heart.

channelling of vitality[52] refers not only to the act of eating from the forest, but to a whole sensorial ecology (chapter 3), engaged through the act of trekking, smelling certain forest fragrances and breathing forest air.

While being *teemo piyengue* refers to strength, it is also a form of subjectivity that is often translated to the Spanish *valiente* (courageous). This subjectivity is as connected to the soul as it is to the body. The Waorani acknowledge the possibility of the *life force* being affected by the soul (*onowoca*) which is the part of the Waorani person that allows people to dream[53]. For example, when a child has received energy (*pii*) from a courageous person through a sweat sharing ritual, it is possible that in the future the person who received the energy would dream about the courageous person who shared the energy. This means that in this case the soul contributes to enhancing the person's vitality. In short, Waorani vitality informs a certain kind of subjectivity that is contained in the body (*aya*) and could be enhanced by the soul (*onowoca*)[54].

Healthy and courageous people as an identitarian category.

> A: What do you do for being healthy?
> O: One has to be [sic] *medicina natural* (natural medicine), that is why I do not want to eat rice, one must eat simply natural, healthy body.
> A: Something more?
> O: One must not drink cokes, what is sold outside in the city. One must drink honey, fruit from the forest.
> A: What happens with the body when you eat food from outside?
> O: The body becomes not like this strong, the body becomes a little bit weak.
> A: Are people in this community healthy?
> O: Some of them might be, some others no, but truly wao, wao is healthy. (Oyo, Waorani man, 33 years old, Epepare).

[52] I am referring here to Strathern's (2018) notion of immanent life force, which elsewhere she connects to the soul (2001). Vitality is described in South-East Asia, in Singh's (2018) work as a dimension in itself, different from space and time.

[53] While my ethnography corresponds to a processual understanding of beinghood, my notes in relation to the soul called *onowoca*, refer to more 'fixed' sense of consciousness that is accessed within dreams. The dreaming soul seems to be able to see other beings who are people; thus if the Waorani dream about hugging a girl, it means that they would be able to hunt the same day, or if they dream about a big party with a dance, it means that they were actually dancing with peccaries, and they might be closer to the village. In this sense, the Waorani soul *onowoca* resonates with what Viveiros de Castro (2001) suggests in his revision of the theory of perspectivism delineating the "affinal" character of the soul, as opposed to the "consanguineal" body: 'The body connects (and collects) kin, the soul separates them into singular persons, just as the soul connects non-kin (humans to non-humans, for instance) and the body separates them […]. The process of kinship continues the differentiation of bodies which began at the end of the pre-cosmological era; the soul is like the 'background noise' left by the cosmological Big Bang, the shadow of the primordial transparency among early beings. As the token of the infinite, internal difference of the virtual pre-cosmos […], the soul prevents an ultimate and absolute differentiation of bodily exteriorities. The soul works at connecting what is different, and, in this sense, is like incest prohibition. This is another way of saying that the soul is 'affinal', while the body is 'consanguineal'' (Viveros de Castro 2001:42).

[54] My collaborators also refer to the possibility of having other souls, such as the case of the shamans, but in that case, they refer more to the already mentioned notion of *enempo* as shamanic force or power.

Oyo's reflection of what constituted a strong body resonates with a general Waorani definition of health as an expression of strength and vitality. High (2010b:758) offers a similar account about the relationship between food from the forest and Waorani strength, as opposed to *kowori* food that is perceived to affect Waorani's bodies making them weaker. Oyo's reference in Spanish to "natural" medicine or food partakes in the widespread understanding among young Waorani living along oil roads, who have incorporated the notion of "natural" to refer to something that is "from the forest" as opposed to manufactured products from outside. In this definition of health, there is also an identitarian component, as if being healthy was equivalent to being Waorani. However, when Oyo says 'truly wao, wao is healthy', he is not only suggesting that the Waorani ideal of beinghood is to be healthy/strong, but he is pointing out what Albert (2002a) has described as the main dilemma faced by indigenous people in situations of contact, which is the maintenance of relations with the Others, having access to their objects while avoiding the virulence that these relations and objects are perceived to bring. The perception of outsiders' virulence[55] is based on indigenous cosmological understandings of alterity, and on well-known historical episodes, such as the epidemics that contact brought. In addition, Oyo's understanding of health as related with personhood could be understood by considering that in Amazonia, illness processes tend to disaggregate people' elements, so that their soul might be taken away (see Vilaça 2002) or their vitality consumed. It means that a healthy person is also one in whom the different elements that constitute their personhood, are cohesively attached.

Early research among the Waorani, based on physical examinations, described them as a very healthy and well-nourished people (Davis and Yost 1983b; Larrick et al. 1979; Robarchek and Robarchek 1998). However, while these studies provide a summary of Waorani nosology (Larrick, Yost et al. 1979), a vernacular definition of health or body is absent. The first analysis of how the Waorani body is perceived was developed by Laura Rival (1992, 1996b) who described the Waorani body being "made" through sharing of substances and care among the longhouse members. Based on this understanding of the body as socially made, I will develop a definition of health that is also socially and morally informed.

When I asked Daniel, my collaborator, how to say 'I am healthy', he responded: *waa imopa* (I am well), and most Waorani agree with this translation. Some people

[55] I am following Albert (2002a) on the indigenization of the notion of virulence, referring to an indigenous perception of the harms that white people bring, not only in terms of physical epidemics but also social, emotional, cosmological harms.

elaborated a more detailed response to the same question such as: *'wenke kedamain waponi imopa'* I am not ill, I am well'. *Wenke* then can be translated literally as to be about to die, but it was often translated as 'being ill'; *kedamain* means 'do not do'. Some also use the word *waemo*, to say "I am healthy"; *waemo* means good and beautiful. Thus, when asking in Spanish for a translation to *Wao Terero* of the notion of health, there is no single word equivalent to health, but responses refer to a state of being well and beautiful. However, in daily life if people refer to the feeling of being healthy, it is more connected with strength, as in *'teemo piyenkete ante'* (gives me energy), and other conjugations such as *'teemo piyengue'* (strong/courageous) which are used to describe people with high levels of vitality. Here, I should recall the similarities with Conklin's (2015) analysis of the Wari' notion *Hwara opa*':

> Like many native people, they see health as the tangible manifestation of proper sociality and morality. People who are hwara opa' take initiative; they work to produce food and care for their family. The idea of being strong but lazy is unthinkable. Feeding and being fed is what Nancy Munn (1986) calls a template of value. At the center of Wari' notions of vitality, being hwara opa' is about having agency: the ability to feed, protect, and nurture others. (Conklin 2015:67)

Although it shares the emphasis on vitality as "being strong", Waorani hunter-gatherer ethos informs a different understanding of the *generative* character of vitality; a person full of vitality will express an equilibrium between being autonomous and also having the skills to bring food back home to share. Vitality is seen as well in other *waponi* (beautiful, pleasant) *generative* actions such as singing, dancing, storytelling and even playing football. For Amazonian people the subjectivity connected to courage and bodily strength is individual, but the body is a relational category (Conklin 2001a). Thus, if the body is made through relations of sharing and caring, a vigorous person is the ideal conduct of those relations. The ideal state of health and vigour for the Waorani is primarily connected with youth and adulthood; small children have lots of playful vitality but they are not properly *teemo piyengue* (strong). Likewise, very elderly people can express life force through wisdom, but they lack *generative* vigour. Furthermore, to be a vigorous person is also an aesthetic value, one that elderly people encourage in younger generations. A vigorous body shows strength but also lightness. As the following anecdote illustrates:

> I was walking in Yoweno's road with my body slightly leaning forward as when one is tired. Kengowento was passing by and said to me half in *Wao terero* half in Spanish 'you are not an elderly person, you should walk straight´. He showed me how to walk with more vigour, with a sort of refinement, how to walk like a Waorani.

In daily life to walk like a vigorous Waorani means to have a straight back, looking forward and being alert. In the forest steps are lighter than in the village, while dancing steps are heavier than for any other occasions. Despite this concern of elderly people to cultivate what could be called the proper Waorani body, there is a general perception among the Waorani regarding changes in their bodies after the establishment of peaceful contact. Rival (2002:162-163) noted a concern among elderly people about younger bodies becoming weaker, which was understood in terms of becoming 'tamed' and 'civilized'[56]. Becoming weaker as an outcome of the peaceful contact is certainly part of contemporary Waorani narratives (see High 2010b:758); my emphasis on the relation strong:weak in the light of health allows an analysis of the strategies that young Waorani people develop to overcome the paradox of being 'civilized' while remaining strong. For the Waorani living along the oil roads this paradox is reflected upon in the following ways:

> Some people live with the ways of the ancestors in order not to fall sick. Other people get old very fast because they keep eating sugar and medicine [pills]. […] Some people say if we eat food from outside the children easily fall down, they break, before they were strong. (Wilbo, Waorani man, 24 years old).
> [In a mix between *Wao terero* and Spanish Kengowento said to me:] Nowadays, *wiñenani* (children) they crack easily [their bones], they eat *gallina balanceada* [chicken grown by feed mill]. Before *durani* (the ancestors) only monkey, that is why I live in the *finca* [Spanish word used here to define a settlement located deep in the forest], without *balanceado* [balanced animal feeds], with my grandchildren, only strong monkey. (Kengowento, middle aged Waorani)
> [In Spanish, pointing out a tree with yellow leaves] Arturo: Some trees along the road are yellow, this is because they need a cleaner environment to exist.
> Andrea: But what about people?
> Arturo: People are already used to the pollution, because they eat a lot of chemicals [in the food] (Arturo, Waorani man, 29 years old)

Young people often mention the Spanish word 'chemicals', when talking about oil pollution, processed food and non-forest medicine. A chemical is defined as a pollutant, and there is an ongoing process of interpretation regarding the notion of pollutant – expressed often through the Spanish *contaminación*. From early ethnographies we know that the Waorani had an 'aversion to the forest floor, especially the swampy areas where peccaries wallow in mud' (Rival 1996a:151), they only rarely ate animals who dwell near the mud and they preferred those that dwell in trees, such as birds and monkeys (Rival 1996a), which Kengowento here links with Waorani strength. However, young people place more emphasis on contrasting any food from the forest with food from

[56] Waorani people often use the Spanish notion *civilizado* (civilized) to refer either to those who have embraced peaceful contact (High 2015b:43; Rival 2002:162), or for referring to new generations of Waorani people (Rival 2002:162), particularly those who have attended school and have embraced the life of Ecuadorians as Waorani explain.

outside. The former equated to an ideal of *living well*, to the extent that a young Waorani man told me that 'peccary is *living well*, not those chicken with chemicals that make us weak'. Thus, nowadays pollution is linked primarily with the quintessential form of alterity, the *kowori* (non Waorani people). This is why some people like Kengowento see the change of residence to a new settlement deep in the forest as the only solution against pollution, but even when he has no small children going to school in the village, he does not manage to fully change residence to the forest settlement; he spends around one or two weeks per month in the forest and then he goes back to the village to engage in *'la vida politica'* (the political life) of oil negotiations and village assemblies (chapter 5).

Waorani reflections about *kowori*-related bodily changes show that the maintenance of strength while incorporating the Other's substances and skills is an intergenerational concern. An elderly man once told me that instead of being *teemo piyengue* (strong, courageous) for hunting, young people now "must go" to school and learn enough[57] to express their knowledge through "speech" (chapter 5). In other words, he suggested the importance of incorporating outsiders' knowledge, so as to know how to better deal with the alterity. Likewise, when I interviewed Ene, the president of the health committee of Yoweno's health post, about her understanding of health, she described being healthy with the Spanish word *'valiente'* (courageous). A few months later we had an informal conversation about Ene's young brother, who has no strong muscles, does not play football, and does not hunt, but who is very active and clever. She noted:

> He learned with the first doctors (non Waorani), he spent a lot of time with them, he is like that [active] because of that, he [therefore] must be courageous, healthy. (Ene, Yoweno)

Ene's brother's vitality and courage is more related to knowledge than to physical strength, although he has no ailments. It is a more intangible vitality. Ene thinks that gathering knowledge from outside, with the doctors that co-reside in Yoweno, makes her brother more courageous in a new way, although for the Waorani knowledge is also located in the body, so the strength that it brings is bodily contained. The understanding of knowledge as a form of power contained in the body was made clearer to me by Nenki, a Waorani friend who invited me to drink Ayahuaska (*Banisteropsis* sp.) with a

[57] Rival (1992, 2002) offers an exhaustive analysis on schooling and Waorani willingness to engage with it.

Cofan shaman[58]. After a few months of low-quality rest beside Yoweno's oil drilling site, I asked Nenki for a Waorani recipe to overcome sadness, and he responded 'well, we just have fun' – having fun (hedonic wellbeing), was often mentioned by young people as something that the Waorani "do" for *living well* – but Nenki added 'I also drink Ayahuaska, you can come with me'. The morning after drinking Ayahuaska, Nenki said to me that he was not planning to take a shower because he wanted to keep his power. I asked for clarification and he explained that the Waorani can share their knowledge through their sweat. Their knowledge is in the body, so when the power/knowledge is strong, is important to contain it by not taking a shower for few hours[59]. A similar avoidance of taking a shower to consolidate the knowledge/power is done by house builders, which is believed to have effects on the house's resistance to termites (chapter 3). Thus the relational construction of the body as channel of vitality seems to be extended even to objects. Waorani embodied knowledge has been discussed by High (2015a) noting its relation to 'specific bodily experiences' such as seeing or hearing (ibid:103). Elderly Waorani note a reduction of *durani bai* (like the ancestors) abilities and knowledge among young generations, which is related to the absence of *durani* 'bodily experiences' (2015a:103); this is closely linked with the Waorani perception that their bodies are becoming weaker (ibid:104; see also High 2010b).

> O: My father used to talk about some trees that grow in the forest, some of them are very strong, they do not break, they do not fall down, when the wind comes, they lie down but they do not break, they become straight again. They win against the wind. Like that, like that he said the **Waorani must be, no diseases, healthy until death.**
> A: what plant is that?
> O: Around here there is, when wind comes it touches the ground, but then **it raises again, it does not break, it becomes straight again, like rubber**. Like that, the Waorani must be, without diseases. (Otobo, middle aged man from Yoweno).

When I insisted on getting a name for that sort of tree, Otobo mentioned a tree called *gaitaweno*; but Otobo's reflection was not about a unique type of tree, he was referring to a general behaviour of some trees that are strong but flexible. In other words, Otobo connects 'being strong' and 'being healthy' but being strong implies the quality of being flexible[60], which is the way to "win" against the wind. Such strength/flexibility informs

[58] The Cofan people are indigenous people from Ecuadorian Amazonia, who live on the Northern border between Ecuador and Colombia. The drinking of Ayahuaska is not widespread among the Waorani, but Nenki is a young leader who maintains intense relationships with the encroaching society. This Cofan shaman acts as a translator between worlds, not only spiritual but also political; for an analysis of shamanism as a translation process see Cuhna (1998) and Taylor (2014).

[59] This is not a general understanding of knowledge, because even though I have some forms of knowledge, I was considered by some people as not "courageous" because I struggle to wake up early.

[60] Rival (1993) has analysed the importance of the strong peach palm tree and the soft balsa *(Ochroma lagopus)* for the Waorani identity.

how people living along the oil roads deal with post-contact challenges – e.g. liquor consumption and diseases – which seems like an ongoing process of falling and recovering through different means.

In sum, I am suggesting that Waorani people understand health as an expression of strength and see their bodies getting weaker as a consequence of peaceful contact. At the same time they are incorporating outsiders' knowledge which makes them stronger in other ways. The dual relation strong:weak is not only related to the biological consequences of a dietary change; instead, for the Waorani – as Kelly (2011) has noted among the Yanomami – this is the bodily expression of a cosmological relation between identity/difference (Viveiros de Castro 2001), in the Waorani case that of *Waorani/Kowori* within the Waorani self.

> This Indian/white duality may be a new "contact" construct, but in its character and dynamic, it is another guise of the Self/Other internal duality that has been described for the Amerindian person (Viveiros de Castro, 2001; Kelly, 2001). Its character is that of being white and Indian, just as people are relationally consanguine to some people and affine to others, or perspectivally "body" to some and "soul" to others (Viveiros de Castro, 1998). (Kelly 2011:220)

Kelly's solution regarding the possibility of an internal duality strongly resonates with the way in which the Waorani living along oil roads perceive themselves; they pursue the incorporation of Other's skills and substances while remaining Waorani. In my interpretation of this dual self/other, the Waorani do not pursue an incorporation of Other's "point of view", but more a modification in their subjective capacities; a modification that allows them to deal with outsiders while defending their way of life.

Disrupted vitality.

> Now food changes, alcoholism, the body changes, young people do not trek, they do not go hunting, they do not hunt with blow pipe, now the body changes. […] I was thinking about stop eating salt, do not eat rice, I am thinking like that for living, because the body is changing, **we are too weak for trekking.** (Gonka, middle aged Waorani man)

Gonka's account resonates with a concern that has been documented by Casey High (2010b) in another part of the Waorani territory, where people, despite living far from the oil roads, also note the effects of *kowori* food particularly among younger generations; they perceive their bodies getting weaker (ibid:758). Very often Gonka mentioned his intentions of abandoning his job for the oil company and changing for good to a settlement in the forest, where he spends his monthly days off from his job. Gonka was less than one year old when peaceful contact started for his family; the

contact for him also meant the death of his mother in one of the main epidemics[61]. He knows very well that Yoweno village is a border of the Waorani territory that they are defending by being there, but his account is a compelling reflection of the paradox that Waorani people face there: how to remain strong (full of vitality) while living along the roads. The contrast between the forest and the road will be further discussed in chapter 3, whereas this section addresses a number of ways in which the Waorani navigate their disrupted strength. Before this, I should present the Waorani notion of health understood as a collective concern.

Health as a collective concern.

There are no Waorani individual healthy vigorous people without good social and moral relationships. Health as a collective concern is expressed by affirmative actions and avoidances; the proper formation of the Waorani body is ensured by parents who observe certain dietary restrictions to secure the new born's well-being (Rival 1998); and at any age, an individual recovering from critical situations (such as snakebite) depends on the collective (kin) observance of food taboos (High 2015b: 48-49). The subjectivity that is perceived as related to health, that of courageous people, is also maintained through intentional acts, from the ritual sharing of sweat (chapter 4) to the contemporary playing of football. Any severe illness is perceived as being caused by a shamanic attack, which invariably requires the intervention of another shaman; a shamanic attack against a person also means an attack on the kin group (High 2015b), and responses range from close kin food avoidance to mobilization of village resources to attend shamanic services.

James Yost (Larrick, Yost et al. 1979:170) observed that the Waorani had two main paths for treating diseases: spirit-related ailments are considered to be caused by shamans and are therefore treated by other shamans; diseases that are not related to spirits are diagnosed and treated by adult people[62]. The latter are referred as being *ononki* (without a good cause or with no cause). The Waorani still navigate between these two pathways for treating diseases, although along the road the use of biomedicine

[61] For an account of the epidemics of contact see Cabodevilla (1994:393).
[62] Adults' medicinal knowledge is mentioned in Ima's (2012) account and is detailed in Alban's (2008) monograph on childbearing, which describes bodily practices such as massages or the application of plants to a mother's body.

is part of a sort of bricolage treatment, which is very often combined with shamanic and local treatment.

A state of illness means a reduction of the person's relations within the village; while growing thin with an ailment people retreat to their houses, and sharing with other members of the village is reduced or totally cut. That is why the Waorani leader Manuela Ima (2012:43) suggests that illness transforms Waorani people into something "different", altering relations with their kin. During prolonged absence of strength or vitality which is normally the outcome of an ailment[63], a person stops gathering food, cooking or sharing, which supposes a cut in the ongoing nourishment of convivial relations. Such isolation is mirrored by the quintessential physical change marker of illness, which is growing thin as a sign of lack of social and physical nourishment. Ima (ibid) also notes that severe illnesses leave long-lasting footprints on people's bodies. Footprints that are afterwards shown to visitors, in an attitude that resembles what High (2015b) and Rival (2002) have called the Waorani "victimhood ethos".

A main feature of Waorani village life is that people tend to share news of their ailments quite openly and proactively. I can recall numerous times when people would stop me along the road to give detailed information about their pains and the treatments they had followed. At the beginning I thought this was related to my previous work as part of a health project, but when my understanding of *Wao terero* grew, I realized that my host mother proactively shared news of any ailment with her *guiri* (relatives), even when passing by along the road. Moreover, many Waorani with access to Facebook actively share pictures of their close kin in the hospital, or after having an accident they post pictures of the wounds. I can only interpret this willingness to share news about ailments as a Waorani pathway to the actualization of relations through compassion[64].

Why is it so relevant for the Waorani to share the news about their pain and also to share details about how they have calmed their pain? None of my collaborators offered an explanation, although they acknowledged that this is indeed a Waorani –

[63] From surveys focused on daily activity and perceptions of life satisfaction Alvarez (2013) concludes that Waorani people do not register 'signs of tiredness or depression' (2013:223). She refers to chronic cases, and notes that when a person feels "lack of vitality", people tend to assume it is a temporary situation which is not a collective concern. Alvarez fails to acknowledge that Waorani understand prolonged lack of vitality as caused by shamanic attacks. In addition, I gatherer a few references about suicides among young Waorani, but none of them happened during my fieldwork, and I was unable to understand the causes of that. One of them was recalled as a reaction against domestic violence and other was referred with the Spanish *mal de amores* (lovesick).

[64] Conklin (2001a) describes Wari' people's openness in talking about emotionally challenging events when meeting people they have not seen for a while, which counts as a collective strategy to overcome sorrow. She also notes that the practice of endocannibalism itself was inspired by compassion.

intergenerational – feature. I am inclined to think that it is related to: first, a cosmological perception of alterity, in which the Waorani perceive themselves as under attack from external forces, which in turn is expressed in Waorani victimhood narratives (Rival 2002, High 2015b); second, the detail of measures taken against pain or ailments builds strength, as a confirmation that the Waorani know how to overcome (pathogenic) attacks, but also as an epistemological strategy for the collective development of post-contact disease treatment knowledge.

In the following sections, I will describe a few pathways for the treatment of ailments that I have witnessed, to emphasise the bricolage character of disease treatment, and noting that it has cosmological and historical foundations. Cosmological because it is based on the perception of a dual opposition between internal (forest/village/household/individual selfhood), equated with health, and external (city/*Kowori*/Other), perceived as a potential source of pathogenic elements. Historical, because of the recent history of Waorani contact, in which they faced some diseases that were not known to them, for which they had to rely also on biomedicine. Unlike what Buchillet describes among the Desana people (Buchillet 2002), the Waorani have not incorporated post-contact diseases in their mythologies, and the *symbolic domestication* (Albert 2002a) of post-contact endemic diseases such as Hepatitis B is still an ongoing process.

Local treatment.

> It is in the nature of these non-Huaorani enemy predators to reproduce by continuously snatching the creativity, vitality and life-force of 'the true people' *(huaorani)*. (Rival 2005:299)

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, my understanding of Waorani vitality differs from Rival's (2005: 195-196). I see Waorani's *pii* or *piñe* as a force channelled through the body and eventually enhanced by the *onowoca* soul (the dreaming soul), but not equivalent to the latter. I do agree with Rival (2002) and High (2015b) about the Waorani perception of being in the position of prey surrounded by a number of predators, where what is at risk of predation is precisely Waorani vitality. This means that the Waorani policy of isolation until a few decades ago could also be considered as a strategy for the maintenance of health.

Davis and Yost (1983b) suggested that before the contact, the Waorani 'had certain relatively definable ailments which they treated with a precise and limited

pharmacopeia' (ibid:283)[65]. I did not conduct research about Waorani medicinal plant knowledge, but I took detailed notes on health seeking trajectories when people fell ill during my fieldwork[66]. Most of the ailments that the Waorani experienced were described as "attacks" from spiritual forces and shamans, normally coming from outside. Assessments of ailments are closely linked with people's vitality. For example, a woman who often wanted to remain in her hammock for long periods rather than going to the forest, cooking or weaving chambira, and fainted two or three times, was perceived as not having any "severe" ailment, but her lack of vitality was unmistakable a "sickness", and some suspected it was caused by a Kichwa shaman. While this is discussed futher below it is worth noting that Kichwa-speaking people 'have become both the ideal source of shamanic services and a primary target of witchcraft accusations' (High 2012b:131) in Waorani villages; for an ethnographic account of this dual relationship see also High (2015b). By contrast, I received news that a friend was diagnosed by the doctors with a "severe" disease, but when I asked other friends about the type of disease, a close collaborator said 'we are not sure, but he keeps playing football, he will be fine'.

Decision making about how to treat diseases varies between families. The most frequently used medicinal plant is *wento,* which includes different varieties of stinging nettle[67] that are applied to the skin; it is used mainly for alleviating pain but also for increasing body strength. This plant also enables the sharing of people's vitality when applied from adults to children, which is done primarily from elderly women to small girls, but not exclusively. While *wento* is widely used by the Waorani, I never saw it used by my young host parents in Yoweno. They normally follow a disease treatment trajectory that includes a visit to the health post or self-medication with pills. Most of the time they would also consult shamans, who are mainly Kichwa. If none of these options works, they might go to hospital as a final option, but still keeping in mind the shaman's recommendations.

[65] Davis and Yost (1983b) identified 35 medicinal plants known by the Waorani in the first years of contact. Mondragón and Smith (1997) recorded 51 plants with uses related to health, whereas a more extensive study developed by Cerón and Montalvo identified a Waorani pharmacopeia with 102 plants.

[66] This was mainly done among households close to my host families and among my close collaborators. I avoided conducting direct research when people could not offer informed concern, such as the case of a woman who was perceived as being "lost", not being herself, which was a particular vulnerable case. This case generated comments among the village but visits were avoided while her state of "being lost" remained.

[67] Zurita records (2014:202) the following types of *wento* used by the Waorani: *wentogi* (Urera baccifera), *nawa wento* (U. echinata), *nanowentowe* (U. caracasana) *wento duicigato* (U. laciniata).

The only time that Minta, my host mother in Yoweno, decided without hesitating to go for a Waorani treatment with *wento* was when she felt sick after visiting a village where 'there was some evil'. The symptoms of her sickness were mainly a general pain in her body and weakness. This kind of sickness is called *cowekewente*[68], which is not considered a real disease, and therefore it is an ailment that is easily treated. Some Waorani explain that *cowekewente* symptoms are similar to those experienced as a result of a shamanic curse, one collaborator affirms that people were likely to feel *cowekewente* after a war, and most of my collaborators say that it is a word used only by elderly people. Nevertheless, during my fieldwork, even without naming this condition as *cowekewente,* young people like my host mother still experience this ailment in the form of sudden weakness whose only treatment is *wento*. The prominence of *wento* in the Waorani pharmacopeia, in terms of extensive and prevalent use even when having access to biomedicine, is closely linked with the intergenerational transmission and re-establishment of vitality when there is a disruption such as in the *cowekewente* ailment.

My host mother did not apply *wento* herself, but it was done by her aunt, a Waorani healer. The relief was almost instantaneous, and Minta suggested 'I think my aunt is going to be a shaman'. There was no agreement among the Waorani from Yoweno and Epepare whether Minta's aunt was a shaman or not. Most of the people explained to me that 'she has power', a kind of power that the Waorani refer to with the notion of *enempo*[69]. When I asked for a specific Waorani word to describe her, people used an expression that means she 'lives doing good'[70]. In Yoweno, there are two people who heal with *wento* in the way previously described, both women. In Epepare, there are two men. Some of these 'healers' only have the power to heal a specific ailment from which they have recovered themselves in the past. There were no shamans in these villages, but people suggested that a vigorous man could have been a shaman if he had not become *cristiano* (evangelical Christian):

[68] *Cowekewente* literally translates as 'it always has been', but some young Waorani translate it as 'high blood pressure'. But the physicians at the health centre say the Waorani do not have chronic diseases such as high BP. The translation might be linked with the way in which *wento* is applied to the arm of the person with *cowekewente*, as if one is taking the blood pressure, but also with the effects of *wento* application over the skin, suggesting stimulating blood circulation.

[69] Sometimes expressed as *enempo gikene*, this refers to a power that can be shared from elderly to young people but is not the same as *pii* (force).

[70] In *Wao terero* is *waa baronga kewenga* (lives doing good), 'doing' is closer to the English word making or creating. Some people use the word '*waminga*' translated as healer, and some others prefer to use a long phrase that describe the process of using *wento* for healing, in order to refer to this kind of healers who are not shamans.

> Before, the shamans talked with the jaguar as if they had a radio [makes the gesture of turning on a radio], they tell the Waorani when someone was coming to kill. The jaguar was like an ally, the *tagaeri* (isolated people) also have that, it is like a riddle, to know.
> […] Before, people did not know that God lives, they lived attending parties and hunting. They hunt, eat, grow and have shamans. […] Now they have become Christians, they say thanks to God and almost do not accept [the jaguar]. That is why the jaguar cannot get inside their bodies. But if they drink *tiname* (strong liquor), then make contact fast, like before.
> It happened to Cawiya […] there was no water in a meeting, and he had to drink beer for filling the belly. But then back in X [his remote village in the Yasuní Park] he drinks manioc beverage, reads the Bible, sings Waorani songs like the *durani*, he works, cut down huge trees [for opening gardens] like *durani*, he gets very tired, sings like *durani*, and then the jaguar came. […]
> It was like a wind that came into his body, he started talking like a shaman. But Cawiya **does not accept the jaguar, he does not allow him to get inside because he preaches the word of God, he does not accept the jaguar**. When he gets angry, he speaks very loud. (Namoro, middle aged man, Epepare).

In this long quote, Namoro, whose daughter is married to Cawiya's son, points out one of the contradictions of the evangelical conversion. On the one hand, to become *Cristiano* (evangelical Christian) is one of the ways in which the Waorani deal with some post-contact dangers, as I will further describe in relation to liquor consumption. On the other hand, the condemnation that Christians[71] preach against shamanism seems to also have an impact upon the reduction of Waorani shamans, and therefore upon an important expression of Waorani maintenance of wellbeing and alliance with Other forest beings.

The Waorani shaman, *meñera* or 'parent of the jaguar', is a figure that has positive effects on the maintenance of abundance (Rival 2002:77-79). The literature provides accounts of two kinds of shamans, one connected with the healing process and other linked with sorcery (Yost 1981a). High (2012b) notes a reduction in the number of Waorani shamans, and he describes this decrease as a pathway to avoid sorcery-related conflicts within communities. This is clearly the case with sorcerers, but people like Cawiya are meant to become *waa keka* (doing good) shamans and have the role of protecting the territory[72]. Thus, as expressed in Namoro's account, the reduction of *meñeras* goes hand in hand with the process of Christianization of outstanding people like Cawiya. This avoidance of relations with the jaguars resonates with what Fausto

[71] I include the word Christian interchangeably for the Spanish *Cristiano* used by the Waorani, as opposed to Catholic, marking a main religious duality that most of the Waorani perceive as being the only possible spiritual options that the postcolonial Ecuadorian context offer; from a Waorani perspective Ecuadorians are either Christians and obey evangelical rules, or they are Catholics and allow themselves dancing and drinking.

[72] During my fieldwork, people referred to a *meñera* who lives in a village deep in the forest, but in the same Orellana province where I conducted research, as a protector of the whole Waorani territory, and some called him "spiritual leader", "wise man".

(2007) describes in the Guarani[73] case, where jaguar's predatory features are seen as incompatible with the Christian discourse of "peace"[74]. A later section explores alternative pathways towards shamanic treatment in the absence of Waorani shamans.

To conclude the analysis of local treatments, I note that apart from local healers who seem to have a particular power in the use of *wento* with healing effects, this plant is widely used in daily life by individuals who want to alleviate muscular pain. *Wento* is also used during menarche; girls who are menstruating for the first time sit over this plant, which is said to make them strong and to avoid having too much bleeding (Alban 2008). Elderly people refer to a reduction in this practice, which is pointed out any time young women are diagnosed with an ailment related to the womb, or when they have difficulty giving birth. The centrality of this plant for the Waorani relational body is such that even in the atomized Yoweno village, whenever a pregnant woman was known to be feeling bodily distress related to her pregnancy, many elderly women – not only healers – visited the pregnant woman with this *wento*, which is also an image of how individual health is a collective concern.

God, dreams and healing.

Waorani perception of strength as an expression of health, and in turn, the perception of being healthy as an intrinsic characteristic of Waorani selfhood, means that falling ill is a form of becoming Other, which causes people recovering from severe diseases to say "I was not myself", or "I am becoming myself again". In this sense, Waorani sickness resonates with what Taylor (2007, 2014) has described among the Jivaroan ethnic group, not in the historical dimension of sickness as a position of vulnerability in a colonial context, but in the sense that sickness supposes a significant alteration of indigenous selfhood. In the Waorani case a severe illness affects the equation Waorani=courageous/strong. While a shamanic intervention is required for overcoming such ailments, there are several cases in which a spiritual power operating through people's dreams is decisive to the recovery. In the following lines, I will describe the case of Game which is particularly exemplary for this argument.

In 2016, Game fell ill due to a shamanic attack that was believed to be related to an old quarrel that her husband had with Kichwa people. Game used to be strong, big

[73] Fausto offers a historical account from 16th to 20th centuries.

[74] This is also the reason that people gave when I asked why an elderly person, who was converted to Christianity, became deer after death instead of jaguar. The response tends to point to the woman's pursuit of peace during her lifetime.

and powerful, but after this shamanic attack she grew thin and retired to her house, not to be seen for several months along Yoweno's road. When she finally recovered from her ailment, and walked along Yoweno road, people often commented with sorrow about how thin she had grown, how different she looked. When I interviewed her, she noted:

> When I was sick, I fainted, in my vision I saw *Wengongui* (God) telling me do not die. When you go back tell your grandchildren, ask God for them to live well. (Game, middle aged woman, Yoweno).

Game's disease was one of the most commented-on cases in Yoweno and Epepare. I learned that theories about her sickness were developed also in other villages. Game's illness was a collective concern perceived as a threat to the whole village, which mobilized resources to a point where the oil company ended up paying for her shamanic treatment. Dreaming about God was decisive for Game's recovery, since she was introduced to Christianity when she was a child, and she relates *Wengongui* to the Christian God. Game was not alone in connecting a sudden recovery with a dream about God; even people said not to be Christians before such dreams[75], have "become Christians" after their recovery. In other words, the Waorani find relief in powerful dreams beyond Christianity, but there is widespread understanding among the Waorani that the Christian God has healing powers, perhaps encouraged by missionaries' preachings and their role as providers of biomedicine (see Fuentes 1997).

A few Christian Waorani elders, converted to Christianity at the beginning of their peaceful contact, currently live in Epepare and Yoweno. Those with whom I was able to work closely noted that the Christian God and the Bible itself have protective and healing qualities; younger recent converts in Epepare share this perception. In Epepare, Kimo, an elderly man who normally sings *durani bai* (like the ancestors) songs at home, developed a sort of prayer-like chanting when applying *wento* to a woman who fainted; the chant for healing did not have a Waorani rhythm but neither was it a recognizable Christian song, the only recognizable word that he repeated was *Itota* (Jesus). After asking many Waorani of different ages about the healing properties of chants, there seems to be an agreement that some Waorani chants contribute to the maintenance of people's vitality related to *living well*[76], but it was explained to me 'there are no songs for healing'. Thus I am inclined to think that Kimo's healing chant is

[75] Apart from dreams connected with healing, concern for the oneiric word is widespread among the Waorani, who often talk about their dreams and perceive them as having effects on the outcomes of the day. Particularly powerful dreams are shared, and possible meanings are discussed.

[76] *Living well* chants reinforce emotions such as tranquillity and happiness, as opposed to for example, "angry chants", those that would be chanted to maintain strength and focus on warfare.

a post-contact development, a sort of invocation to God or Jesus understood as entities with agency over healing processes. At some point, the chant or the word itself seemed to be the entity endowed with agency; for example, on another occasion, when Kimo's wife was feeling some muscular pain, Kimo said to me 'I am treating her with the word of God'.

Kichwa and other powerful healers.

High (2012b) observes that when accessing shamanic services, the Waorani are currently paying for Kichwa shamans, which is also the case in Epepare and Yoweno. At the same time, in Waorani villages, conflicts are externalized and often Kichwa people are accused of generating shamanic-related ailments, as discussed by High (2012b, 2015b:155). It could be the case that the Kichwa shamans are undertaking the role of translators between the global and the local in the sense analysed by Carneiro da Cunha (1998). This also resonates with Taylor's (2007) description of the Kichwa role as mediators or 'buffer groups' between the 'whites'[77] and 'wild'[78] Indians.

Gow has shown that in colonial situations the number of shamans normally increases, but he observes that people from remote areas of the forest respect the 'shamanic power of more urban and acculturated people' (Gow 1994: 96-97). In the Waorani case, as High (2015b) has noted, the perception of Kichwa shamans as powerful figures is not due to an acculturation process, but instead what is highlighted is their ability to navigate different relationships with the Others; Kichwa shamans 'are said to be experts at identifying the source of witchcraft and in some cases can provide a cure' (High 2015b:161). Likewise, Fuentes (1997:38) observed in the 80's that the Waorani considered Kichwa shamans to be 'more effective'. In Yoweno and Epepare people also consider that the most powerful shamans are Kichwa. But they visit several other shamans and healers including indigenous Shuar and non-indigenous *colonos* that live in neighbouring towns. As I have mentioned before, there are no acknowledged Waorani shamans in these two villages.

Biomedical health services.

> **Doris**: The Waorani body is different, it is not like the *kowori*, *colonos* [non-indigenous people living in Amazonia], Kichwa have other way, Shuar have other,

[77] 'White' refers not so much to a skin colour, but to people connected to urban environments (the place where relations are monetarized), in contrast to people who inhabit the deep forest (Taylor 2007:138).
[78] Taylor refers to the Achuar people, but the Waorani were also described as 'wild', which is a term to refer to indigenous people who inhabit the deep forest avoiding relationships with outsiders.

> *colono* other. We, the Waorani have different. We are different and we need more [medicine].
> **Andrea:** Why is the Waorani body so different?
> **Doris:** It is because we eat different.
> **Manuel:** It is because the things from outside come with chemicals, all of which cause harm to us, whereas the food from here is normal, one hundred percent natural. (Doris and Manuel, young Waorani from Epepare)

> I give my child Loratadine[79], that one that they give for elderly people [instead of children's medicine], this is because I do not want him catching a stronger cold. […] When he caught a strong fever, then I give him half Termofin[80]. When I have not that, then I do only with *medicamento natural* (natural medicine). (Juana, young woman from Yoweno)

The contrast between forest food and chemicals from outside that Doris develops is linked with an ontological distinction; Waorani are different from other people who also eat from the forest, their bodily processes are different, and Doris links this bodily distinction with ethnic differentiation (cf. Conklin 2001a:138). There is a paradox regarding the consumption of biomedicine; the Waorani perceive pills as equated to chemicals, and chemicals have an effect of weakening people's bodies, but still they pursue the consumption of biomedicine. I am still puzzled by this, my only explanation is that the Waorani perceive that ailments coming from *kowori* people should also be healed by *kowori* medicine, and *kowori* diseases are an almost unavoidable part of the peaceful contact. This is a main reason why they consider it essential to have a health post in their village.

In a study of Waorani therapies Alban (2008) presents the sphere of Waorani therapies and the sphere of biomedicine as separate, but during my fieldwork this separating line was somehow blurred. What is at the core of Waorani treatment of ailments is that each family pursues a sort of autonomous "control" over their own health-seeking trajectories, even if that means taking *kowori* medicine in their own hands. The Waorani "domesticate" biomedicine not only by using it without a doctor's prescription and talking about its effects; in the village that has a health post, the Waorani also try by all means to make the doctors "become" Waorani.

What I have seen in the Waorani relationship with doctors who co-reside in Yoweno resonates with Kelly's (2011) study among the Yanomami, for whom the doctor/patient relationship is non-Yanomami/Yanomami. It is also similar in the ways in which the health post is a place of socialization rather than a "State Institution". A doctor working in Yoweno noted: 'very often, when I ask people about their reasons for

[79] Antihistamine.
[80] Medicine that in Ecuador contains mainly Paracetamol.

coming to the health post, they simply say that they have come to visit' (Gabriel, doctor). For the doctor it was surprising that people would spend time in a public health post with no health-related reason, other than socializing.

What Bruce Albert (2002a) has called among the Yanomami 'symbolic domestication of diseases' is done among the Waorani by talking about ailments happening in the village. It is also done by experimenting with self-medication and visiting the health post not only for attention, but to socialize, which includes getting to know the latest news about diseases and their treatments. I discuss the relationship with doctors as a category of the Other further in chapter 5; here I conclude the discussion on vitality and health by referring to the consumption of strong-liquor.

Tiname, harmful vitality.

The Waorani did not have strong fermented beverages before peaceful contact (see High 2015b:127); they consumed a fresh manioc beverage made from sweet manioc (Rival 2002). Smoked manioc beverage prepared for feasts seems to have contained only low alcoholic strength[81]. *Tina* (strong*)* fermented manioc beverage is connected with Kichwa people, whereas *tiname* refers primarily to strong liquor[82]. *Tepe* (Waorani manioc beverage) is primarily sweet and fresh, consumed one or two days after the manioc has been masticated, and not more than 4 or 5 days after that, as then it becomes *tina* (strong) and is not considered to be healthy[83]. High (2015b) notes the 'Waorani are aware that they are the only indigenous group in the region that does not let their manioc beer sit to ferment for days or weeks'(ibid:127), so they see the consumption of fermented beverages as something related to *kowori* people (ibid:126). Here, I will not focus on manioc symbolism or the process of elaboration of manioc beverage, which is less demanding than the processing of bitter manioc (see Daly 2020; Heckler 2004; Hugh-Jones 1980), but my interest here is to note that the consumption of *tiname* is

[81] The Waorani say *emongue gironte,* referring to the party in which smoked manioc beverage is consumed, I have not tried it for the lack of such parties during my fieldwork. Rival (2002: 129-151) provides a detailed description of Waorani traditional parties.

[82] *Tiname* was always translated to me as the Spanish *alcoholes* (liquors) or *trago* (liquor). The consumption of beers is not normally referred as *tiname* but is referred as *'alcoholes'* or *'trago'.*

[83] In a recent work presented in Vienna (Conklin 2019), Conklin suggested that sweet beverages (previously chewed such as the manioc) have more microorganisms than strong fermented beverages. The more people share sweet beverages the more alike are their microbiological bodies, and this has been compared among different indigenous groups. Thus, the more people live together sharing sweet beverages, the more they develop "similar bodies" at a microbiological level distinguishable from other collectives, who in turn are more similar among themselves.

highlighted by the Waorani as having opposite effects to the social consumption of manioc beverage, which is connected with cohesion of people (cf. Uzendoski 2004).

After running out of gas, a Waorani friend was lighting a fire. I joined this activity, pretty much like a child, not helpful but welcomed. There were no other adults around, and the warmth of the fire generated an intimacy stronger than playing football together, my friend said:

> You know, he has been bad, he beat me up when we were at the party, he was drunk. I have told him that if he wants to behave like this, he must leave the community. [I told him] Why have you come here? (Young Waorani woman)

My friend mentioned this later two or three times, in other intimate moments, when we were on our own. Her residence is uxorilocal and she seemed entitled to "talk about" the wrong behaviour of her *guiri* (relatives), and at other times she often shared recent news about other men in the village who have beaten up their wives. Such sharing of news did not require intimate moments. She strongly disapproved of domestic violence. One of her classificatory cousins was said to have 'tried to kill his wife'. The first time that to my knowledge he 'tried to kill' his wife, the latter sought refuge in the middle of the night at Yoweno's health post. Badly injured after being beaten up by her husband, she was with her children and her sister in law. She fell asleep at the health post. She had no close kin in the village, which is her husband's village. Paradoxically, the man that 'tried to kill' his wife is one of the most peaceful and joyful Waorani that I have met since 2014.

It should be noted here that the Waorani have a very egalitarian approach to gender (Rival 2002). Asymmetry is not seen between generations, or gender beyond the complementary gender division of labour. Nevertheless, asymmetry as a principle that organizes relations is seen in sister and brother differences based on the uxorilocal principle of marital residence (Rival 2002:124). Through this principle, children of sisters, Rival argues, are seen as more 'the same' than children of brothers. It also should be recalled here, as I have mentioned earlier, again relying on Rival's analysis and my own data on vitality, that men and women are different in relation to the attachment of their soul to the body and the ways in which they channel their vitality. Beyond these differences, Waorani society could be understood as Descola (2001) has noted for other Amazonian people, as a society that is not structured in terms of gender differentiations, but more in terms of consanguinity and affinity, which is a main difference from other peoples, for example those from Melanesian ethnographies. When Descola contrasts Amazonian ethnographies with those from Melanesia, he

points to the particularity of most Amazonian people who do not consider the possibility of "heterosubstitution", meaning that women are not exchanged for objects or animals as in bridewealth arrangements; instead bride service is normally the case, from a young husband to the family of his wife. Having said this, the liquor consumption-related violence that I am analysing in the section should not be considered as an outcome of gender structural inequalities among the Waorani, but more as an outcome of men's propensity to become *piinte* (full of homicidal anger) which makes them become "Other" to the point that they do not recognize their own wife and children.

I attempt to make sense of the Waorani consumption of *tiname,* although the voice of those who have been drunk and violent with their kin, and those who have been victims of such domestic violence remains incomplete. As for my female friend at the introduction of this section, the need for talking about this is evident in intimate moments, although there is an unspoken social rule: violence between loved ones is something that is better to be forgotten[84], for the sake of good conviviality (see Overing and Passes 2000).

Tiname as an external pathogen.

Very often, while interviewing elderly people about what *living well* means for them, they would mention 'attending traditional parties' where sweet manioc beverage was consumed. After recalling details of these parties with nostalgia, people also refer to current *tiname* consumption as a new disruptive force:

> In *durani´*s (ancestors) times, *watape kewegarani* (we used to live well), *waponi* (good), good, *kewegarani toma* (they all lived), it was good with the grandparents, everything was like the ancestors, *key apote* (to prepare manioc beverage), they did not drink *tina* (strong). They prepared and drink sweet manioc beverage, they prepare and drink. They went hunting, *ome kedani* (they worked)[85] and drink, they lived like our grandparents *watape durani kewegaranimpa* (the ancestors lived well). I talk like that, but they don´t understand [young Waorani], I keep crying. […]
> Ancestors did not drink strong beverage, they did not want it burning, they drunk sweet manioc beverage, plantain beverage, they did *emonguepe*[86] party, now [the

[84] Some parents beat children up when they behave badly; this is done in contexts that are not related to the ritual whipping described in chapter 4. As Rival (2015) has noted, domestic violence among the Waorani is recent, and the rule of no-coercion among the Waorani is also considered to hold for children (1992), and this kind of domestic violence is not related with *tiname*. Those children that have been beaten repeat in their daily life different conjugations of the verb *pangi* (to punish). But to understand this, a study focused on Waorani childhood would be required.

[85] I translated this interview with Wiña's son; while the literal translation is 'doing the forest', he preferred the translation 'to work'.

[86] Manioc beverage that was made through a process of smoking the manioc (see Rival 2002: 129-151).

> Waorani], here *tinanka bete* (drink strong/tangy)[87]. (Wiña, elderly woman from Epepare) [88]

The Waorani almost unanimously refer to the beginning of tiname drinking as something that came from *kowori* (see also High 2015b:126-130). They relate *tiname* consumption to marriages with *Kichwa* people, trips to the cities and men's insertion into the labour force for construction or extractive activities. Alban (2015) provides an account of men earning wages and spending their money on liquor[89], although she does not develop an analysis of this trend. In addition, *kowori bai parties* (non-Waorani like parties) are a main space for *tiname* consumption, this type of party started with the first settlements and were promoted by school teachers, as Rival (1992, 2002) has described in detail. The main problem with the incorporation of this outsider's beverage is the risk of getting angry, which means a disruption of peaceful conviviality:

> Babe already died, Bai already died, the only one who remains here in Yoweno is Cogui. Now there are only young, they don't think about *waponi kewemoni*, nowadays youth think different, now I see, youth dedicated themselves to *tiname*. Then, there is not *waponi kewemonipa*. *Tiname* brings troubles. (Ene, elderly woman, Yoweno)
> They live well, but when they drink *tiname* they get *piinte* (angry) with the *nanicabo* (kin). (Berbeca, middle aged woman, Yoweno).

As Rival (2002:56-57) notes, *piinte* is a type of anger that is experienced by men normally when close kin have died. Then, they will become *piinte,* and look for revenge. The state of being *piinte* is considered as "becoming other", he is not himself anymore. Thus, the new kind of becoming *piinte* which is not connected with revenge after the death of close kin, is a form of anger in which the angry man struggles to find an external target, and might harm his own brothers, wives, children. In Yoweno, where there is co-residence of *kowori* health workers at the health post within the village, some young people have directed their drunken anger against the health post and the doctors. In other words, perhaps a way to avoid directing their anger at close kin has been to focus it on the *kowori* within the village. A doctor who maintains excellent relationships with the Waorani, who is called by a Waorani name and has incorporated the use of *wento* in his own practice, was attacked by a drunk young man. When I enquired about the reasons, Waorani people were generally puzzled, and, as often happens, they tried

[87] Wiña does not say *tiname* but *tinanka*, again with the root *tina* that is translated to the Spanish *fuerte* (strong/that burns).
[88] Based on Wiña's ID data, his son says she is 66 years old. She remembers the process of contact very clearly, explaining that she was around the same age as her 16 years old grandchild, when the peaceful contact started for her.
[89] See Townsend (2015) for an analysis of social changes related to villages settlements also associated to recent alcohol consumption among the Baka in Cameroon.

not to develop interpretations about other reasons or ways. Whereas when I asked the doctor, he said 'liquor takes back the Waorani to the time before the contact', meaning that peaceful contact is suspended when men are drunk. The doctor's interpretation might be derived from national imaginaries of Waorani's warriorhood (see High 2015b).

Yoweno seems to have reduced its consumption of *tiname* compared to a few years ago as the Waorani recall[90]. New peaks in *tiname* consumption are connected with peaks in access to money, as was noted by Daniel, my collaborator. There are Waorani who receive monthly salaries and do not drink but distribute their incomes to their families. At the same time, there are moments when money is not as easily integrated into the Waorani economy; for example, during the new oil drilling in Yoweno, in 2017, I heard comments like these:

> Here they only spend on liquor. (Rosita, young Waorani woman).
> Here they say that are going to organize a strike, but it is only for spending on liquor. (Omi, young Waorani woman)
> He did not bring food home, he spent all on liquor. (Minta, young Waorani woman).

During those months, most of my interviews with women about *living well* pointed to *tiname* consumption, as well as the oil drilling, as a main disruptor of their wellbeing. When the drilling stopped, they did not complain as much about *tiname* although there were still some cases of *tiname*-related domestic violence.

Tiname as becoming "mad".

For exploring the notion of *living well,* one of the participatory methods that we developed with the Waorani was the recording of videos and audio about *waponi kewemonipa* (living well) and *wiwa kewingui* (living badly). In this participatory method which included the use of cameras and recorders, only young men took part. A few of them recorded pictures, audio and videos the day before showing them in a village meeting. Others created videos with their smart phone apps, based on previous pictures. Juan, the president of Epepare, presented a series of videos that were assessed by the village participants as the "most accurate" representation of *living well*. One of Juan's videos that was within the *wiwa kewingui* (living badly) series reflected on how people "become mad" when drinking *kowori* liquor, and resonated with other accounts such as the following:

[90] Yoweno village has present-day cases of liquor-related violence; most of Epepare people, during the time of my fieldwork, had embraced a Christian conversion with an avoidance of liquor.

> I became mad because of *tiname* […]. Then I gave it up, I became bored of *tiname.* but the time when I became mad I did not stop [drinking], I was about to die, I became mad. (Oyo, middle aged man, Epepare)

Oyo recalls that in one of those episodes of liquor-related madness or becoming *piinte* (angry), he got lost in the forest, he claims to have forgotten the notion of who he was, and such disturbance in his beinghood is what he links with the outcome of being violent with his close kin. The fact that *tiname* is translated by the Spanish *fuerte* (strong) and *que arde* (that burns), resonates with Kengowento description of *tiname* as 'being hot' which he opposes to living cold, calm and in harmony.

> I used to live cold. Hot is not good. I think like that. […]
> Do not go fighting, do not go hot, go only like the ancestors, a little bit cold. That is what I think now. Hot is angry, after that comes fever, then sorcery and death. Now, I won't be hot, sorcery not. Let's be like it used to be, cold, like my heart is now. (Kengowento, middle aged Waorani man)

In literature about the Waorani, to my knowledge, there is no mention about this link between heat and anger, and both connected to vulnerability against sorcery. I understand, from many conversations with Kengowento, that this is an interpretation that he has developed recently, so as to make sense of the present-day challenges that he and his family face in Yoweno. Even then, whenever we reflected about Kengowento's understanding of hot and cold, my young collaborators agreed with him, and considered that he has a "vision", he has seen something beyond ordinary senses. The contrast between cold and freshness, related to the forest as opposed to the road, is discussed in chapter 3; for now, I should highlight this connection between anger, heat (cf. Londoño 2005) and *tina* (strong, hot) or *tiname* (strong liquor). The relation that Kengowento draws between hot and vulnerability against sorcery and even death, could be explained as an alteration in the *piinte* person's health and vitality, where the person who is angry channels *pii* (vital force) in a harmful way. If the state of being *piinte* is prolonged it constitutes an asocial state – health is maintained through proper social relations – and the attachment of the soul and body remains altered (Rival 2005). In that state of alteration it makes sense that the person becomes vulnerable to shamanic attacks.

To conclude this section, I should note that young Waorani men, who have given up the drinking of strong liquor, often mention that they did so after they became Christians (chapter 5) and therefore now they do not drink; some of these young people who have given up *tiname* actively organize football tournaments (chapter 4), saying explicitly in village assemblies that they do so to avoid other young people getting drunk, as if the physical activity and collective happiness related to the football was

opposite to the liquor-related anger. While Christian conversion and football playing are analysed in detail in other chapters, here, I should highlight the following:

- The consumption of strong liquor, which often triggers Waorani men's anger along oil roads, is seen as a main disruptor of Waorani health in its corporeal, social and moral dimensions. This is because people who get angry channel their vitality in a harmful way, destructive way, as opposed to vitality channelled in a convivial *generative* way.
- Since the Waorani directly connect strong liquor with a post-contact non-Waorani way of life, they also choose to tackle it through non-Waorani post-contact measures. Elderly Christian Waorani do not drink *tiname*, and young Waorani people living along the oil roads see "becoming Christians" (chapter 5) as a way to deal with liquor-related anger.
- In regard to football playing, I heard a few times young Waorani referring to the physical activity and explicitly the sweating through playing football as something that helps them to remain healthy, and to have good thoughts. The discourse of football as connected to health might have been learnt at school. As Rival (1992) has noted, schooling among the Waorani was as much about a Foucaultian management of the body – from notions of hygiene to the incorporation of clothes and food – as it was about literacy. Nevertheless, beyond the effects of schooling, for young people – many of whom do not trek in the forest or go hunting very often – playing football as a way of being physically active and literally "sweating" seems to favour the corporeal channelling of vitality; while they might drink liquor in big tournaments, they do not drink in daily life football playing.

Conclusion.

I have suggested that being healthy is equated to being strong, and even courageous. This notion of health is a Waorani category of identity; while a "true Wao" is healthy, a prolonged lack of vitality is considered as a sickness. Vitality should not be equated with the kind of subjectivity connected with the soul that dreams (*onowoca*), even though a person's vitality may be enhanced by a particular powerful dream. The Waorani call courageous people *teemo piyengue* (strong, full of life-force), but the ideal form of strength implies flexibility, as in the tree that is hit by the wind but becomes straight again. In other words, in the relation vitality:courage:health, courageous/strong

people seem to be more resistant to diseases because they are flexible: "they do not break".

Thus the understanding of health expressed as *waa imo* (I am well), or *waemo imopa* (I am beautiful) is not only a corporeal state but also a form of subjectivity. This subjectivity can be enhanced by incorporating substances that increase Waorani vitality; it includes ordinary and ritual practices with human and non-human substances. Vitality is depleted through the intervention of evil forces such as sorcerer attacks. This is reflected in the way in which the Waorani deal with diseases, an example of which is the way in which they understand hepatitis B, which has become endemic in their territory during the last two decades. Some people from Yoweno – I am aware of only one case in Epepare – died due to this disease, and some others still have it. Most of the young people are vaccinated. While doctors talk about the dangers of "contaminated" corporeal fluids, not a single Waorani would say that someone had died because of having shared, for example, semen[91]. Instead they would say that the exhaustion of vitality was caused by an evil attack, which was expressed bodily as hepatitis B.

Many young Waorani are interested in domesticating doctors' scientific categories; instead of translating viruses and bacterial effects as shamanic attacks, they consider that viruses and bacteria have similar effects to low-key poisons (as when one eats slightly damaged food). This can be treated with pills (which contain chemicals that the Waorani also identify as low-key poisons). Thus a disturbance in the body caused by substances with no evil forces involved can be healed by other substances, whereas when an ailment is expressed in a depletion of vitality – as in a fatal case of hepatitis B– this is understood as a cosmological alteration caused by an evil (spirit or human sorcerer) who has predated on the Waorani. The person affected by an evil force becomes vulnerable to viruses or bacteria. This is why, in severe cases of disease, the Waorani combine biomedical treatment and shamanic treatment. When young Waorani face an ailment with mild symptoms, such as a cold, they tend to use only biomedicine, whereas elderly people might treat it with some forest plants. In

[91] For some Amazonian people, as Conklin (2001b) notes among the Wari', semen is a vitalizing substance. For the Waorani semen contributes to making a healthy foetus, and any man who has sex with a pregnant woman will contribute to this (Rival 1998). When a small child had some hearing problems, the mother said jokingly that the child's father had failed to properly "make" the child during pregnancy. I am not clear about what semen's relation to vitality is when there is no pregnancy involved, because when talking about sex the Waorani refer to the sharing of vitality more related to sweat. This is ambiguous, because in some cases too much sex might leave a man with reduced vitality, but I have also heard people suggesting that a man "stole" a woman's vitality through sex. More research should be done in this regard.

both cases the healing is achieved through time and the incorporation of substances. In other cases, when a disturbance of vitality is felt directly as related to an evil force – as in the *cowekewente* ailment – they look only for traditional treatment with a Waorani healer, who would restore the person's vitality by using their own power as a healer and a plant that has subjectival strength. This leads to the next chapter which is focused on the ecological dimension of *living well*.

CHAPTER 3: THE LOCUS OF LIVING WELL

This chapter addresses *living well* from a place-based perspective[92] (cf. Sarmiento 2016). The approach here is primarily focused on sensorial perceptions, which are highlighted in the ways Waorani people reflect upon their relationship with the forest as opposed to the road; a sensorial contrast is also noted between palm houses and cement houses. I suggest that the ecological dimension of Waorani *living well* is sensorial.

Waorani villages located along oil roads are strategic places for accessing external resources (chapter 4) and defending the borders of the Waorani territory. In recent decades, the Waorani have seen an unprecedented growth of *colono* (non-Waorani living in Amazonia) settlements, a growth that even very young Waorani pointed out when passing by the nearest towns. The Waorani also consider that it is their right to receive compensation for oil extraction done in their territory. I witnessed a year of these painful negotiations for compensations, which required endless assemblies and strikes along the oil road. Moreover, many Waorani think that by living near the oil company camp, they are "watching" over the oil company's actions. It is therefore unthinkable for the Waorani to abandon their settlements along the road, but still they describe their ideal *living well* as related to the forest of plenty that is increasingly far from the oil roads; and they withdraw themselves to deep forest settlements, as often as school times (cf. Rival 1992) and oil negotiations allow. This is the context in which I explore the Waorani ecological *living well*. I start by considering sensorial relations within the forest milieu. In the second section the focus is switched to the micro space of Waorani houses.

The forest as a socio-biological milieu.

Needless to say, the forest for the Waorani is important in many ways: (1) primarily, the forest is *monito omere* (our forest), the place where the ancestors lived and new generations will come, the place that must be defended from *kowori* (non-Waorani)

[92] Sarmiento (2016) in an issue on anthropological approaches to wellbeing and place (Ferraro and Sarmiento 2016) offers an analysis of the relation of "place" and well-being, showing that academic study and policy on wellbeing, with few exceptions (Atkinson, Fuller, and Painter 2012; Schwanen and Atkinson 2015) has not engaged enough with the role that "place" has for people's wellbeing, despite the rich body of literature that already exist on the topic of "place" (e.g.,Escobar 2001; Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003; Tilley 1994) as an essential part of human existence (Sarmiento 2016:44). I build on this literature, but particularly on works that have approached the relation between senses and place, see especially (Feld 2005; Feld and Basso 1996).

invasion[93]; (2) the forest is the place of natural abundance (Rival 2002, 2016), that allows a life of plenty for the Waorani, which will be further discussed in chapter 4; (3) the forest milieu is deeply connected with the Waorani body, a connection that is very often expressed in sensorial language. This section explores the sensorial relationship with place, based on the approach of my collaborators, who overwhelmingly spoke in a sensorial language when referring to the forest. Thus, ecological *living well* is something that one feels, that is experienced through the senses. Certainly, a *sensorial living well* would not be possible if the Waorani were deprived of their forest for any reason, or if the forest of plenty is depleted.

> I think that we will only be able to become white people the day white people transform themselves into Yanomami. I also know that if we live in their **cities,** we will be unhappy. Then they will put an end to the forest and never leave us a place where we can live far from them. We will no longer be able to hunt, or even to cultivate anything. Our children will be hungry. When I think about all this, I am filled with sadness and anger. (Kopenawa and Albert 2013:22)

These words from the Yanomami shaman and activist Davi Kopenawa (Kopenawa and Albert 2013) resonate with a feeling that is broadly shared among Amazonian people. The forest of plenty, which is different from white people's cities, is the place of *living well*. Among Amazonian ethnographic works focused on relation between wellbeing, I found particularly interesting Sarmiento's (2016) emphasis on a place-based living well, from his work with the Ashaninka's in Peru, whose conceptualization of wellbeing is explicitly related to the earth's wellbeing, considering the latter as a socio-biological being that is sentient. Therefore, when Ashaninka suggest that after the civil war and with current oil and natural gas extraction 'the earth is angry' (ibid:47) which in turn impedes the fulfilment of humans wellbeing, they are referring to a non-anthropocentric notion of wellbeing. Buitrón (2016) also provides a recent account of Shuar perception of the forest as the locus of *shiir/penker pujustin* (beautiful/good life); they highlight a 'state of wellbeing predicated upon self-sufficiency and autonomy' (ibid:92), which is perceived to be possible in the forest as opposed to life in towns or cities where many Shuar have 'experienced first-hand harsh moments of dependency and deprivation' (ibid:92). However, they note a depletion of the forest near their villages, where they also lack access to external resources; scarcity is then opposed to living well (ibid:93).

[93] Rival (2016:248) provides an account of how a Waorani living in the city recalls *monito ome*, where the memory of *monito ome* is equated to a perfume that remains in Waorani bodies, so they don't forget. Also, Rival mentions that the defence of *monito ome* translated as 'our word' is essential for the continuity of the Waorani way of life (2016:261).

When talking with Waorani leaders, they seem to be in an endless struggle between obtaining foreign resources for their villages (chapter 4) and ensuring well defined territorial borders. While I have seen the Waorani defending their territory fiercely against invasion from outsiders in some poorly defined frontiers, almost nobody mentioned these territorial struggles when asked about their notion of *living well*, even when they mentioned the forest[94]. In Yoweno, in a meeting with Shuar people and the State, the Waorani president reacted to news about Shuar people invading Yoweno's North frontier[95] by saying that 'if we have to go to war, we will'. While using a language of war, the whole meeting was carried out in "diplomatic"[96] terms, and the issue was solved by the Shuar commitment not to invade Yoweno's land. The same "diplomatic" state of relations is seen in Epepare, although I have been told that only a few years ago the pressure over their land triggered more heated confrontations.

Narratives of *living well* that I collected in 2017 and 2018 focus mainly on a language of conviviality, which initially resonates with Overing's (Overing and Passes 2000) analytical approach of 'moral economy of intimacy' (see Viveiros de Castro 1996:189). Nevertheless, the language of conviviality in my ethnography is somehow beyond humans; by this I mean that the Waorani connect their *living well* and health with a multiplicity of ecological relationships. This also implies that Waorani relational bodies are not only made through convivial relationships, they are made through relationships with their environment. Thus what I call the ecological sphere of *living well* also has positive effects on the human convivial sphere of *living well*. For example, Waorani people consider that certain forest fragrances, tastes, smells and sounds put their bodies in a good social disposition; they also note similarities with some animals' social preferences – such as a hummingbird looking for a quiet place in the forest where it feels more "sociable".

Shepard's (2004) proposal of a sensory ecology is helpful for considering Waorani approach to the environment. Sensation can be understood as a 'biocultural

[94] Interviews in Epepare brought up Waorani concerns about State claims of ownership over the Yasuní (YPN), and elderly people often said that the State should not "own" their ancestors' forest. Young people also mention their disagreement with State administration of the park, but they have embraced the increasing mediatization of the YPN. Chapter 5 offers a broader discussion of Waorani relations with the Ecuadorian state.

[95] Waorani and Shuar people signed an agreement few decades ago, in which they defined a territorial border. The Shuar people, who have only recently lived in the North of Ecuador, gave assurances that there will be no need of war, and even suggested that the agreement should be renewed, but that the article concerning 'not allowing marriage between Waorani people and Shuar' people should be changed, because they foresee a future in which they might marry.

[96] Chapter 5, concerned with Waorani *strong speech*, offers an analysis of this form of Amazonian diplomacy based Nahum-Claudel's (2018) work.

process through which humans acquire information about their environment' (2004:264). Shepard's study among the Matsigenka and the Yora shows that while sensory experience is physiological, sensorial approaches vary cross-culturally, which in turn is expressed in different ecological relationships. Shepard offers an analysis of these variations in relation to the sensorial selection of medicinal plants; the Yora, who have a homeopathic (like cures like) approach towards health treatment, focus on plant shapes (visual), tactile properties and odor, whereas Matsigenka's more allopathic medicine includes a greater variety of bitter (taste) plants, showing their concern for chemical processes[97]. Amazonian scholars also draw attention to the role of senses within rites and daily conviviality, including studies of hearing or the aural (e.g., Ewart 2008; Passes 1998; Seeger 1981; Walker 2010, 2013b), sight (e.g., Ewart 2008; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1978; Surrallés 2003)[98], and touch and smell (e.g., Crocker 1985; Rival 2016; Seeger 1981)[99]. These scholars also provide accounts of how interconnected different sensorial modalities are (see Ewart 2008; Seeger 1981), so that one sensorial perception often summons up others (cf. Classen 2005). I build on these Amazonian studies and a broader body of work on the anthropology of the senses (Le Breton 2017; Feld 1982; Geurts 2002; Howes 1991, 2005; Howes and Classen 1991; among others) and Ingold's critique arguing in favour of a 'dwelling perspective'(2000). Nevertheless, I did not conduct research focused on Waorani senses, which is a potential area of study; instead, my argument here is derived from the sensorial language that spontaneously emerges from Waorani reflections about their environmental milieu. This chapter engages exclusively with the sensorial ecology. Previous ethnographers (Davis and Yost 1983b, 1983a; Rival 2002, 2009, 2016) have noted that Waorani ecological knowledge is expressed through detailed accounts of forest relations and processes. Waorani deep empirical knowledge about the forest, I suggest, is accompanied by Waorani *fine-tuning* of their senses in order to navigate the forest milieu.

[97] Waorani approach to medicinal plants is similar to the Yora in their focus on plant shapes and fragrances. Moreover, Shepard reports that the Yora's main form of medicinal plants application is external (2004:258), similar to that of the Waorani who mainly apply plants directly to the skin or through the use of warm compresses, rather than ingesting them. Again, more research on this area needs to be done.

[98] While Viveiros de Castro's (1998) perspectivism does not point to a study of the senses, it emphasises the sight or the 'point of view' as the perceptive modality.

[99] See also Classen's (1990) comparative study of Lowland and Highland Amerindian ethnographies.

Relational body and the "beautiful" forest.

We were walking in the Yasuní (YPN) with Wane and his family; we were still an hour's walking distance – at a strolling pace – from the village. Wane was complaining during the first part of the trek about footprints that he attributed to Shuar people having hunted and cut trees in the area. At a point that for me seemed to be already the forest of big shades, where the air is fresh and the trees are big, a bountiful forest to my eyes, I said to Wane in a child-like *Wao terero* 'Wane, *bito ome waemo*' (your forest is beautiful) and to my surprise Wane responded with strong body language pointing out to the East: 'no, no, further, further, there is *waemo*'; he then explained that the place that he was referring is near Tivacuno river, which is at least 4 hours walking distance – fast walking. I learned later that some families from Epepare had plans for opening settlements in that area of their forest. They were already opening the path and taking manioc stalks for sowing there.

Why is the deep forest beautiful and why is the forest along the road not? The obvious response points to the abundance of animals for hunting and food for foraging, so that the forest of plenty is getting further from the road (Chapter 4). Nevertheless, Waorani people also mention that when the forest gets depleted of animals and the river has no fish, this is probably a sign of a sorcerer attack, which is aimed at Waorani collapse, therefore acknowledging that sorcerers can also predate on forest vitality. We should recall that the Waorani notion of beautiful and good are often synonyms as in *waponi*, and therefore part of the same value. Thus the forest of plenty is good for the Waorani but is also full of vitality, which is not only assessed by the number of animals; I suggest instead that Waorani assessment of the "beautiful" responds to their sensorial ecology. Moreover, this sensorial (hedonic) relation with the forest is deeply connected with an eudaimonic approach to wellbeing that requires communication with the forest:

> Andrea: how is the body of a Waorani who lives *waa kewingui*?
> Jose: a truly *waa kewingui* was before, nowadays there is no, that is because they used to have the spirit of everything that surrounded them, that protected them, their vision arrived to them, because the Waorani used to eat there [in the forest]. The Wao used to have strength. Nowadays, for me to be a proper Wao, **to have that spirit, I have to go to the forest**, do what they did and get that strength. I have not, I have not what my grandfather had. […]
> A: Is there something that you do to connect with that strength?
> Jose: Yes, one day I had a dream about my grandmother, I was sad, *sin ánimo* (without energy or courage). I took a pill and I remained like that, I said I will take an exam (biomedical), I had a headache. I remembered **my grandfather told me one day that when you** *no estas bien relacionado con la selva* (**are not well-connected with the forest**), with what your grandfather had, **if you forget you will need it**. Then I decided, I am going, I am going to cut a liana and see how it is.

> Then, I asked permission in my work[100], and I left, I walked upwards, passing the river mouth, where Ene has a garden[101] when I arrived **I felt like I woke up**, like I was getting up, I took that plant *tugure monkabe*[102], **it has a different smell**, I cut it, and a fruit, I ate that, then I went deeper, the pain was gone. Further, I found forest garlic[103] (*wiyaguein*), took some leaves to make juice, I jumped into the river, the pain was gone. The tiredness that I had was gone. **When coming back, I asked my father if I can help him,** I worked with my father [building a house]. (Jose, Waorani man, 23 years old, Yoweno)

Jose's account shows a continuity between the notion of vitality or strength discussed in the last chapter, and the understanding of communication with the forest. Jose, as many young people do, opted to use pills for treating a pain, but given that he also had a lack of strength, he pursued a "relation" with the forest[104]. In other words, while Amazonian bodies are relational and socially made (Conklin and Morgan 1996; Rival 2005; Seeger, DaMatta, and Viveiros de Castro 1979), the Waorani body also seems to require a certain kind of "relation" with the forest in order to *live well*, to be more sociable. That is why, once back from the forest and full of vitality, Jose dedicated his strength to a productive activity, helping his father to build a house. His renewed vitality contributed to vitalize a domestic place, a vitalization that will be further discussed in the second section of this chapter.

The relational emphasis in Waorani accounts about the forest can also be seen in the emphatic commentaries that they utter while trekking in the forest, for example: 'the monkeys are having fun' or 'the tree [whose leaves were dry] has not drunk his manioc beverage, because there is no rain'. Similar comments were made in the art-research based method, where people overwhelmingly painted the forest as part of their *living well*. Interestingly, in Epepare, people developed more detailed accounts about their forest relationships than in Yoweno. In Yoweno, while everybody mentioned the importance of the forest as part of their *living well*, only one young man developed a detailed account of such relations – including the peach palm, running water, rainwater, trees, plants and forest animals (picture 3.2). This man is one of the few people in Yoweno who lives far from the road, who does not live in a cement house; and from the data obtained in a Food Frequency survey conducted in 2017 and 2018, I know that his

[100] Jose works for a health post.
[101] Manioc and plantain garden made through the slash-and-mulch technique.
[102] He described it as the tree with salty ants, I have not been able to identify its latin name.
[103] The name of this plant in *Wao terero* is *wiyaguein*, Mondragón and Smith (1997:194) offer a different spelling *wigagen* or *wigayen*, they identify it as *Mansoa standleyi*, see also *Mansoa alliacea*.
[104] It is clear from Jose's account that the forest is not a homogenous place, but a place where people interact with different beings, plants, lianas, fruits, and so on. Perhaps in this sense when the Waorani say "the forest", we should understand 'a myriad of powerful agentive beings' which in turn are connected as a whole, a powerful singular entity called "the forest" as opposed to "the road" or "the city".

economy and nurture relies mainly on forest resources[105]. In other words, his relationship with the forest seems to be reflected in his painting.

Picture 3.1 Living well, Yoweno 2018.

Picture 3.2 *Waponi kewemonipa,* Yoweno 2018.

Picture 3.3 Living well, Epepare 2017.

Picture 3.4 *Waponi Kewemonipa,* Epepare 2017.

Waorani paintings and reflections suggest that when thinking intuitively, as painting allows, the Waorani develop a place-based description of *living well*, and when referring to place, the sensorial language is central. Another interesting way in which people from Yoweno refer to some areas of the forest is by the Spanish notion of

[105] All the participants from Epepare and almost all from Yoweno referred to the forest as essential for *living well*, but only one from Yoweno produced a detailed picture of the forest relations. Several factors such as the environment in which the method was conducted might have affected the mood for painting in Yoweno, where the painting was done in a closed space. Also, in the Yoweno case, due to a lack of initial interest from young people to take part on this research, I included the option of taking photos and videos, which might have taken attention away from the painting activity.

reservas (reserves). This is a notion promoted by Waorani leaders living in the deepest part of the forest, who have rejected oil extraction in their lands, and one notable leader who is a main campaigner for the *reserve* notion, whose territory borders Yoweno's land, has long been assisted by international environmentalists. The notion of *reserve* has clear Western environmentalist roots, but for the Waorani living along oil roads *reserve* means a socio/biological environment far from the roads, where the Waorani can grow strong like the ancestors. Kengowento is one of the Waorani whose family now has a *reserve* in a deep area of the forest. He argues that the *reserva* is a place where he hunts little, so 'animals are there for the grandchildren to learn their names'. Furthermore, he provides the following account:

> Everything is hot, where before [it was cold], I go now and it is hot, A hot, Coca hot, B hot, C hot, D hot, everywhere I go[106]. Before we used to live cold, good hunting, children grow up well. When I leave [die] this might end.
> *Kowori* (non-waorani) *tiname* (non-Waorani liquor), *tiname, tiname,* that is how our lives are now, drinking hotter *tiname.* Before, I wanted cold, now it is a little bit hot wherever I go, my grandchildren, my children. Before it was good, cold, manioc was far away, thus every 3 months, 4 months we change home, we live cold. Now along the road comes fever, garbage, garbage trucks, they come throwing up diarrhoea in the same place, flu is also there, from earth this goes out ufff, rain falls, smoke comes from earth, when it rains smoke comes out, when it rains smoke from *crudo* (oil) comes out.
> We are sick, there is not like before. Before [we changed houses often]. It did not smell like old, it was fresh. On the fresh, there is no fever. […] The **fresh foliage does not smell like that, now, along the road when it is going to change**? The garbage smells, the car smells, the chemicals from the oil smells, that is why I *wenkekebopa* (I am ill, I die). Before it was not like that, we drink manioc, talk, eat, cold in the hammock. Does not smell, there is no poison, [it is] calm. (Kengowento, middle aged Waorani man)

When Kengowento developed this differentiation between the forest of cold and the road of hot, I asked my collaborators if they had heard something like that among their grandparents, but the almost unanimous response was that it is Kengowento's vision, a new interpretation of life along the road – an interpretation that all of my collaborators agreed with. More interestingly, the connection that Kengowento makes between sweet manioc and coolness could also be considered a metaphor of sociability; manioc is the quintessential beverage for making similar bodies and therefore more alike people. The Waorani are not alone in considering that being "cool" as opposed to heat, is a convivial, moral virtue, Londoño notes that the Muinane perceive heat as being 'pathogenic' and suggests that 'Muinane people's notion of the good life involves

[106] "A" is a Waorani village located at the end of the road, 10 minutes ride from Yoweno. Coca is the main nearest Amazonian city. "B" is located in the YPN, in the North of the Waorani territory. "C" is in the West side of their territory. "D" is to the South. All the villages mentioned are within oil camps accessible by road, except "D" which is one of the oldest and biggest Waorani settlements.

making and shaping ‘cool’ (healthy, strong, comfortable, beautiful) bodies’ (2005:9). Based on Kengowento’s insightful analysis, I suggest the following contrast between the sensorial perception of coolness and hot:

Table 3.1.

Coolness	**Hot**
Calm, joyful and playful people	Anger
Mobile lifestyle in the forest / fresh foliage	Road / settlement / pollution
Healthy body (courageous/vigorous/strength)	Sickness (weakness food and chemicals) / Sorcery
Sweet beverages	Liquor (domestic violence)

This contrast between hot and cold as a main sensorial perception of life along the roads was also noted in the art-research method:

Picture 3.5 Ama la naturaleza, *Waponi Kewegui* 2017.

Picture 3.5 is a composition created by young Waorani, who decided to present together two different versions of the forest. The left-hand side t-shirt was painted by a young man, whose central theme was a “black polluted” river. The right-hand side t-shirt was painted by Brisa, a young woman with formal education who included the Spanish phrase *Ama la naturaleza* (love nature) resembling a governmental slogan *Ecuador ama la vida* (Ecuador loves live). Brisa developed a speech explaining this composition of two pictures, and it is worth noting her use of past tense: ‘this was the forest *waponi kewengui,* which means that there was no pollution […] nowadays, with the oil companies pollution, there is the oil [pointing to the left picture], the river is more polluted, the sun light is stronger [pointing to the sun in left picture], it is harsher, in this way we cannot live well’. One can even read this as a Waorani interpretation of man-made climate change, which is happening in a single lifetime.

While I quote Waorani people referring to an opposition between the forest and the road, I should clarify that the Waorani do not think the forest is homogenous. For example, the forest has an abundance of historical landmarks (Rival 2002, 2016; Zurita 2014) which include places were the ancestors lived and died. There are also landmarks referring to people who are alive, whose acts have inspired the naming of a path or a lake; some spots become landmarks when connected with relevant events from previous treks; there are also 'not to go' places where they perceive evil spirits inhabit; and there is the land of the isolated people, with which the next section is concerned.

Isolated people.

A thesis focused on Waorani *living well* along oil roads, gives little room for extensive discussion about the *living well* of Waorani people who are still in isolation. Some leaders from Yoweno refer to isolated people[107] as "free people"[108] when talking about them in front of the State. They suggest that "free" people do not have to "relate" to the State or obey Ecuadorian laws, in the way the Waorani have to. In practice, many studies have shown that the "isolation" of this "free" people is relative, and they are in a continuous struggle to defend their borders from the encroaching society (e.g., High 2013, Rival 2015). Yoweno and Epepare territories have areas in which isolated people either live or walk. These areas are normally avoided by Waorani people. They are places of "non-relationality" within the forest, where relations are avoided, as if by acknowledging isolated people's rights over that territory, the network of relations within the forest was "cut" in Strathern's (1996) terms. Isolated people, namely Tagaeri and Taromenane[109], are a frequent topic among the Waorani. As noted by High (2013,

[107] I use the expression "isolated" to refer to people who avoid peaceful contact with the encroaching society, but as High (2013) and Rival (2015) have analysed, in the Waorani territory such isolation goes hand in hand with increasing pressures on their land. Isolated people's necklaces are made from palm fibre, animal bones but also with pieces of plastic, bottle caps and other waste materials that are often left behind in the oil frontier (High 2013, Rival 2015), and these are among the most compelling proofs that there is no such isolation but instead a resistance towards encroachment.

[108] Rival also records references to them as people who prefer to live 'free like the jaguar' (2015:299).

[109] Tagae and his group, the Tagaeri, isolated themselves from other Waorani at the time when the majority of Waorani accepted peaceful contact (Cabodevilla 1994, 2004; High 2013). The Waorani jokingly call naked children "*tagaeri*" as a way to differentiate between a *durani bai* (like the ancestors) behaviour and what is considered proper after peaceful contact, which has also been noted by High (2013). There is no agreement among the Waorani or scholars working on the area about whether the Taromenani are Waorani or not. They seem to share a similar origin but some Waorani who have encountered Taromenani people have noted a different dialect; there is evidence of variations in material culture but there are also oral stories of kinship links (see Cabodevilla 1992, 2004; High 2013). Recent accounts suggest that Tagaeri survivors of confrontations in the oil frontier may have joined the Taromenani. It is also unclear whether there are other isolated people apart from the tagaeri-taromenani, Kimerling (2015: 498,517) mentions an isolated group known as Dugakaeri.

2015b), while some Waorani – including people from Yoweno in 2003[110]– took part in recent killings of isolated people, other Waorani have expressed an identification in terms of kinship with the same isolated people. High, building on Sahlins (2013) study of kinship as 'mutuality of beings' – an intersubjective sense of "belonging" – suggests that Waorani identification with isolated people is based on their shared experience as victims of killings; this sense of mutuality goes beyond the Amazonian emphasis on substance sharing for the creation of kinship. During my fieldwork the majority of Waorani people followed a praxis of "non-relationality" and respect of isolated people's autonomy, by avoiding any activity in the forest that they inhabit. This praxis is very fragile, not only because borders are not clearly defined, but because some Waorani do envision some kind of "relationality" or contact with these people.

The praxis of spatial non-relationality that the Waorani maintain towards isolated people's territory is not "respected" by the encroaching society. The Ecuadorian State has recently emitted a Presidential Decree[111] that would allow extractive activities in the borders of isolated people's land, places where they forage and hunt. Also, the Waorani acknowledge that pollutant elements generated outside the territory of "free people" reach them in ways that they are not able to avoid, and that therefore, their freedom is indeed relative:

> Pedro: People should not bathe anymore in Shiripuno river [after explaining that there are denunciations about non-Waorani people mining with mercury upriver]. Poor Penty [from a downriver village], they will be contaminated.
> Rosita: I know that [mercury] is a very dangerous chemical.
> Juana: Poor *hermanos* (she uses the Spanish word for brothers) *taromenani,* they do not know that they are drinking contaminated water.

This empathy towards isolated people as unaware victims of pollution was expressed in a spontaneous way by Juana. Juana moved to Yoweno only after marrying a Yoweno man a few years ago, so she or her close kin were not directly involved in the 2003 killings, although her father-in-law was. Most Waorani who call isolated people 'brothers' in Spanish, or *guirinani* (relatives) in *Wao terero,* acknowledge having kin who decided not to accept a peaceful contact; these family links are actualized by what High (2015b) calls a mutual shared experience, and in the above quoted case, the shared experience is that of being victims of pollution.

[110] Waorani recalled this attack if I asked, but it was not a common topic. What was recalled more often was the death of a Yoweno man killed by isolated people in 1993, which is argued as being the main reason for the 2003 killing expedition, along with loggers' interest (for a detailed analysis of these events see High 2013, Cabodevilla 2004, Rivas 2003).
[111] Decree N 751 emitted in May 2019.

In Epepare, the news of isolated people passing by is received with less concern than in Yoweno; in the former, people would avoid walking in places where isolated people were seen, but they mostly believe that isolated people will not attack their village. Instead, they would identify the Waorani as being "the same" because the village has some *durani onko* (palm houses)[112]; this is a different attitude from Yoweno people, where people fear a spear attack in their village, because contact with isolated people in their territory has a history of violent confrontations. Yoweno people have even asked the oil company to build a fence surrounding the village, which for me seemed like an odd petition, but for them seems to be the incorporation of oil company's aesthetic of non-relationality within the forest.

To finish this section, I should highlight that the Waorani also refer to isolated people with a sort of admiration. Kengowento, a man who took part in the 2013 killing, noted that isolated people 'still have power' explaining that it is because they still live in the forest and eat forest food, and animals with strong meat such as monkeys. So even for those who consider isolated people as enemies and do not desire to relate with them as kin, the "free" people are 'a potent image of indigenous strength and autonomy' (High 2013:197). Thus, being strong seems to be an expression of relationality with the forest; such relationality is reduced for the Waorani living along the roads, while relationality with the encroaching society increases.

Sensorial ecology of *living well.*

> Arturo: People who live in the forest have good relationship with the forest, when an eagle flutters, [it means] other community has a problem, they communicated that. The parrot, my grandmother used to say, when it is time of peach palm the parrot goes all over the place communicating it to the people. That parrot does not eat the seed, he puts the seed in the ground for future generations.
> Andrea: What about Yoweno, do people still have that relationship with the forest?
> Arturo: We almost do not have that relationship with the forest, it is like 28%, it is very low, people who live in Z they might be 60%, people in Y and X maybe 93%[113].
> Andrea: What about Epepare?
> Arturo: Maybe 45% […] they are also in contact with the oil people, they cannot be 100%.
> Here it is difficult to have a good relationship with the forest because of motors noise, animals go deeper into the forest, only little birds remain, humans also go deeper into the forest. (Arturo, 23 years old, Yoweno)

Arturo uses a *Kowori* form of comparison, percentage figures, for developing an analysis of the Waorani relationship with a socio-biological forest. This relationship

[112] High (2013) also records Waorani building *durani onko* so to give the message of similarity to isolated people.
[113] All Waorani villages with no access to road.

with the forest is often expressed as a sensorial experience through the body when the Waorani refer to *living well*, but they also develop a series of semiotic interpretations, resembling what Kohn (2013) notes among the Kichwa, who by reading forest signs and icons are able to better navigate within the forest "ecology of selves". In the Waorani case this form of reading forest signs is abundant, for example:

> Namo joined me for helping with the translation of an interview with the elderly Tenka. We were walking towards Tenka's house, and suddenly, Namo noted a bird saying "*tinwa*" "*tinwa*", he interpreted that as a sign that Tenka will be at home, the bird was anticipating our encounter. (Fieldnotes, 2017)

A semiotic approach towards the forest, particularly birds' sounds, was ubiquitous throughout my fieldwork[114], but the language of the senses seems to be more directly related to the notion of *living well* in relation to the forest. By senses I am referring to the five senses hearing, sight, smell, touch, and taste[115]. I also consider a kinaesthetic sense (Geurts 2002) that the Waorani describe as body intelligence, this is a corporeal feeling manifested by a sudden trembling of an arm or a leg. Waorani people experience this kinaesthetic trembling mostly in anticipation of an animal approaching (when hunting); on other occasions it is connected with the arrival of someone to the village; and sometimes it is an anticipation of something bad (an accident) that is about to happen. I am not clear how exactly the Waorani differentiate among the possibilities of this kinaesthetic sense, but this is perhaps because I have not got that enhanced sense. Here, I will focus primarily on the senses that people spontaneously referred to when noting that they feel different in the forest compared to the busy road: hearing, smelling (see also Rival 2002:71), and the kinaesthetic sense. It is not to say that the other senses are not important for the Waorani[116]. They have an acute sight for identifying animals at long distance, and can read their footprints, sights that for me were mostly blurred. Moreover, as expressed through the art-based research method, the Waorani have a great appreciation for visual details, which can be seen also in pictures posted on Facebook (chapter 6) and wall paintings (next section). Still, in relation to *living well*, they did not mention sight as much as they mentioned hearing and smell. It seems as

[114] 'Birds in particular are known for their prophetic calls' (High 2018:63); see also Walker (2010: 4,16) among the Urarina; among the Apurinã see Virtanen (2016).

[115] My collaborators offered different spellings in *Wao terero*, here I summarize the most common spelling and the one that Yeti (2012:50) offers: hearing *(eñemini, eñepite),* sight *(akin, apamo),* smell *(ween ongimamo, oginwa, onokaro ween onkengi),* touch (*tao keki, gampo keki*), and taste (*gerepamo, onone gere kete*).

[116] I agree with Ingold's (2000) suggestion that a 'dwelling perception' includes visual practices; a broader study of Waorani senses would illuminate their cross-sensory ways of dwelling and moving; meanwhile, I am following the ways in which my collaborators highlight certain sensorial modalities.

though for the Waorani, as for other Amazonian people, hearing is the most important sense (see Santos-Granero 2006).

Regarding touch, I was taught to be careful with what I touch while walking in the forest; "touching" in relation to the forest was not particularly highlighted, but perhaps a sensorial research focused on plants might illuminate better the relevance of the tactile. Touch is important when a certain subjectivity from an animal is ritually acquired, by rubbing a part of his body on a child, normally after a hunt. I also know that some couples will go to the forest to have sex, but that is within the human scope of relationality, instead of a sensorial communication with the forest through touch. Where touch is clearly at the core of Waorani *living well* is in the ordinary conviviality, which Rival (2016) has called "sensual" *living well*, as already discussed in chapter 1. Here, I will just add that gentle touch for bonding is also a form of communication; for example, when my host mother wanted me to go with her to the city, she would play with my hair, while making her point. Likewise, instead of dealing with my poor *Wao terero*, many grandmothers would prefer caressing my hands and some would hold my hand for walking around, as they often do among themselves when they meet for singing. Overall, touch seems to be a main form of communication between humans (cf. Brightman 2007:58), but it is not the preferred form of sensing the socio-biological life of the forest.

In relation to taste, people emphasise not so much the taste but the vitality that is obtained from the forest food, as discussed in chapter 2. Sweetness is a taste that the Waorani appreciate the most; they also have ritual practices that increase women's tongues' capacity for making a "sweeter" sweet manioc beverage[117]. In contrast to this, strong flavours or a burning mouth is not favoured by the Waorani from Epepare and Yoweno[118]; fermented alcohol is called *tiname* (strong). Here, I should note again Conklin's (2019) study which suggests that the sweeter the manioc beverage –the Waorani only consume sweet manioc[119]– the greater the amount of microorganisms

[117] For this the Waorani use the sweet part of the fruit from *owetawe* (*Crescentia cujete*). Also, I have tasted some extremely sugary beverage manioc, which I learned had added sugar, a practice that some women have adopted. Several young families also consume juice and even just water with abundant sugar added.

[118] Only a few young Waorani who have lived in the city told me that they enjoy hot spices with their meals. Hot spices are also consumed to repel bad spirits. Some people consume spicy food while fasting after sowing *kompango* (*Loncharpus utilis, L. nicou*), but it is not clear for me whether this is a post-contact practice acquired from Kichwa people.

[119] Some young Waorani still encourage the consumption of raw sweet manioc. Juana Enqueri, my research assistant, said to me while chewing raw sweet manioc in her garden: 'you should learn to eat raw manioc, my grandmother taught me'. I saw a few other women also eating raw manioc. Later Juana

passed from the women who make the manioc to those who consume it; therefore, the sweeter the manioc, the more similar the bodies of those who drink together. There is a potential new field of research for exploring the role of microorganisms in Amazonian theories of the body. Daly (2020), in a study of the fermentation of bitter manioc among the Makushi, notes how the consumption of fermented beverage goes hand in hand with social bonding, but it is not clear if strong fermented beverages, with less microorganisms due to the levels of alcohol, may be less sociable.

Hearing, smelling, sensing the forest.

> A: Do you remember a place where you lived in a beautiful way?
> In "Z" (a village in the forest) there was no noise. (Daime, middle aged woman, Yoweno).

As Feld (2005) has noted in his study among the Kaluli people of Papua New Guinea, 'place is sensed, senses are placed, as places make sense, sense make place' (2005:179), here in, if *living well* is connected with the forest, then it is also connected with the senses. When I asked the Waorani living along the roads if there was a time or a place where they lived particularly well, people who grew up in remote villages often pointed to life in the forest as the ideal of *living well*, as opposed to life along the road. Whenever I walked with the Waorani in the forest – I did not join any hunting trips – they shared food, knowledge, memories triggered by the landmarks (see Zurita 2014) and laughter (chapter 4). The Waorani often organize themselves to go to the forest with people who are not necessarily their close kin, but with whom they have relations of sharing within the village. I found it very difficult to retain the knowledge that the Waorani shared with me while trekking; thus, to overcome my difficulties in learning about Waorani knowledge of the forest, and also, based on the intuition that spontaneous quotidian references to the annoying noise of the road, as opposite to forest "silence", might be better understood by in-deep forest treks descriptions, I decided to conduct a participatory method[120].

I gave recording devices to five men, two from Yoweno, two from Epepare and one who lived in both villages. The decision to use this method only with men was based on the fact that only men, and a few elderly women, go alone on long treks. These

mentioned that this is for training oneself in case one gets lost in the forest, or in case of war, she added 'you should learn to eat without salt'.

[120] This method was recommended by Jerome Lewis in a personal conversation.

men were trusted male research assistants and the research that they conducted with the recorder consisted in:

- Carrying the recording device to the forest and thinking about *waponi kewemonipa*;
- Recording anything they consider important from the forest;
- Teaching the listener about the forest from the Waorani point of view.

All of them were enthusiastic in collaborating with this practical research, generating an abundance of recordings. Interestingly, men from Yoweno spontaneously undertook recordings of meetings with State institutions and with the oil company, some of which I attended, and some others that I was unaware of. Two men also decided to conduct interviews with their elderly kin, arguing that their knowledge was about to be lost. Their recordings with elderly people include primarily historical accounts and myths. Unexpectedly for me, the recording device became an instrument of power for the Waorani. They would put the recording machine in the faces of powerful others to document their meetings, they developed deep reflections about their lives, and they documented knowledge that they thought was at risk of being lost[121].

Each man generated the recording as and when he pleased: some while walking in the forest on their own, some trekking with family for foraging or fishing. Two men also recorded trips to distant villages. None of the participants listened to each other's audios, and none of them conducted the recording together, therefore the similarities in their narrative are significant[122]:

> I am standing by the side of a giant tree, *ceibo* (*Ceiba pentandra*). This is a historic tree from our forebears […] there are some birds on this tree, they are ***alabando*** (praising) their day**. I cannot see their colour, but I can hear them** [sound of birds is heard in the recording].
> A hunter must be alert to three important aspects: smell, sound, footprints […]. Because I am a hunter, I identify the sound of each bird. It is similar to a person, they tell other animals if someone is coming, they know I am here. […] I think birds have freedom to fly, a sentiment for flying (Namo, young man, Epepare)

Hearing for this hunter reaches further than sight, he can hear the birds without being able to see them (cf. Feld 2013:223). Namo, a good hunter, developed audios full of sounds; as he says 'a hunter must listen to the sounds'. But for him, birds' sounds are not simple sounds, they are a form of communication (cf. Gutierrez-Choquevilca 2010).

[121] They knew the machine recorded was theirs, so they will keep the audio files with them after sharing with me.
[122] They differ in style, one does the recording in a more journalistic tone, such as the Ecuadorian news; another seems to imagine a public of tourists and scientists and another speaks very slowly reflecting about his feelings.

Namo developed the theory of the Waorani bodily 'intelligence' in order to explain to me that his body, and most of the Waorani bodies, 'listen' and 'tell' when there is a danger, but also when a potential prey or a visit is approaching. This is what I call the Waorani kinaesthetic sense. Interestingly, Namo argued that when changing residence from Epepare to Yoweno his body intelligence was reduced, he was not able to perceive his kinaesthetic sense as often. His willingness to sing in the afternoon also declined. Namo described these changes by explaining in Spanish that the Epepare sense of isolation feels like "*sagrado*" (sacred), not in a religious way, but as opposed to the busy road, where he did not find himself at ease.

Cabral de Oliveira (2015), building on Lévi-Strauss' *logic of the sensible*, Stenger's notion of *cosmopolitic* and Bateson's analysis of *communication*, notes that among the Wajãpi there is a dimension of knowledge that does not require a major change of perspective – such as in shamanic metamorphosis. Cabral de Oliveira suggests an understanding of the forest world, as happening in a certain moment and context, can be reached through imagination and sensitivity. In other words, the knowledge of other beings' perspectives is accessible to the observer through the senses. Namo describes singing birds as '*alabando*' (praising), inspired by the Christian use of the word *'alabanza'* (praise) for referring to Christian chants. Thus Namo is using his imagination to understand the meaning behind birds singing, which is also clear in the following recording:

> Birds, toucans, they have their activities, when they see that the day is fresh, sunny, **they feel *ánimo* (courage, enthusiasm)** for supporting. This month school starts, and children are hearing toucans' songs, **that is a fundamental chant, which brings life, brings energy** […].
> Silence, there comes the wind, likewise we have here natural perfume, the natural perfume has its own story, **uuuummmm what a nice smell.** […] That pure air that we are breathing [in the forest] brings life […]
> We are almost in the middle of the forest, it is fun for my son who is following the forest [path], he is without shoes, on the way he is having fun, **this is the footprint that we are keeping with us, walk and learn, learn to have fun** [sing a Waorani chant] (Alfredo, middle aged man, Yoweno)

While Namo pointed out that birds sing with an intention similar to when the Christian Waorani chant to God, Alfredo notes that birds are 'supporting' the children. Birds' songs are understood here as a form of sharing energy. The chant that "brings energy" to the Waorani children and, indeed 'any sonic manifestation, may be considered a 'thing' that has an 'occult life' in the Amerindian context, enacting agency and maybe even intentionality in certain conditions or situations' (Brabec de Mori and Seeger 2013:278); it follows that, sensorial encounters in the forest – or on the road where

noise pervades – are part of the processual crafting of Waorani subjectivity (chapter 2), particularly if we consider that sounds can have effects over peoples' bodies (cf. Brabec de Mori 2015). This is why these encounters also have effects on people's willingness to engage in convivial *living well*. A similar logic could be applied in relation to fragrances. Rival noted that for the Waorani, boundaries are blurred in the forest by the bodily incorporation of the forest's smell (Rival 1996a); perhaps she was referring to Waorani attempts to be unnoticeable in the forest, especially hunters, but in that case they seem to be less concerned with incorporating smells from the forest, focusing more on reducing any kind of smell from outside, for example a hunter will avoid bathing with soap so as not to smell like an outsider. The Waorani also note that isolated people might think the Waorani "smell" like *kowori*, because of the food they consume nowadays, and the soap they use.

> That smell from a tree, nice smell, I like living like this, that is a different smell from home. […] **I feel passionate,** I wish to be all day with this air, this is a fresh smell, like mint, it comes to our body, it is nice to live like this in the mountain […]. There is a plant that smells like chewing gum [mint], that you do not smell at home, only here in the mountain. **At home you find dust, but here you find nice air.** (Juan, middle aged man, Epepare)
>
> When you eat smoked meat, you must eat just a little bit, because the smell will get into your body and you become tired for walking. When you eat natural, the body generates a protection, when you go to the forest you feel fresh. […] The smell of the forest is like a medicine, it helps you to breathe. Water is fresher there, clean. Without noise, one feels good, sounds of birds, of trees […]. All of this makes you feel well. (Byron, young man, Epepare)

The forest 'freshness' as opposite to village 'dust' and 'heat' was a permanent topic of reflection in these recordings, confirming that for the Waorani 'freshness' is an ideal state of *living well*. While Byron suggests that the smell of the forest is like a medicine, Juan's reference to feeling "passioned" seems to be linked with the highly appreciated Waorani 'courage'. For example, Juan's voice sounded tired after climbing a steep hill, but then he said to himself 'I must be courageous and keep walking to reach *Pegonpare* (a small river)'; one can almost feel the courage in Juan's voice. I cannot tell if such courage is inspired by the forest sensorial experience or by the excitement produced by the body movement −also achieved by playing football− probably both.

Elsewhere in Amazonia, Hill's (2011) study of music and sound among the Wakuénai suggests that the 'movement of musical sounds away and across the rivers and forests' (ibid:115) creates or allows an '"opening up," of political, social, economic, life-cycle, ritual, and other historically situated space-times' (ibid:115). The relevance of sound for the relation between humans and the forest is not exclusive to Amazonia. Lewis (2013) among the BaYaka Pygmies in Congo provides a detailed analysis of how

BaYaka's polyphonic singing allows them to communicate with forest spirits and melodically converse with the forest (Lewis 2009)[123]. Perhaps "noise" could be considered as the reversal of the connective potential of other more sociable sounds. Moreover, the Waorani suggest that this perception regarding noise is not exclusive to humans:

> At this point there is a path of hummingbirds, **they look for a fresh place, more pleasant, without noise.** There they have better food, and they are also more friendly here. They have contact with insects. [sound of birds in the background] People also develop a good mood here, they sit, they rest, they feel like chanting in their own language, they always imitated the sound of birds […] ouuuuu (Waorani cry of joy). (Jacobo, middle aged man, Epepare)

When Jacobo suggests that 'friendly' hummingbirds look for a 'fresher place, more pleasant, without noise' he is also saying something about Waorani aesthetics. What is beautiful and good for the birds seems to reflect what is good and beautiful for the Waorani. Thus, when I suggest that a *sensorial relationship* with the forest is an important part of Waorani wellbeing, I am saying that the sensorial ecology is as important as the sensual sharing among those who live together.

The convivial and ecological dimension of *living well* should not be considered as separate spheres. People bring the forest to ritual and convivial spaces (through material culture, songs and fragrances), but they also extend convivial caring to forest relations. An example of the former is the smell of *menga*[124], a fragrant plant whose flowers are used as a crown. When my adoptive grandmother put *menga* on my head she explained *'oguiwapa'* (fragrance), and she and another elderly woman wore *menga* crowns during our trek, leaving a fragrance that lingers as much as 30 seconds after they pass by[125]. An example of the convivial caring extended to the forest was given by a young collaborator when he found a snake on the way. He decided to kill it, but carefully explained that the head must be buried, so that one avoids other Waorani stepping on and getting hurt. This also means that the managing of forest dangers is part of the maintenance of *living well*.

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[123] Yaka people also perceive that 'elephants walk elsewhere now due to the noise of the loggers' bulldozers' (Lewis 2008:13).

[124] Cerón and Montalvo (1998) in a detailed study of Waorani botanic classification identify *menga* as *chamaedorea pauciflora*.

[125] There are stories of people using fragrance to lure a lover (c.f. Shepard 2004). I was encouraged to put this plant under my pillow to have a nice smell while sleeping. Also, elderly people recall impregnating feathers and other ornaments with *menga* smell for the parties.

The road.

> J: I am very upset, I rather look for a place far from the road. There is too much noise in here.
> A: Who makes such noise?
> J: The *petroleros* (oil people)
> A: Where are you going?
> J: Tivacuno, far from the road, in the forest. (Jonathan, middle aged man, Yoweno)

I could not count the number of times that I had to swallow dust near Yoweno's road, but the dust is not the main concern among the Waorani, although it is a concern. The main Waorani concern regarding the road is the noise. While speaking in Spanish, Waorani use the word 'silence' when referring to the forest and 'noise' for the road. When interviewing elderly people, they use ideophones[126] of oil drilling or trucks passing by the road: 'toc toc toc' or 'buuu' followed by the word *añomo* (here). These sounds were translated to me as noise.

> The Waorani used to live more freely, without noise, only animals singing. They lived calm, but nowadays it changes, here there is the oil drilling, the noise when the big machine was there, there was a smoke and noise, I was not even able to sleep. (Otobo, middle aged man, Yoweno)

To the question what it means to live *waponi kewemonipa*, a straightforward and common response among the Waorani is 'it means to live calmly'. The road is primarily perceived as a noisy place where Waorani calm is reduced. But such sensorial effect on Waorani *living well* is not even considered in negotiations with the oil company for compensations, or in State wellbeing programmes. This section draws attention to the pollution through the senses that the Waorani perceive along the road. Waorani descriptions of noise as a pollutant resonates with a definition of noise as "sound out place" (see Atkinson 2007; Goldsmith 2012; Pickering and Rice 2017) that is often used in sound studies, which is related to Douglas's (1966) classical analysis of dirt as "matter out of place"[127]. This approach towards noise allows an understanding of why the forest was often described by the Waorani as "silent" even when it is full of sounds, but those sounds are not "out of place".

Almeida and Proaño (2008) describe the construction of the Auca road –the road that provided access to the villages studied in this research– as a 'crime' (ibid:62) against Waorani which facilitated the advance of the oil frontier and colonization of their territory. Harvey and Knox (2015) have suggested in a study of road construction

[126] Waorani ideophones from forest sounds are abundant in their narratives, for a discussion of this see High (2018).
[127] Pickering and Rice (2017) offer a genealogical analysis of the term, noting that it was used even before Douglas's (1966) work, although, several subsequent studies do refer to her analysis of pollution.

in Peru that roads, which are infrastructures planned and executed by the state – although in the case that I describe, roads are public but maintained mainly by the oil company – 'demonstrably bring that state into being, creating and recreating its territorial form and enacting its paradigms of ownership and control' (ibid:186). But in Waorani territory, this ownership is contested by the Waorani, whose most effective form of strike is closing access to their territory on one of the oil roads. Roads, then, 'exceed the state as they become part of the mundane material fabric of people's lives, producing possibilities and limitations that go beyond any specific plan for integration, connectivity, or even abandonment' (ibid:186).

> From the ground it rises ufff, when it rains, from the ground it rises a smoke from the oil. We are sick […] car, motorcycle wiiiiii, food, beers, liquour, jaaa smells, it goes kee kee [cough].
> When they are drunk [they say] I will kill you. Then they fall sleep and children smell that, when they grow up they might be like them. (Kengowento, middle aged man, Yoweno)

Early ethnographies noted that the Waorani body is constantly being made by substance sharing (Rival 2002), as among other Amazonian people, and the collective is made through consubstantialization (see Fausto 2007a; Vilaça 2002). The challenge that the road poses is that pathogenic substances are also shared. Cepek (2018: 151) describes, among the Cofan people in Ecuador, the case of a death that was understood as being caused by involuntary smelling of oil. Kengowento suggests that children smell their parents' anger, so they might become like them. Road heat, noise and smell seem to become constituents of Waorani bodies living along the road:

> Sometimes when the river rises, we catch the smell, also from the ground, that bad smell of pollution is affecting us. (Winame, elderly woman, Yoweno)
> Health for living well is not about the health post, health for me is to live where there is no noise from the oil company, no cars, no big machines. **Living without noise would be living well** […]. When people who live along the road with noise move to the forest they perceive it is different. They change their attitudes, they wake up without noise and say 'I feel well, I feel my body fresh'. Likewise, when people from the forest come to the road they say 'where I live is fresh, here I feel tired, those cars are passing by'. (Daniel, middle aged man, Yoweno)

Daniel spontaneously developed this reflection while helping me to translate an interview with an elderly woman who argued that for *living well* it is necessary to have a health post. The elderly woman said this because her family started peaceful contact when she was a child, and she lost her mother in one of the epidemics. She acknowledges that the Waorani had only certain diseases that were treated with a limited number of forest medicines, so she is certain that they would not survive the

"diseases of the contact" without a health post. Daniel has not experienced the trauma[128] of contact, but still he supports the health post work, and he himself has worked as a health post assistant. Thus, what he is saying is that *living well* is beyond disease treatment, it is about living in a clean environment. This concern about road smells and noise was primarily expressed in Yoweno – where several families live along the road – but it was also present in Epepare in relation to the noise of oil pipelines and planes that can be heard from the nearest hills in the forest. People in both villages note that birds go far away from such noise, meaning that the practice of hunting of small birds near to home is considerably reduced.

The "smell of pollution" along the roads, which rises after the rain, is described as a sort of vapour. Discomfort about the smell of the damp road resonates with Waorani theories about the causes of a major epidemic that Waorani faced during the early years of peaceful contact:

> They were foreigners, missionaries, [my grandparents have told me that] they carried clothes with poliomyelitis disease. They carried the clothes that sick people used [in other countries] and they threw that in A and B, there everybody fell sick. The clothes had the disease, when it rains the vapour moves the smell from the clothes, that is why people fell sick. (Amo, middle aged man, Yoweno)
> In C people died with poliomyelitis, first disease. From the mouth you could see a white smoke. Nemo *wori* [a dead missionary] opened it [a box] and all the smoke went out. That was thrown from a plane, some chicken, cans, meat, when it fell down there was a smoke. A big tank [with meat] came there was a smoke (*boguima bai*) from that people were infected very fast. (Winame, elderly woman, Yoweno)

While Amo provides an account transmitted from his elderly kin, Wiñame recalls her childhood memories from the epidemic that she witnessed, but both agree that in that case, disease was transmitted by smoke. There is no agreement among the Waorani about the causes of this epidemic; some point to beef, others to clothes, others to contaminated syringes, and in some narratives, as above, smoke seems to be part of the explanation. This sensorial interpretation connected with smoke is strikingly similar to what Bruce Albert (1988) described among the Yanomami, whose first interpretations about disease spreading after the contact included pathogenic smoke that emanated from boxes containing metal tools.

I have presented here the general discomfort regarding the road's sensorial effects, but I also met one young woman who is 'getting used' to road sounds, to the

[128] I use the word trauma purposefully because, particularly in the accounts of people who were children when peaceful contact started, and witnessed the death of their parents, they describe the contact with expressions such as 'many, many, many Waorani died, so many, their arms and legs were eaten by vultures and dogs, they were not properly buried' (Naima). The actual numbers of dead Waorani have been recorded as no more than 16 (Cabodevilla 1994:393) but Waorani who were children at that time recall it as hundreds.

point that she misses such sounds when going back to her village. In Yoweno, there are five young women who have married men from Yoweno and have given up uxorilocal residence to live along the road. One might wonder, if new generations of Waorani develop this sort of 'getting used' to the noise, what would happen with their sensorial connection to the forest? I am unable to give a response to that. What is clear is that most of the Waorani families who complain about the unliveable road are increasingly ensuring they have "reserves" deep in the forest. In 2018, I visited a new settlement which a Yoweno family is claiming as their territory. It is located far from the road; there I saw some children from Yoweno completely at ease, *fine tuning* themselves with the forest, fishing and foraging on their own.

Opening new settlements in areas that have not been used for hunting or foraging for a long time was part of the Waorani pre-contact forest management (Zurita 2014). The Waorani used to have two or three houses at considerable distances from each other; each house was inhabited once a nearby garden was mature enough for consumption. They would open new settlements in their territory while exploring new hunting terrains, and let the previous ones recover, a form of forest management that most elderly people recall. This does not contradict Rival's (2002) thesis of natural abundance that will be discussed in chapter 4, although it clarifies Waorani awareness of the effect of their forest management practices, not only by their ancestors, but their own management during their lifetime. Waorani forest management for people living along oil roads varies because gardens are concentrated around a village where they spend most of the time; in addition to this, they choose to have settlements that they equate to the Spanish notion of *reserva* (reserve), places where they also have small gardens, but they prefer to have a bountiful forest that attracts animals. While the Waorani aspire to maintain their *durani* (ancestors) lifestyle in those *reserves*, pressures from oil companies for opening new explorations are frequent, and as will be discussed in chapter 4, money is not only a luxury along the road, but is becoming part of Waorani needs. For now, I will finish this section by expanding the discussion to the ways in which the Waorani pursue an "understanding" of oil-related pollution.

Making "sense" of pollution along the roads.

A recent study in Yoweno village carried out 37 interviews about ecological concerns and the researchers note that all respondents 'felt the community was polluted' (Lu, Valdivia, and Silva 2017:163). This perception was also ubiquitous during my fieldwork, and here I attempt to make sense of how the Waorani sensorial ecology

relates to pollution. The Waorani use the Spanish word *contaminación* (pollution) but also the *Wao terero* expression *wiwa iñomo* (it is bad here) alongside references to oil-related noise, smell and descriptions of deficient manioc plant growth. While placing emphasis on senses when talking about pollution, the Waorani are also interested in understanding pollution from a Western "scientific" perspective, so as to navigate dialogues with outsiders. This learning process takes a long time, and they are still trapped between the sensorial feeling of pollution and what "scientific" measures of permitted levels of pollution say. The following account[129] was recorded from a conversation with Gonka in which I asked him whether he perceives any kind of pollution in Yoweno, particularly because he works for the oil company:

> T: Before, since we did not know [about pollution], they dumped here, they dumped oil in a pool, it was a lot, now grass has grown over but that is pure pollution.
> A: Is that in the area along the river?
> T: No, it is near the school, behind the dining hall, there are two big pools now there are trees, it looks like soil, but underground is pure pollution […]. That was TEXACO company[130] they used to dump as they pleased. Now there is control, they do not throw even water. […] Petroecuador used to throw to the river, some animals died […].
> A: What did you do when you saw animals dying?
> T: We did not know [about pollution], they used to dump oil and there was a strong smell […] when we learned we said that they should not dump anymore. Now we know, if they dump more, we are going to start a trial. […]
> A: How many years have that process of learning taken?
> T: Around 25 years.
> A: Do you already know well how it works?
> T: I think that there is still a little bit more to do, **how they dump chemicals, we need to learn a lot about that form of pollution,** now we are observing. We are working in the oil company, we are observing they do not make more pollution. Sometimes we, ourselves collect polluted water from the river that is taken to the lab, it is sent to Quito so they see how it is polluted. Everytime we complain, we do that [take samples] to see how it is polluted. (Gonka, middle aged man)

Gonka's father defended the border of Waorani land to stop the colonization process that came when the road opened for the oil business. Gonka spends most of his time off – from his work at the oil company – in a new settlement *reserve* located down river far from the road, but he would not abandon Yoweno's border which he is still defending. He says they have 'taken 25 years' to learn about the oil business and about pollution; he distinguishes between pollution coming from dumping oil and from dumping chemicals, which Waorani working in the oil business often mention. While they have

[129] It is common for the Waorani to complain about pollution with an anthropologist. Nevertheless, the quotations that I am sharing here are chosen from collaborators who were often interested in reflecting and debating with me rather than complaining to me.
[130] He refers to the consortium CEPE-Texaco, but this particular oil field was operated only by CEPE (Corporación Estatal *Petrolera* Ecuatoriana) which was the State oil company before Petroecuador. For a detailed description of environmental damages related to this consortium see Almeida and Proaño (2008), Kimerling (1991), Cepek (2018).

developed this knowledge and perceive knowledge as a form of control over the "polluting" actions, they have no control over the process of proving pollution, which is analysed using standards that they do not actually understand, particularly because of the obscure technical language in which environmental analysis is done. This was particularly clear during the last drilling environmental impact consultation, when a long document was presented in a village assembly by a technician, to which a young Waorani commented 'we understand Spanish, but we do not understand what you say'.

> Water here is not good, and the pipe water is full of oxide. Those burners, when it rains it falls into manioc, it dies because it is polluted. Sometimes, the river grows we also catch the bad smell, smell from the soil, that bad smell from pollution affects us. (Winame, elderly woman, Yoweno)
> When the drilling tower was there, they were throwing many chemicals to the air, those chemicals go very deep, that smells so bad! My head used to be dizzy. […] That tower brought a lot of disease, now that it has gone, we are free from that bad (Kemea, middle aged woman Yoweno)

Even in cases like Kemea's, who lived for several months in 2017 beside the new oil drilling site in Yoweno (see picture 3.6), sensorial impact on *living well* does not seem to be considered either by the oil company or by the State. Whenever the Waorani confronted Petrobell – the oil company drilling in Yoweno's land – representatives or State officers about the pollution issues, they were consistent in avoiding confrontation with the Waorani, leaving the elephant in the room unaddressed or addressed only by technical measures showing that pollution is maintained under "permitted levels". In a 2018 meeting with State representatives, the president of the Waorani National Organization said 'nowadays the Waorani are *muriendo ambientalmente* (dying environmentally speaking), polluted water, polluted fish', which suggest the perception of a sort of "chronic" pollution. But the Waorani do not talk about pollution only in the *encounter milieu,* they also reflect upon it in their domestic space. For example, while eating smoked fish coming from a river in the south of the Waorani territory, my host mother in Epepare pointed out 'this fish comes from a river without pollution'. This reflection was not isolated, there is consistency in the way in which the Waorani compare the bounty of what they perceive as non-polluted rivers in the South of the Waorani land, in contrast to rivers along oil roads.

Picture 3.6 Yoweno centre, 2017.

A new trend among young Waorani people is to conceptualize pollution in scientific terms, which they say they have learned from documentaries watched on TV or on internet; after gathering information from outside they normally translate it into their own empirical knowledge of the forest, a description of which is beyond the scope of this research, but should be part of a more broad exploration of Waorani sensorial relations with substances. If we consider that for the Waorani the body is made by substances that circulate through it and are shared with other Waorani, a circulation process that allows the body to replenish its vitality, then pollution seems to be counter to this process. If the substances that form the body are related to vitality, pollution in the form of a chemical appears as a kind of poison, which impedes vitality; whereas pollution in the form of noise appears to be disruptor of the circulation process. The waves of energy through which the sound circulates when it is *waponi* (good-beautiful) – such as in a song – increase vitality, but when what circulates is noise, it acquires the form of anti-vitality.

Living well **and houses.**

This section explores forms of relationality in Waorani houses. Based on an ethnographic case from Yoweno village, where the Ecuadorian state built cement houses in 2014, I describe how flows of vitality are channelled and disrupted through

different infrastructures[131]: the cement house and the palm house. I am following here the relationship that Strathern suggests between network and flow, in which the '(homogeneous) network of elements that make up the person – human and nonhuman – is also a (heterogeneous) network of social relationships. In turn, the person acts as both container and channel, blocking flow and bodying it forth.' (Strathern 1996:528). In this section the flow and network that I am particularly interested in is that of vitality channelled and contained in Waorani houses.

The first part of this section describes a series of movements from a palm house and to a cement house; alongside these movements some relational changes are noted, to contrast differences in the ways in which abundance of vitality is channelled through each building. A second section explores Waorani aesthetic differences as opposed to those of the state. This consideration of aesthetics is particularly relevant for the study of *waponi kewemonipa* (living well), in a society that considers the good and beautiful to be the same: *waponi* (good, pleasant, beautiful).

Movements in the Waorani house.

When a Waorani family builds a palm house, there is usually a man who is in charge of the building process, who may receive more or less collaboration depending on a number of factors[132]; when the house is finished the man in charge of the building will avoid taking a shower for few hours, so that the strength (vitality) that he put into the house is contained. The strength is contained not only in the man's body, but also in the house; if the man takes a shower before the vitality has been properly contained, it is likely that the house would be vulnerable to termites; in other words, the house will be weak[133]. Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995) pointed out the animated quality of houses when suggesting that:

> The continuous movement of goods and people between the inside and the outside, a movement sometimes represented as one through the orifices of the body (see also

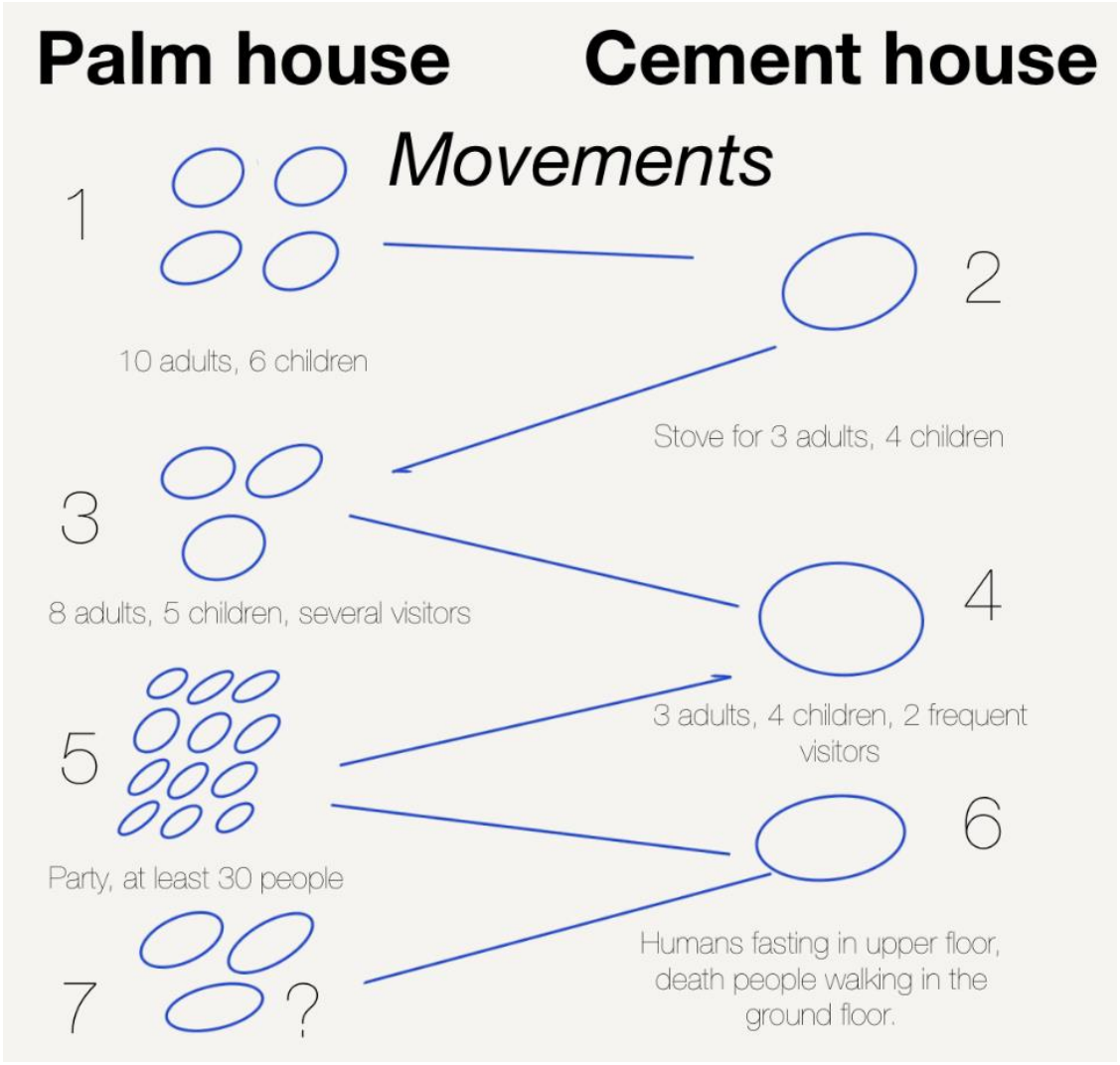
[131] I am using this word interchangeably for buildings.

[132] Rival (1992) notes that the building of houses was an activity in which the whole family would contribute, with specific tasks. The building of houses that I witnessed were mostly in hands of a man; when other adults were to inhabit the house, they took part in the building process but with smaller tasks. In other cases, the builder asked for support from other men with whom he maintained frequent relationships of sharing, even when he would not be going to live in that house. I witnessed the building process of a house for which a single couple carried out the whole process on their own, it was a long task that lasted at least three months, but there was no hurry; the sense of autonomy in this case seemed to be the guiding value.

[133] This outcome was explained to me by a well-known house builder, a young Waorani who not only builds strong houses for his family, but has been asked to help out in the building of other people's houses.

> C. Hugh-Jones 1979), again attests to the processual and animate qualities of the house. (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:40)

A perception of movement (see graphic 3.1 below) among houses that I brought from fieldwork was reinforced after getting familiar with Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995) work 'about the house'; the processual approach to the study of houses is reflected in a series of *movements* recorded during a period of fourteen months among the Waorani:



Graphic 3. 1

When arriving in Yoweno village in 2017, my first impression of Minta's *weka* (place) was that of flourishing. The recently state-built cement house[134] (see pictures 3.7 and 3.8) where we lived together in 2014 showed signs of decay – some low-quality wood handrails and taps were already falling apart – but its surroundings had flourished, the

[134] Alban (2008:45) notes that in 2008 most of the houses were made from wood and corrugated iron, some others made with palm leaves, and the oil company was building cement houses for some elderly Waorani. At the time of my fieldwork only two of those earlier cement houses were inhabited by Waorani families, others remained abandoned. Those who maintain the cement houses also have wood and palm houses in different locations.

cement house was now accompanied by a palm house, a small hut for chickens and a bountiful garden. In graphic 3.1, this is noted as *movement 1*, which had already happened when I arrived in the village. Minta, who had 3 children in 2014, had married a Waorani man from a different village in 2015, who had moved to Minta's *weka*. At the beginning of 2017, the couple had a new-born child and had changed the kitchen from her cement house to the *durani onko*[135] (see pictures 3.9 and 3.10), built by Minta's husband. Minta's married sister, one visiting brother-in-law[136], one widowed brother, one married brother, and her father, who live in a cluster of four neighbour cement houses, joined the *durani onko* sharing economy, which with husbands and wives reached a total of ten adults and six children. The *durani onko* had one stove and one fireplace, both belonged to Minta, but were used by all the above-mentioned women and the widowed brother, and meals were often shared by all.

Picture 3.7 and 3.8 Cement houses with palm houses at the back and side.

Picture 3.9 *durani onko* design.

Picture 3.10 new design of palm house.

[135] The Waorani call it *durani onko* because is made of wood and palm, with the same technique used by the *durani* (ancestors), but innovations in the building of these palm house also include Kichwa designs. In contemporary designs of palm houses, walls are not covered with palm, which is only used on the roof, whereas in the traditional *durani onko*, palm will cover the house from bottom to top. Nevertheless, while the Waorani would point to the house in "A" shape (picture 3.9) as their traditional house, Cabodevilla (1994) mentions that the Waorani even before the contact had incorporated innovations and changes in design that they had seen in neighbouring groups.

[136] This was an extraordinary case, since he was hired as a teacher at Yoweno's local school, and was hosted as a long-term visitor at Minta's house.

In *movement 2,* Minta moved the stove back to her cement house, and each nuclear family cooked separately at their own cement houses. Demand sharing was reduced and the *durani onko* partially abandoned. While the acquisition of stoves for each nuclear family – due to the temporary works at Yoweno's oil drilling in February and March, 2017 – made the fission materially possible, the reason for Minta's withdrawal from the palm house sharing economy seemed to be connected with tensions between her and her sister-in-law. These tensions followed by fissions resemble Århem's (2000) study among the Makuna, where internal tension triggers village fissions; Århem (ibid:83) notes that tensions were not absent in longhouses, and this was one of the reasons for moving to single-family houses, where families have more autonomy. In this Waorani case, distance was marked not by a village fission, but instead, the sister-in-law moved to her mother's cluster, in the same village but a different neighbourhood. Indeed, most of the tensions in the villages are solved by changes of location within the village perimeter, and only in exceptional cases – such as when a Kichwa man was accused of sorcery – do people move out of the village.

In *movement 3*, the fire at the partially abandoned *durani onko* is reactivated through the cooking of abundant seasonal fruit, or when game meat is carried to Minta's house (by Minta's widowed brother or by a brother in law). The above-mentioned extended family eat together again, except for the married brother, whose wife decided to live uxorilocally. Minta continues cooking in the stove at the cement house in *movement 4*, going back to *movement 3* whenever there is abundance from the forest. The widowed brother and father often demand sharing food at the cement house, daily meals are preferred at the cement house and the *durani onko* is partially abandoned.

Movement 5 happened around August, when Minta travelled to an Andean city and brought back some city items, primarily clothes, which she distributed only to her sisters. Meanwhile, she had an excess of ripe plantain which allowed her to reaffirm her relations of sharing beyond her cluster by organizing a plantain party. The *durani onko* was reactivated for this party which hosted at least 30 people. The palm house was animated by abundance of people, laughing and sharing within the party. This party was followed by a time that resembles *movement 4*, in which sharing is done mainly at the cement house but the palm house is used from time to time for cooking big game.

An extraordinary situation happens in *movement 6,* when Minta's new-born fell sick and she stopped cooking for few days. A shaman suggested that there were dead

people walking in the ground floor of the houses. The family spent more time in the upper floor of the cement house and the *durani onko* was destroyed. After the child recovered, almost at the end of my fieldwork, *movement 7* was already germinating. New abundance arrived to Minta's house through her husband's temporary job for a state institution. Then plans were made for building a new *durani onko* at the other side of the cement house[137].

In this series of movements, kinship, economy and architecture are entangled; the movement goes from daily sharing with extended kin in the palm house to reduction of sharing in the cement house inhabited by a nuclear family, and the movement goes back to the palm house when abundance is to be channelled and shared. The cement house, where goods are hidden – not only the stove, but any other material valuable is locked with a padlock within the cement house – serves as a device for 'cutting a network' (Strathern 1996) of extended sharing. In the spiritual world, the cement house also allowed cutting relations with dead people (*movement 6)*. The possibilities that these two types of buildings offer are explored and embraced, particularly by young and middle aged Waorani people, but there is a widespread appreciation that having only a cement house is not enough: Waorani relational persons[138] require also extended relations that are better channelled in the palm house.

This processual character of the Waorani house was visible in other houses beyond my host family and also among the wood houses in Epepare village; there was a series of evident material modifications, creation and destruction of houses, although I have no extended data about the internal movements that might have accompanied the external material fluidity. I do think that the Yoweno case is quite extraordinary because of the presence of an infrastructure – the cement house – that is static. For Minta's cluster, the palm house added a sense of mobility and continuity with the flow of abundance coming from the forest. Minta's palm house and extended sharing partially resembles the longhouse conviviality; but a dependence on one single stove or fire was not part of the Waorani longhouse (Rival 2002). In other words, Minta's case and the building of a palm house by the side of the cement house shows a continuity with the design of the longhouse, but when it was not successful, they withdrew to the cement house. Despite the impermanence of these arrangements, the palm house is

[137] From a short visit to Yoweno in 2019, I know that the house was indeed built with a series of new arrangements, but my data on that is not enough to extend the analysis.

[138] The idea that persons are continuously made by social relations, in a language that is primarily corporeal, is well established in Amazonian literature (see Conklin 2001a, 2001b; Seeger, DaMatta, and Viveiros de Castro 1979; among others).

unequivocally perceived as the proper channel whenever a new flow of abundance is to be shared.

Domestication of cement houses.

Waorani approach to the cement houses varies from sensorial discomfort to an interest in domesticating *kowori* (non Waorani) concrete[139]. When asking Waorani people from Yoweno what they think about cement houses they said:

> It is too hot. (Arturo, young man)
> Smells of bats urine. (Nantoqui, elderly woman)
> There are too many bats [on the house ceiling] they leave a horrible smell. The house is pretty, but too many bats, that is why I am not happy with it. (Omenquiri, elderly woman)
> I know the house looks good, but I do not like it, it is too hot (Daime, middle aged woman)
> The house is too hot, I cannot rest in there, that is why I almost always sleep here in this *onko omako* (palm house). (Game, middle aged woman)

If we recall that Kengowento connected heat with anger and discomfort, and coolness with peace and calm, then people's perceptions about cement houses' heat are also related to their *living well*. At the same time, people from Yoweno consider having a cement house as an earned right, achieved through struggle with the oil company and the State:

> They went on strike, it was declared [by the State] to be an *estado de emergencia* (state of emergency), that is why they built these houses. People were brave, they blocked the road, the oil company entrance. These houses are because something very serious happened, they threw gas at us, they threw everything at us, but at least they gave us these houses. Some people were hurt, after that [the State] built these houses. (Omi, young woman, Yoweno)

Thus cement houses offer a paradox for Waorani wellbeing. On the one hand they are the product of Yoweno's fight for oil-related compensations. On the other hand, the house design does not satisfy Waorani aesthetic values that are important for their wellbeing[140]. Furthermore, the cement house draws a sort of break from the forest, as

[139] Morelli's (2014) study of Matses children in the Peruvian Amazonia records expressions of desire or 'love' for concrete (ibid:242), which children perceive as intrinsically connected with the nonindigenous world and urban settlements.

[140] Studies of architectural projects including cement houses, such as the "Millennium Communities" in other parts of Ecuadorian Amazonia (e.g., Cielo and Sarzosa 2018; Espinosa 2017) have highlighted social transformations related to the designs imposed from outside, whereas indigenous agency for domesticating this alien object has been described as 'anti-disciplinary responses' (Espinosa 2017:322). Attempts at "domesticating" cement houses which I describe in this ethnography are not developed as acts of resistance to external powers, they are expressions of Waorani willingness to engage with these alien objects. Cepek (2018) offers a different comparative case among the Cofan people, for whom the building of a Millennium Community with hybrid houses is described in positive terms as 'a dream come true' (ibid:11). Expressions of positive assessment are not absent among the Waorani, in relation to the

opposed to the continuity that the palm and wood house offers. Apart from being too hot, the cement house was designed with little awareness of aesthetic preferences, such as avoiding roofs where bats might nest, or even practical needs such as having a place for hanging plantain, hanging the hammock or cooking big game. This is the reason why in 2017, three years after cement houses were built, I found that most of the cement house owners had either small huts, made of wood and zinc or palm or a *durani onko*, which were used as kitchens and places for resting during the day.

> A: Do you enjoy living in the cement house?
> T: I like this house [the cement house] but am going to build a *durani onko* (traditional house). Inihua [brother] told me that we would build a big house on that hill [pointing out a hill near his cement house], after digging the hill a bit. When we finish building the house, we are going to bring plantain, because the house is big, we are going to hang the plantain like the *durani* [used to do], we are going to throw a plantain party like the *durani.* Because we live in a *kowori* house, it is too small. (Tenka, elderly man from Yoweno)

Tenka's reflection about houses was immediately followed by a spontaneous and joyful chant. The chant that Tenka chose to sing is called '*Kawaye'*[141], which is one of the most upbeat and popular melodies in Waorani land. The main thought of living in a big *durani onko* and organizing a party carried great joy, the kind of joy that inspires either a diaphragmatic Waorani cry "kiuuuu", a cheerful song or both. Tenka was not alone in relating the palm house to a party; any young people who engaged in building a new palm house mentioned an intent to throw a party. If we consider that 'the body and the house are the loci for dense webs of signification and affects and serve as basic cognitive models used to structure, think and experience the world' (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:3), then it is clear that the Waorani relational body prefers the "big" house which is not only animated by the vitality of the builder who contains his sweat after building it, but it is also animated by the vitality of the inaugural party and extended ordinary convivial happiness.

The perception of the 'big' *durani onko* as opposed to the 'small' *Kowori* house is not merely about 'size'[142], it is about the potential that the palm house has for channelling abundant food from the forest and containing an abundance of people.

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idea of receiving a house and public services, but they complain about the design, as I will further discuss.

[141] Whenever I have asked for a translation of this word, people explain 'it is the name of the song' but do not offer a translation. A hunter told me that this is a song for making the animals be ready for the hunt.

[142] If one were to measure the size of the palm houses built in Yoweno by the side of cement houses, there would not be much difference between the square meters that they occupy. The habitational space of the cement house is located on the upper floor, which is divided into three bedrooms and two front rooms, one of them with a small sink that suggests it is the space for the kitchen. A toilet is located downstairs. During the first years of dwelling in new cement houses, many nuclear families used only one bedroom, where the whole nuclear family slept.

Waorani emphasis on continuity with the forest can be seen in the ways in which they have attempted to domesticate the cement house. For example some families have decided to paint their houses with forest motifs:

Picture 3.11 Forest on cement house wall.

Apart from this attempt to animate the cement house, the Waorani had other ways to add mobility to the static concrete. Some families exchanged cement houses among different neighbourhoods – a nuclear family moved to a different house, whose inhabitants in turn moved to the house of the former. This has happened only exceptionally but is worth noting. When asking people about the places where they have lived in the village before they had cement houses, I came across an account of high levels of mobility within the village territory. Wood houses had been destroyed or burned, clusters had moved from one hill to the other, from one edge to the other, although still within the village perimeter.

Facing neo-colonial projections.

> Others do not understand why the Waorani deserve cement houses, the Waorani deserve the same just like every citizen. (Non-Waorani politician)
> I do not think a cement house would work here, people enjoy living in their huts. (Doris, young woman, Epepare)

During my fieldwork there were attempts from the State, motivated by the Waorani, to provide Epepare village with cement houses. In this context, an officer from the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing arrived in Epepare. At the beginning of the meeting he told us that a Waorani warrior from a nearby village had forced him to agree to building state houses where the warrior wanted, not where State technicians

suggested, and in addition to this, the warrior asked for Coca-Cola. The state officer had a main point to make to the Epepare audience: 'we want a populated centre', which is a terrain where houses are built side by side[143]. It means a square design with no isolated houses along the river as the Waorani have and want. In other words, for the state officer, the Waorani need for maintaining distance between different family clusters was irrational, or at least not as important as the technical convenience of building houses side by side in order to provide affordable piped water and electricity.

Waorani women from Epepare became increasingly uncomfortable with the stubborn state officer. They responded using a *strong speech*; they were not really angry, but their voice was strong enough to make a statement, they were upset. One woman said that she does not want a house like the *colonos* (non-waorani in Amazonia) have, those are 'tiny houses to put a chicken'. Other women added 'why you have come [if you are not going to listen to the Waorani], just go'. The State's officer responded by saying that he has faced 'Waorani women's anger before', and he understands they like big houses, but he had no budget for such houses. He said that the budget was USD 6000 per house and the house must be 6 by 6 metres. The meeting ended with no agreement.

In sum, this short episode is a snapshot of the terms in which the Waorani living along the road negotiate "becoming modern". This resonates with what has been seen in Bolivia where the State has also recently built houses, changing the traditional materials (Alderman 2019). It is worth noting that the Waorani from Epepare and Yoweno have navigated the process of "getting used" to new materials and designs since the early years of contact. Yost (Kaplan, Yost et al. 1980:299) recorded that in the 1970s some Waorani families already raised floors and used aluminium roofs. These first changes followed Kichwa and *colono* design at that time.

Conclusion: senses and design.

In this chapter, I have attempted to establish the relationship between a *fine tuned* sensorial perception of the world and the Waorani *living well.* Waorani people perceive that the "beautiful forest" is getting farther from the road; this is not only a challenge in terms of access to resources, but it also means that their sensorial ecology is being

[143] As Århem (2000) describes among the Makuna, within the constraints of responding to State's "ideals" of community for accessing to public services, indigenous people adapt their own organizational models to the "village"; they do so by maintaining two or more houses as in the Waorani case (cf. Killick 2019) and by establishing clusters of single-family houses that mirror longhouse structure.

altered. The importance of sensorial ecology for *living well* is that "proper" relationality with the forest "full of vitality" has effects on people's personal vitality and their willingness to engage in collective *living well.* Sounds and fragrances are highlighted from Waorani's sensorial descriptions. The ways in which Waorani complain about sonic pollution are particularly compelling; noise along the road is indeed polluting sound or 'sound out of place' (Pickering and Rice 2017). Hence, when Waorani refer to "forest silence", even when it is full of sounds, they are referring to the absence of 'sound out of place'. I am even inclined to think that the prevalence of noise along the road is one of the reasons why in villages like Yoweno, one rarely hears people chanting.

By exploring Waorani interactions with a recent and static infrastructure, such as the cement house among the Waorani, I have suggested that mobility is still an important value for people who have chosen to live in permanent settlements. Mobility has at least two functions in relation to vitality: when vitality is disrupted, such as in the case of a person's death, continuity of the vital-force flow is ensured by changing houses; when vitality is not disrupted, there is still periodic mobility, where each new house promises a new period of abundance, a party is celebrated and the house is animated for properly channelling a new flow of vitality. A Waorani palm house can last between 4 and 7 years, but the Waorani used to move periodically (3-6 months) among different settlements.

Mobility as a value varies across Amazonia, for example Londoño (2005) notes that Muinane people consider 'spatial fixity (as opposed to flitting residential mobility or unsettled fidgeting)' (Londoño Sulkin 2005:9) as a moral virtue. In contrast, among the Trio, Riviere (1995) noted that they preferred the renewal of their palm houses; even when they could have changed only the thatched palms, they opted for destroying their palm houses every 6 or 10 years, and in a similar way to the Waorani, a house was also abandoned after episodes of death or misfortune. For the Waorani the preferred form of destroying houses was burning them. In 2017, after a Waorani family faced some misfortune and abandoned their house, people referred to it as 'the house was burned' even when only clothes were burned, and the house made of wood planks was disassembled to use its parts in new houses. A similar approach towards burning the house after misfortune can be seen among other Amazonian peoples such the Nahua (Feather 2009) and the Achuar (Taylor 1993). Thus, when the flow of vitality is

disrupted, a material and geographical move is required, the abandoned house marks a temporal cut with the past, and the new house is the materialization of a new cycle.

The Waorani design of houses allows a continuity with the forest, mobility, renewal, extended sharing in big gatherings and a proper circulation of vitality. In contrast, Yoweno's small cement houses do not favour the circulation of forest abundance or sharing in extended groups. However, Waorani people from Yoweno, particularly young people, choose to withdraw to the cement house for momentary breaks from extended sharing among the clusters. *Movement 6* showed that the cut allowed by the cement house also worked in the spiritual realm. By withdrawing to the upper floor, the family cut relations with the death spirits walking on the ground floor. Thus, the Waorani navigate the possibilities of extended networks and withdrawal, going back from one to other.

Finally, Waorani regard for palm houses' "coolness" resonates with what was discussed in relation to forest freshness, which favours the Waorani's maintenance of vitality and health. The palm house satisfies Waorani ideals of relationality in ways that the cement house does not. At the same time, the Waorani are interested in exploring other materials and designs for their houses along oil roads, although they have to deal with the Ecuadorian state's design based on a different set of relations: social (smaller families), temporal (modern and static) and spatial (disconnected from the forest way of life).

CHAPTER 4: GENERATIVE LIVING WELL, EGALITARIANISM AND LAUGHING

This chapter explores the generative dimension of living well in relation to Epepare and Yoweno local economies. This approach allows me to draw connections between people's health/strength (chapter two), whose vitality is maintained through certain ecological relations (chapter 3), and their contribution to the maintenance of thriving households and villages. The latter is related to Waorani collective happiness and peace, and favoured by several processes of sharing, which includes the circulation of laughter, sweat, food, crafts and more. Of particular importance for the Waorani living well is the maintenance of egalitarian access and distribution of an abundance of food; however, their traditional reliance on a forest of plenty is challenged along oil roads.

The chapter starts with a revision of earlier literature in relation to the Waorani economy, particularly Rival's thesis of 'natural abundance' (Rival 2002). While noting changes in Waorani livelihoods along oil roads, the emphasis is placed on making sense of such changes – including the need for money and some *kowori*'s goods – from a Waorani perspective. To expand this analysis, the chapter offers a revision of what has been said about Waorani work ethic; this section also discusses how skills and strength are ritually passed from adults to children, which favours the maintenance of generative living well across generations. The second section describes how egalitarian practices are integrated into daily life, noting some disputes witnessed at the village level. The chapter finishes with a discussion about how the maintenance of peace and extensive sharing through traditional feasts are adapted to contemporary parties, which is extended to daily football playing.

Waorani generative living well.

The generative dimension of living well is primarily related to people's health and vitality. However, while vitality is experienced in each individual in the form of health and strength (chapter 2), bodily processes that contribute to the replenishment of vitality require certain ecological relations (chapter 3), ritual and convivial practices. I use the notion *generative* to describe any Waorani bodily process or activity that allows the replenishment of people's vitality. There is a relation between the Waorani understanding of strength and people's skills for procuring an abundance of food for sharing, this is particularly illustrated in the Waorani ritual of sweat sharing that is

discussed in this section. The following paragraphs explore how the notion of *generative living well* relates to what has been said about a Waorani economy of procurement.

Waorani economy has been consistently analysed by Rival (2002, 2016). She described initially an economy of procurement, which relies on what Rival has called 'natural abundance', which implies that: (1) forest abundance is generated through past generations' forest management, but 'such abundance is not regarded as the outcome of moral relations' (Rival 2002:91); (2) this reliance on a 'giving environment'[144] relates to the Waorani work ethic, in which one must not survive from what is created through human labour in the present but on the natural abundance created from the past (Rival 2002:90). Whilst agreeing with Rival's theory regarding Waorani perception of the forest of plenty as a 'given environment', I challenge Rival's understanding of the Waorani work ethic. While human labour does not create or generate forest abundance – or at least not for the same generation – Waorani people in Epepare and Yoweno consider that their procurement activities require the effort and vitality of strong people. I will explain this with an example: if a Wao is sick or too 'weak', such person would be less likely to engage in procurement activities of hunting or foraging; whereas a strong person would often be trekking in the forest for hunting and foraging. The effort involved in bringing food from the forest is bodily expressed through people's sweat, which is also circulated across generations. I understand Waorani perception of vitality as complementary to Rival's theory of natural abundance. Because it is part of the same cosmological understanding of social reproduction, Waorani people do not rely on predatory relationships for their reproduction, but on the constant replenishment of the forest favoured by past generation activities (Rival 2002: 90,184), complemented by the circulation of vitality among the living Waorani.

Recently Rival (2016) revisited her theory regarding Waorani economy, suggesting that the economy evolving alongside oil business is more one of 'obtainability' rather than procurement. Rival argues[145] that resources coming from oil business are obtained in a war logic; thus, what is obtained from selfish Others is a reward from a 'hard-won battle' (Rival 2016: 235). This revision of the natural abundance theory responds to Colleoni's (2016) and Zurita's (2014) recent ethnographic works. The former argues that historically the Waorani have been able to

[144] Rival's use of this notion is inspired by Bird-David's work (1990).
[145] Here, Rival (2016:235) notes her agreement with Colleoni's doctoral dissertation (in progress).

change from a prey perspective to a predator perspective to obtain external goods that were incorporated as 'war trophies'[146]. Zurita's (2014) exhaustive work on Waorani historical landmarks and their slash-and-mulch horticultural practices suggests that while relying on these crops for daily consumption in sedentary villages far from oil roads, this economy is combined with their forest management in the logic of natural abundance.

The ethnographic material that I discuss in this chapter confirms the existence of an economy of procurement projected towards the forest, and an economy of obtainability directed towards the oil frontier and the State. However, the oil roads are unpredictable contexts, and Waorani livelihood activities vary during the same year. In addition, far from relying on an economy of procurement with no cultivation, as Rival (2016: 107-108) notes among other villages near oil pumping stations, the villages in which I conducted fieldwork present more similarities with Zurita's (2014) account of a Waorani 'agro-ecological system' (Rival 2016:108).

One of the most interesting aspects of Rival's (2002) theory of procurement, is Waorani appreciation of abundance at the core of their economy, as opposed to scarcity. Throughout this chapter, I discuss contemporary Waorani reflections regarding scarcity, and the new use of the notion of poverty. Living well is related to abundance as opposed to scarcity – of healthy people and food. The following sections provide more insights about how an economy of procurement that relies on natural abundance, coexist with different livelihood activities along the oil roads. Not all livelihood activities described in this chapter could be considered as conducive to living well; for example, when Waorani people engage in precarious wage labour to access food that they consider to be part of their basic needs – e.g., sugar – they reflect about this in terms of scarcity rather than abundance or living well; whereas an abundant harvest of manioc and plantain is widely distributed and often celebrated in small gatherings. Sowing manioc or plantain for daily consumption are activities integrated into what I call *generative* living well; the effort involved in sowing is an expression of people's vitality, this is why some Waorani friends also share their sweat with children after a day of working in the garden. However, if we recall the paintings presented in chapter 1, most representations of the Waorani living well included the peach palm (natural abundance)

[146] Colleoni's (2016) work relies on historical accounts of the Waorani pursuit of external goods through raids before peaceful contact. She suggests that a sort of *cargo cult* was developed by ritualizing the objects obtained through raids and by "killing" planes that had goods.

rather than crops, suggesting that Waorani's most intuitive understanding of living well is mainly related to the forest of plenty.

Waorani work ethic.

> They used to drink peanut beverage, corn beverage, manioc beverage, like that they used to throw parties, like that we used to live. That is why before [the peaceful contact] young people worked[147], when they were good at working, they were married to women, if the young man was not good at working, hunting, he would not be able to marry because he did not know how to work.
> That is why the *durani* (ancestors) used to say *empacabe,* there is a fish that is called *empacabe,* that fish used to only go out to eat, he doesn't go around looking for food, he only eats and goes back to his hole. (Omenquiri, elderly woman, Yoweno)

The Waorani along oil roads are using the word *wenteye* (lazy, resting, having done enough) as an adjective to describe people, opposite to *teemo piyengue* (strong, vital). Rival (2002:201) has noted that the notion of *wentey*[148] is more an action than an adjective, and was wrongly translated by missionaries as 'lazy'. She instead describes this notion with positive connotations, a state of relaxation, such as when a person is chanting happily in a hammock with effects on peaceful conviviality. I suggest that even when the meaning of *wenteye* might have been positive before the contact, the Waorani do seem to have considered "laziness" such as the *empacabe* case, as an attitude that generated moral opprobrium. In villages where people rarely chant in a hammock[149], the current meaning of *wenteye* is often related to what Omenquiri describes as *empacabe.*

Based on the natural abundance theory, Rival (2002, 2016) suggests that for the Waorani human labour as a source of subsistence is not an important value, and that any labour should be done with no coercion, in a pleasant way (2002:101). Similarly, the Waorani along oil roads are against any type of coercion over their activities. Nevertheless, with the increase in crops and wage work, the attitude towards human labour outcomes is changing. Vitality allows a person to be active and creative, the opposite of *empacabe*, to produce beautiful objects –including songs– and bountiful gardens. Vitality is encouraged through practices such as the sweat sharing discussed above. At the same time, for the Waorani an excess of work is still seen as something

[147] My translator uses the word 'work' for translating the Waorani expression *keki* (to do) and *ome keki* (to do in the forest). The latter is often used for referring to any activity that is currently considered work, such as the doctors' work, or the work for the oil company, even if that is not carried out in the forest.
[148] Rival uses the spelling *huentey*.
[149] Rival (1996b) noted the reduction of chants in new settlements, in comparison to Waorani located in remote areas.

dangerous, something that can cause an early death. While seeing an elderly Christian man sowing coffee non-stop for several days, people in Epepare expressed their concern about his health, as if enough time for recovering after hard work was essential for a healthy life. Some Waorani friends suggested that one should not work "hard" in the same activity more than two days, one should rest and continue after one or two days of resting. However, if resting –*wentey* as an action– is important, people are also encouraged to be active when vitality is recovered.

Elderly people interpret the reduction of *ome keki* (forest work) activities among young people as a consequence of the lack of sharing vitality and building strength through the ritual of whipping and sweat sharing. This in turn suggests that the immanent quality of vitality requires proper forms of mediation and sharing among humans, so it is replenished over time. What I call *generative living well* is maintained through the circulation of vitality.

W*enteye* is normally translated as 'lazy' by the Waorani, but it has different moral connotations according to circumstances; for example, being *wenteye* also refers as 'having done enough' or as being tired. It can be used when a person is tired of working, so willingly resting in a hammock, or when a person had enough of any activity. Also, some people use the word *wenteye* when someone does not want to share something. *Wenteye* should not be a permanent state of being, when that happens it is expressed as an ailment.

> If you go to the forest and do not carry something back, you will be attacked by a deer. (Patricia, Waorani woman)

With this statement Patricia made all the children with us and myself carry baskets with plantain and manioc. Small children would carry tiny baskets, but the lesson was clear, everyone must do their part. This resonates with the idea of autonomy, which is indeed an important egalitarian value among the Waorani (Rival 2002); a person who is able to carry his own food would be able to remain autonomous and also would have something to share. Besides, the Waorani consistently link food from the forest with vitality, opposite to food from outside that makes their bodies weak (see also High 2010b:758) and *wenteye*. Even when leaders work pursuing projects for the community, still people tend to perceive their lack of dedication to hunting or foraging activities, as well as the gardens, as a sort of laziness. However, village life is perceived as requiring much more work connected with horticulture; Rival (1996b, 2002) noted that in 1980s people resisted this increase of work and preferred their mobile lifestyle

(cf. Sahlins 2004). Below I address another aspect that is connected with this increase of work: money.

> It is important to have *centavo* (cents), but for that you need to work more. The *durani* had more time for resting after work, now I have to sow coffee and cacao [for selling]. (Kengowento, Yoweno)

Abundance of people.

When talking with my Waorani friends about how they envision a thriving village, they often refer to an abundance of food to be shared, which is translated into social reproduction (cf. High 2015b:61; Rival 2002:148), an abundance of food favours an abundance of people. This section discusses this people-centred understanding of abundance, although it also shows changes regarding some young couples' approach to the number of children they envision having. Daniel, my main collaborator in this research, commented to me in Spanish, quite concerned: 'I have seen families that say, he is lazy, let him die' meaning that close kin sometimes decide not to follow dietary restrictions for the recovery of their kin's health. Daniel concern was related to a case that puzzled many in Yoweno, when a young man had an accident and his mother did not seem to care about him, whereas many others in the village were worryingly sharing pictures of the man's fractured leg. Daniel did not understand why this mother apparently did not care for her son, particularly when 'he often brings fish, he hunts'. In the end, Daniel concluded 'it might be that her heart is like that'. Skilful and knowledgeable people are essential for the maintenance of Waorani thriving households and villages – a definition of what is a Waorani thriving village is explored below, and it is related with a broad definition of living well rather than an accumulation of resources. Waorani emphasis on social reproduction differs from the model of 'political economy of control' (Viveiros de Castro 1996: 188-189) inspired by the works of Turner (1979, 1984) and Rivière (1984). While for the Brazilian case Turner describes a 'political economy based on social rather than material production and reproduction' (1979:168), Rivière's (1984) 'political economy' of people suggests that, people being a scarce resource, mechanisms of control over the circulation of people are developed. I believe that Waorani people place more emphasis on "desire" rather than "control", a proper moral person is "willing" to engage in the collective maintenance of *living well.*

In this logic, having children is considered as a form of sharing essential for thriving households and villages, but at the same time people are delighted with children (Rival 2016:151). Most Waorani adults, even those with no children, consider

that a "happy" life would not be possible without children around. Even though there were three children in my host family in Epepare, when I interviewed my host's unmarried brother, he mentioned that the house felt a little bit sad because there were not "enough" children. Thus, not having children could be also considered to be a "selfish" act, something that a proper moral person would try to avoid; this is why a Waorani friend, while playing with a recently born male baby said to him: 'Andrea is selfish, she has not yet given birth to a daughter for [marrying] you'; my friend was not only making fun of my childlessness, but through "joking" she was teaching me what I would do, if I was a proper moral person. However, this also should be understood in the light of a recent trend of using contraceptives among young Waorani women.

When talking about the use of contraceptives among women, namely, the implant, my host mother in Yoweno said to me that she was encouraging her sister-in-law to get the implant so 'she can provide better [formal] education for her children', adding that now 'every woman has the implant'[150]. A similar understanding was expressed by my other host mother in Epepare, who is now using the implant as well, she explains that many women are using the implant because 'there is no *presupuesto* (budget) for more children in Epepare'. The implant is used mainly by young woman who already have two or three children. This idea of parenthood linked with a "budget" is surprising[151], but it might be related to the idea that external knowledge and goods are a valuable resource for navigating life along oil roads. Thus many young parents envision their children being able to navigate the outsiders world with ease, as much as they envision them being *teemo piyengue* (strong) people – recalling that knowledge is related to strength (chapter 2). My young Waorani friends maintain an idea of living well related to an abundance of food and children (High 2015b:61; Rival 2016:151), but this idea coexists with recent conceptualizations of 'scarcity' along oil roads, which will be further discussed.

Forest abundance and crops.

> When we arrived here Shuar people said it was their land, we had *documento* (a letter) with the government. *Colonos* [people settled in the area] wanted to fight, but we said [to them] you only have limited munitions supply, but we have spears from the forest, which is never going to end, then, who will win? (Namoro, Waorani man, Epepare)

[150] I brought up the topic of the contraceptives in my conversations with young women. While not every woman uses the implant, many fertile young women with whom I talked are indeed using the implant.

[151] Perhaps an ethnography focused on campaigns (from the State or NGO) promoting contraceptives might show that the way in which these contraceptives are marketed are precisely in terms of family size and budget, but this discussion goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

Views like this, suggesting an almost unlimited forest abundance (Rival 2002), are often expressed by the Waorani living along the roads. Namoro's land claim using a written document is a way to navigate contemporary encounters with the Others (chapter 5). However, as noted in chapter 3, Namoro notes that the forest of plenty is getting farther from the road:

> In ten years, I want to change house to Tivacuno, my grandchildren can go there and live there. My grandchildren might think why they did not keep it [the forest] for us, that is why we are going to build a house there, grow peach palm and plantain. We are not going to cut trees, so it is fresh for people. Some say that is land of the State [Yasuní National Park], but we can build houses there.

Namoro describes here the current process of claiming territory in Tivacuno, by building a house and growing peach palm there. Tivacuno is for Namoro the forest of plenty, far from the oil frontier. This process of establishing settlements in the forest of plenty is also present in Yoweno (see chapter 3). There are cases like Oma's family, who have expanded alliances and gardens all over the Waorani territory. They have several gardens in Yoweno, but also collect the seasonal abundance of peach palm in the Yasuní Park, 7 hours down river, where they have other gardens. One of Oma's daughters, who lives in Yoweno and takes part in the Yasuní abundance, also has a garden near the Curaray River, which is cared for by her mother-in-law. This expansion towards the forest of plenty, and the increasing concern for defending Waorani territory, are part of the Waorani *living well*. In an interview about what it means to *live well*, a woman developed a long explanation which included the following expression:

> *Mono ome gompoke, oinginairi gompoke* (To care for our land, to care for our animals). (Omenquiri, elderly woman, Yoweno).

A young translator preferred the use of the Spanish word *cuidar* (to care) for translating Omenquiri's '*gompoke'*. The same word is part of a well-known Waorani song, chanted in *Wao terero* with a rhythm of Kichwa popular music. In that song, which talks about defending the Yasuní National Park, *gompoke* is understood as 'defending'. The Waorani who have witnessed the expansion on the oil frontier see the claiming of new territories as a way of *'gompoke'* the forest of plenty. While the forest of plenty is seen as essential for the Waorani living well, contemporary sedentary villages rely on a combination between the management of the forest natural abundance and the maintenance of one to three gardens per household (cf. Zurita 2014).

In a survey covering half the households in Yoweno, only 2 out of 28 households reported not having a garden[152]. Among those who have a garden, the majority have more than one, and an abundance of planted fruit trees around their houses. In Epepare, the same survey was conducted among half the households; all of them reported having one or more gardens, plus a variety of fruit trees around their houses. Zurita (2014) developed a survey about plants that were considered to be "owned" in two Waorani villages, these included some plants that were not only sown but also part of their forest management. Zurita (2014: 156-163) presents a detailed list of plants that are considered to belong to a family group who has rights over that plant, particularly because it is the outcome of one's actions or, in the case of plants like the peach palm, the outcome of one's ancestors' actions. A similar argument was developed by Lu (2001:435-436) noting that plants belong to the ones who planted them or to their descendants; other resources, such as clay, "belong" to whoever found them first. Nevertheless, this should be understood in the terms of 'rights of use' as suggested by Rival (2002), rather than private property in a Western sense. I agree with this view, and I should add that for my informants to "own" a plant varied in meanings; for example, people consider that they have exclusive rights over their gardens, but if someone "steals" crops from their gardens, there is no action taken against that person, apart from complaining. It is considered more an "exceptional" act of sharing by demand, but it also means that the person who "steals" is not autonomous and courageous enough (full of vitality) to grow crops themselves[153]. In other cases, when people say they "own" a palm that was not necessarily planted by them, but managed, such as a *petomo* palm (*Oenocarpus bataua*), they consider it acceptable that other people harvest the plant, but unacceptable that they cut down the tree. Rights of use related to forest management are often translated into sharing relations; there were many occasions in which my host mother was invited to harvest seasonal fruit from her aunt's trees, which in turn contributed to strengthen their bonds, even when they were not part of the same cluster of neighbouring houses. A similar situation was generated by my host mother when she had an abundance of plantain: she invited several women, *guiri* (relatives and friends) but not part of her cluster, to harvest as much as they could

[152] The ethnobotany of contemporary Waorani gardens is analysed in detail by Zurita (2014, 2017).
[153] Rival (1992) suggested that "stealing" implied negating a relationship with the former "owner"; I have not being able to interview someone who acknowledged having stolen something to offer their perspective; my interpretation here is from the point of view of the ones from whom something was "taken away" without previous agreement, and was labelled as "stealing".

carry, and meanwhile jokes, laughter and news were shared in those trips to the garden, which also strengthened their bonds.

Gardens, as Zurita (2014) notes, are part of people's daily subsistence. Moreover, some families are engaging in a new form of agriculture projected towards the market with coffee beans and cacao. While visiting *'las comunidades'* (villages located in Waorani land), Patricia, the president of the AMWAE often visits the gardens. She goes to the forest not only to check the state of cacao plants, which is part of AMWAE's project, but also to contribute to the management of forest resources, as if by doing that she would better perform her leadership. Every time she takes manioc from someone else's garden, she also puts some stalks of the same plant back on the ground, which in her words is 'for ensuring that there will always be some'.

The reliable seasonal character of forest abundance is different from the garden logics. Some families –including my own host family in Yoweno with whom I engaged in sowing – have at least three gardens at the same time, which correspond to different times of crop maturation. When people find themselves without a crop to harvest, they rely on their sharing networks, but there might be months in which no one in the network has crops to harvest. In one of those months Daniel said to me in Spanish 'we are in a crisis'; he explained that 'everybody' had grown crops at the same time, and that month 'nobody' –within Daniel's network of sharing – had manioc or plantain.

To finish this brief reference to gardens, it is worth noting the dynamism with which the Waorani develop post-contact adaptations to their gardening bodily practices. For example, when allowing manioc stalks to enter into the ground, after sowing manioc, people avoid touching hair combs and broomsticks because of their thin sticks, which might influence the manioc to grow thin. Likewise, most women avoid using soap after sowing manioc, so that manioc does not resemble soap's bubbles. Interestingly, while people reported bodily practices for all the crops that they knew before emerging from isolation[154], nobody, to my knowledge, practised any type of bodily practices for current crops such as cacao and coffee.

[154] Zurita (2017:502) notes that manioc was "stolen" from the tapir, which is recorded as marking a "new" historical epoque (see Zurita 2014), from *titeiri kewenko* (the time of the tapir), to *durani bai* (the time of the ancestors). Zurita (2014) also records historical myths for the plantain and the peach palm. Other crops such as peanut, corn do not seem to have a mythological origin, but they are more recently "stolen" from neighbouring indigenous groups (see also Cabodevilla 1994).

Creativity and living well.

A relationship between *living well* and creative activities was pointed out by women during my fieldwork. Engaging in a creative activity such as weaving *digintais* (chambira palm crafts) is considered an enjoyable activity, but in turn, being well is a prerequisite for weaving chambira, which is not practised when feeling poorly. One of the best chambira weavers in Epepare changed home to Yoweno, where she took a while to feel well and settled; during this time, she did not weave any *digintai*. This change of village reduced her autonomy, because she had to live initially in her husband's kin's houses. Creative activities are related to living well, in the sense that Waorani people tend to express their skills and their happiness by engaging in creative activities. Some creative activities, such as the chambira weaving, also favour the circulation of other shareable resources. Chambira crafts are often sold or exchanged with outsiders for goods. Very often when I carried some previously demanded goods from the city, women would give me some *digintai* without me asking for them. Women also give away *digintai* as an act of caring, expecting nothing in exchange.

In Epepare demand sharing[155] towards outsiders was often related to chambira crafts selling. For example, my host mother said to me a few times 'she is wondering if you don't want some crafts, so she can get sugar for her children'. Pressure for me to buy some *digintai* was widespread in Epepare, but was almost absent in Yoweno, where people have more income coming from oil wages. In addition, Juana, a main collaborator from Yoweno, said to me that projects for weaving *digintai* and selling outside do not work in Yoweno due to lack of good 'communication' between different clusters, which was reflected in Yoweno's lack of cohesion[156]. Selling crafts – or exchanging them – is a post-contact incorporation in Waorani economy. With few exceptions recorded by Reeve and High (2012), exchange was not practised to access external goods before the contact. A few elders mentioned that they exchanged objects such as hammocks or blowpipes in encounters (normally within a party) with relatives living geographically distant, but these accounts are rare. I am inclined to think that the Waorani living along oil roads have incorporated the logic of exchange as a way to remain autonomous.

[155] I use the notion "demand sharing" following Rival's (2002:104) who in turn takes this notion from Peterson (1993) in a similar sense as Bird-David's (1990:191) discussing the 'requests to be given'; this refers to Waorani sharing by 'demand rather than by unsolicited giving' (Rival 2002:105).

[156] After my fieldwork people from Yoweno shared pictures of a new attempt to engage in a weaving project, which apparently had more success. This was evident in a recent visit to the field in 2019.

When women weave *digintai* they do it as a pleasant activity, often while chatting with other women, and they put their best efforts into creating the most beautiful *digintai*. As Rival notes (2002:100) each person's style of manufacturing, creating, chanting is idiosyncratic and therefore recognizable as different. Thus, creativity is a way to create differentiation in a highly egalitarian society. A high appreciation of people's creative skills, sense of aesthetic and symmetry has been noted also (Rival 1996a:153) in relation to blowpipe making. This appreciation of beauty is pointed out by the Waorani when describing in detail beautiful crowns, body painting and other adornments that the Waorani used to wear when attending feasts. Women and men currently use *digintai* as a symbol of differentiation towards Others when they go to meetings with outsiders, for example, they would notoriously wear it for a strike in the capital city.

Gendered vitality.

After a hunting trip, Namo, a young Waorani, invited me to eat at his home. He was more enthusiastic than usual, as if the forest revitalized him. In an animated conversation he recalled the joys of the hunting trip with all his family and other families from Epepare. He acknowledged that his strength and skills for building houses are due to the fact that he was 'whipped'[157] by the great warrior Babe, when Namo was a child living in Yoweno; whereas Juan, president of Epepare, well known for being a clever negotiator with outsiders, often attributed his strength to being 'whipped' by Cawiya when Juan was a child. High (2010b, 2015a) has discussed this intergenerational sharing of knowledge through ritual whipping among the Waorani, which is related to the understanding that knowledge is embodied (High 2015a), as considered in chapter 2. Cawiya is a Christian[158] man who is extremely well respected over the whole Waorani territory. Cawiya is one of the best singers and the epitome of *durani bai* wisdom. Juan has no skills for building traditional houses or for hunting, in other words: no "productive" *durani bai* skills other than fishing, but he has powerful dreams, and the strength to bring external resources to the village.

[157] Whipping allows Waorani people to share their abilities with younger generations while making their bodies stronger/harder (see also High 2010b, 2015a). See also Hugh-Jones (1978: 64, 207) account of a whipping ritual among the Barasana, in which children are whipped in the legs and body by powerful adults; he suggest this whipping promotes the growth of young boys and small children, and it also 'imparts strength'(ibid:209).

[158] A discussion of Christian conversion is included in chapter 5.

In a similar way, whenever I came across someone who was skilful, who has an embodied power, or who was courageous, I would also learn about the ways in which they received that strength from skilful adults, many of them still alive. But in my own host houses, I did not have the opportunity to witness this transmission of power until a skilful hunter, who stayed with my host family in Yoweno, decided to share his knowledge/vitality with a child in our house after a good hunt. The hunter took a piece of liana that was used for carrying the game. He then whipped the hunted peccary that was on the hearth. Meanwhile, a three-years old child was held in the air by his uncle, who took the child by the arms, allowing the child's body to be open for the whipping ritual. The hunter whipped himself first, like fine-tuning or tasting the whipping instrument. Then, he whipped the child's legs and arms. The whipping was fast, no more than few seconds. At the end, the hunter took the child with his own hands and rubbed his sweat on the child's back. Through this practice the hunter was performing a moral act: the sharing of strength. He was also contributing to making this child a moral and beautiful person. He did not choose this child because he was weak, but because the child had a lot of energy, sometimes expressed in joyful naughty actions[159], which were pointed out as a sign that he would grow up as a strong person, full of vitality. The child's parents were delighted, we would have a good meal thanks to the hunting, and the ritual ensured the replenishment of strong people with generative skills.

A second opportunity for witnessing this ritual was in the context of a *toki beye* (for laughing)[160] Waorani dance, which I only witnessed two times, but recorded many descriptions of how this dance used to be. *Toki beye* (for laughing) is one of the names that the Waorani give to the dance that is done with flutes, *oñakare*, thus some people also call the dance *oña onte*, but interestingly, I have heard young people calling it "the Waorani reggaeton". I witnessed this dance in the context of a *presentación*, a performance of Waorani dances and chants. Some missionaries arrived in the village with Christian indigenous people from Colombian Amazonia. Three Christian Waorani men decided to take in their hands this *presentación*. It was night and their bodies were *durani bai* (like the ancestors), beautifully decorated with feathers, crowns and without other clothing than underpants. The chants and dance started in the usual cohesive way,

[159] A friend would explain later that naughty children are full of energy, when they grow up they are very likely to become good hunters if they were whipped by other hunters.

[160] *Toki beye* was also spelled *toki baye* and translated by my collaborators as 'for laughing' or 'to make people laugh'. *Toki* is translated to the Spanish '*gozar*' which does not seem to have an exact translation to English, other than enjoying, but the Spanish *gozar,* and certainly the *toki* Waorani is more a sort of enhanced enjoyment.

until one of the dancers explained: we will now perform a "Waorani reggaeton". Then, the men played their flutes, but suddenly a sort of carnival started, they were jumping and laughing all over the place, playfully putting their buttocks in the attendants' faces or making a gesture of sitting in their laps. After a few minutes they were heavily sweating and ready for doing the whipping and sweat sharing with children[161].

> When I am sweating, since I come from the forest, I have strength, this is what I am passing [to my grandchild], otherwise he might be even more lazy[162] than his father. (Kengowento)
> It is like donating blood, in that way they donate strength when they come sweating, though punishing. […] My father whipped my youngest brother, he [the brother] is a good hunter, the other brother is a little bit lazy. (Juana)
> Because my grandfathers, my parents were good workers, they were not lazy. I cut down trees [for opening gardens or building houses], other people do not know how to cut down trees, because I am strong, I am strong because I was whipped [ritually by strong men], I am strong. (Daniel)

In an analysis of the contemporary construction of masculinities, High (2015b, 2010) notes that the practice of whipping children is now rarely done. The explanation that High's informants give for the reduction of ritual whipping is that young generations have soft bodies because they eat too much foreign food, so their bodies might be "broken" by the whipping. High's analysis focuses on male intergenerational transmission of knowledge, specifically the knowledge of how to be a good peccary hunter, which is a main feature of Waorani masculinity. For a discussion of how embodied knowledge is shared through ritual whipping see High (2010b, 2015a). High does not mention the sharing of sweat, which may be due to the general reduction of this practice. In Yoweno and Epepare, some grandparents who did not perform sweat sharing with their children[163] are now doing it with their grandchildren:

> He likes whipping children with *orocame, otome* (forest vines) with that *plin, plin* he hits children arms and legs after work, when they grow up, they would be good workers. Now his grandchild enjoys working, he fishes. (Manuela, middle aged woman, Yoweno)

The reason for bringing this practice into an account in this chapter is that it allows an understanding of how vitality, is contained in a different way in male and female bodies. With the increased reliance on cultivated food in villages located along oil roads, the Waorani practice of whipping is done not only after a peccary hunt, but in

[161] This *toki beye* was afterwards pointed out by other young Christian Waorani as an improper dance to perform in front of the missionaries. But the collective laughter is precisely a signal of the collective approval of this Waorani reggaeton.
[162] Waorani notion of "lazy" will be discussed in a forthcoming section.
[163] It is not clear why they choose to skip a generation; it is in part what High (2015) says about parents thinking that weak children might "broke", but also teachers say that Waorani should not whip their children.

any instance in which a skilful adult arrives home after a hard-working day in the forest. A friend mentioned an exception, when he and his wife worked in his garden with the help of a visiting couple, and he mentioned, without me asking for it, that in this case he would not practise the whipping, arguing in Spanish that it was *'trabajo amistoso'* (friendly work), a gentle work after which they were not tired; this suggests that strength is shared when someone's vitality is channelled in the form of an "effort" – having in mind the Waorani work ethic and the importance of combining activity with rest. Men share their vitality after a hunt and cutting down big trees for opening a garden; women share it after any work in the garden (created abundance), rather than foraging activities (natural abundance).

There are two main differences between the male and female practice. Firstly, men use forest vines, for whipping their own bodies and afterwards children's bodies, whereas women use only *wento* (stinging nettle) in a similar way[164], first on their own bodies and then on children's. Secondly men rub their sweat over children's bodies after whipping them, whereas females do not rub themselves[165]. When I asked a few Waorani women how the sweat is shared if they do not rub themselves, the explanation was that the sweat is passed through the plant that is first applied to the *energy sharer*. In addition, sweat is shared by touching hands, the *energy sharer* takes the child's hand and makes a gesture of elongating the fingers, so they will produce big manioc. Gender differences noted in this practice can be thought of in relation to how male and female souls are attached to bodies (Rival 2005), the male body being less contained. Body to body sweat sharing is possible between male bodies whose souls are loosely attached.

While I agree with High's interpretation of the whipping as a sharing of knowledge, considering the analysis that I have presented regarding sweat sharing, I am inclined to think that such knowledge is contained in the body as form of vitality. I argue this based on the ways in which people describe the effects of the sweat sharing practice. They use the word '*teemo*' which means strong; elderly women have used the same word to describe the effect of foraging/eating forest fruit *teemo piyenkete ante*

[164] Rival notes that 'legs and arms of toddlers, who are gradually expected to walk and participate in subsistence activities, are gently beaten with nettles and the shoots of certain tree' (1993:640) but does not offer further analysis of this practice. More research needs to be done regarding the use of plants over different gendered bodies, the forest vine is used only with male children, whereas the stinging nettle is often used for male and female. There is a medicinal use of the stinging nettle (see Alban 2008) that was discussed in Chapter 2.

[165] Many Waorani young and elderly affirm that this sharing of vitality is done following moon changes, but I have not myself seen that in practice.

that was translated to me as 'gives me energy'[166], but other conjugations such as *teemo piyengue* are translated as 'to be courageous'. In short, ritual whipping (High 2010b, 2015a) and sweat sharing among the Waorani allows an intergenerational circulation of vitality; this also means a replenishment of people with generative skills, who are able to access and share an abundance of forest food. The next section shows that the Waorani living along oil roads are also developing conceptualizations of scarcity in relation to the *kowori*'s economy.

Making sense of kowori's resources.

> With oil extraction, long-standing livelihoods, socio-ecological relationships and structures among the Waorani have been dramatically altered. […]. A people who prided themselves on their hunting prowess and viewed plentiful meat from forest game as important to living well have become less reliant upon hunting as faunal populations declined from habitat degradation, and as alternative economic activities increased the opportunity costs of hunting. Market-derived foods, which are nutritionally inferior, have become more pre-dominant in Waorani diets as people become increasingly, albeit unevenly, integrated into the market economy. Oil infrastructure such as roads brought the market closer. And though some Waorani have chosen to live closer to oil company activities for the goods and services they provide, some also do so in order to defend territory against colonists. (Lu, Valdivia, and Silva 2017:20)

Waorani livelihoods understood as the 'means of living, maintenance, sustenance' (OED date / online ref) are certainly changing along oil roads (see Flora and Sorensen 2013; Lu, Bilsborrow, and Oña 2012; Lu, Valdivia, and Silva 2017), however, it is necessary to make sense of these changes from the Waorani perspective, which is what I am attempting to do in this section which considers Waorani reflections about *kowori*'s money and goods.

While forest abundance is celebrated and praised through words and gestures (Rival 2002:88-89) such as '*baacuuuu waaaponi*! (literally, "so many, this is awesome!")' (Rival 2016:210), an abundance of *kowori* resources, as Rival (2002, 2016) has noted is not celebrated with the same admiration. However, my Waorani hosts would not fail in noting *nangui nengi* (has a lot) whenever they saw someone

[166] There are other forms in which the Waorani access vitality from the forest, most of them equated to a sort of gathering. However, Rival notes that 'hands of young children are applied to the fur of the palpitating and bleeding [peccaries] carcasses before they are skinned, so as to absorb their force and energy' (1996a:156). We should recall Fausto's (1999) analysis of the difference between prey as subject and object, the former when the animal is "raw", still with agency; the latter when the animal's agency has been neutralized, "cooked", transformed into meat that will allow building relations among humans without the dangers of engaging with the animal's agency or subjectivity. Therefore, Rival's account seems like a form of incorporating the animal's agency, which resembles a form of predation. When I have seen similar practices with other animals that were not "bleeding", it was framed as a form of incorporating a "certain" feature or capacity of the animal, with no risk involved.

arriving with an abundance of *kowori* goods, or when discussing how much money a certain visitor might earn in the city. This sort of assessment was normally followed by acts of demand sharing. I should clarify that the Waorani are not interested in accumulating *nangui nengi* (having a lot) in the way they see *kowori* people do. For example, a Waorani friend said to me 'the *kowori* have a lot of clothes', but then he added a reflection in Spanish regarding how people in the city "need" so many clothes; he compared this with the Waorani who, he suggested, do not need that many clothes. My friend developed this reflection after carefully observing *kowori* people's lives during a trip to the city. This sort of comparison was also occasionally expressed in relation to money.

Waorani lack of interest in accumulating goods or money resonates with what has been noted in studies about indigenous understanding of wellbeing across Amazonia. Indigenous people in Amazonia express a concern about the abundance of intangible valuables such as health (Conklin 2015), euphoria/happiness created through music and dance performances[167] (Seeger 2015), expressions of beautiful life force (Gordon 2016; Whitten and Whitten 2015) rather than the accumulation of money or goods. Among the Trio people, accumulation or abundance of goods has been analysed in terms of social wealth and related to their notion of wellbeing (see Grotti 2007). A different case is presented by Gordon's (2016) work among the Mebêngôkre-Xikrin, which provides an account of the increasing importance of foreign goods as a way of differentiation, which formerly was achieved through the ritual creation of *beautiful people*, as opposed to *common people.* Such differentiation is a principle that organizes relations, which is part of the maintenance of collective wellbeing.

When talking about money in informal conversations with Waorani friends, I learned that most young and middle age Waorani living along oil roads see money not as a luxury but as part of their contemporary livelihoods; however, they often say that they do not need "much". When the topic of money came out in some semi-structured interviews about wellbeing, I decided to ask the question: how much money is *ida waa* (enough) for a Waorani family to live well? This only happened in interviews with young people a few times, the responses varied from 'I think 100 USD' to 'each family needs 300 USD per month'. The latter was the response from the president of Epepare village. There was an agreement regarding the expenses that they have: sugar, rice,

[167] Euphoria within performances requires the observance of other factors such as sharing food, universal participation and certain interpersonal relationships (Seeger 2015:51-52).

clothes, cellphones and internet, trips to the cities and eventually buying medicines and school supplies.

Two Waorani vernacular notions are helpful for understanding how the Waorani assess their needs. One is *ida waa* (enough) and the other is *toma* (all, complete). The notion of *toma* was used by my host families also in Spanish for referring to material resources, translating *toma* to the Spanish *completo* (all, complete, full, entire), which is related to but not synonymous with *ida waa* (enough). The former is used for referring to "the whole", whereas the latter refers to a sense of satisfaction as in "has had enough" or when an activity has reached a limit "has done enough", "has taken enough". My host family praised the ideal of having *toma* 'complete, all', fulfilling their needs, mainly food which included rice and sugar. When they had *toma* they enjoyed themselves, they lived well. But also, they did not ask for more, so it was *ida waa* (enough) at the same time, which points to what Sahlins (2004:2) called the 'Zen road to affluence'. In one host family that received oil compensations, my mother would say to me 'don't bring more, it is enough *(ida waa*), we have complete (*toma*)'. In the other host family, after a time without rice and sugar, the father said 'we were bad, we did not have *completo* (all)'. In this second case a better translation would be the notion of 'enough', but since the person in question used the Spanish word "completo" which is the literal translation of *toma*, I maintain this sense, which somehow points out the interconnection between ideals of prosperity (*toma*/all) and a sustainable attitude (*ida waa*/enough). For now, I will expand the analysis focusing on different Waorani approaches towards *kowori*'s resources.

Walking in El Coca[168] streets with a young Waorani friend, I invited him to a restaurant that was introduced to me by a middle-class friend working on conservation in the area. When we arrived at the restaurant – which was one of the few quiet places for talking without a loud background of tropical or Amazonian popular music – my Waorani friend, who visits this city at least once every two weeks, told me that he has never been in that part of the city, twelve blocks from the central park. He then pointed out that the Waorani only walk around the central park and some streets in the city centre, but mainly around the park, which is something I had observed repeatedly in El Coca. Then, he pointed out in Spanish:

> The Waorani *pelucones* (upper-class) also go to the *malecón* (embankment). (Young Waorani man)

[168] An Amazonian city officially called Francisco de Orellana, after the Spanish explorer. This city has grown following the needs of the oil economy in the region.

This was a surprising comment for me, not because of the possibility of Waorani walking on the embankment, but because of the speed with which the Waorani incorporate new notions, a sort of frenetic "*linguistic predation"*[169], and the idea that something resembling an "upper-class" Waorani could be possible from the Waorani perspective. *Pelucones,* which is the plural of *pelucón,* is a word popularized by Rafael Correa, ex-president of Ecuador. Correa used this notion repeatedly in his weekly speeches, which were streamed every Saturday on national TV. He used it as a pejorative way to describe a privileged elite that Correa was confronting, at least discursively. The word comes from *peluca* (wig) and it was not a common word before Correa, but soon it replaced more popular ways for referring to the upper-classes. My friend was not the only Waorani using the word *pelucón*; other young Waorani with formal education also use that expression. However, they are not using the notion in the same sense that Correa used. While for Correa that was a pejorative notion, for the Waorani it is not so, as Juan expressed in advice for me:

> When you go to the other country, try to make friends with a *pelucón,* like Guillermo Lasso, so they can come and visit here. […] Some women here, women like Daime, say they want to marry Guillermo Lasso. (Juan, middle aged Waorani man)

Guillermo Lasso is a wealthy, banker, head of a right-wing party who became Correa's main antagonist. Correa often referred to this banker man as a *pelucón,* something well-known for the Waorani, but still, they choose to use the word without Correa's negative moral connotations. The Waorani do not see any harm in being wealthy *per se*[170], moreover they would like to make alliances with the wealthy.

Daime, the woman to whom Juan refers, actually has a husband with a good salary, and in terms of foreign goods, Daime's house is the wealthiest in Epepare, but she does not generate envy or conflict because of her joyful generosity. Almost every time when I arrived in the village after a break, Daime invited me to her house to feed me. Her house and Juan's are the only places in Epepare where I was often offered rice

[169] A notion developed by Jerome Lewis: in a talk at the reading group for study of sounds, in 2018, he pointed out the indigenization of foreign expressions, see also Lewis (2009) for a broader analysis of predation of vocabulary and other communicative skills. See also Renault-Lescure's (2002) linguistic analysis among the Kali'na from French Guiana, who are open to integrate new notions, and do so through different strategies, allowing a differentiation between notions that refer to completely new technologies or situations, in contrast to those that show a continuity with their own practices.

[170] I should clarify that the Waorani with whom I talked referred to the banker as a wealthy person, without a consideration of what it means to be a right-wing conservative politician. I am sure the possible outcomes of conservative measures would not be welcome by any Waorani.

and chicken, or even beef, Daime also shares abundant plantain beverage. I can recall Daime mentioning joyfully 'I always cook more, I always have visitors coming here to eat'. Even though Daime's house was located a good distance from my host family's house, I soon learned that she was generous in other ways, for example, helping people to reach the nearest health post. Moreover, she would raise her voice in meetings against Others to defend equal distribution of resources coming from outside.

Coming back to the restaurant in El Coca, when I asked my friend, 'who are the Waorani *pelucones?'* he explained 'those who live with luxury, like people from NAWE'. NAWE is the Waorani national organization, and people who work for NAWE earn a salary, but more importantly, they travel to Quito to meet national authorities, including the President, and some of them travel around the world for international meetings. In those meetings they are expected to eat well and stay in hotels. However, while NAWE people might engage with city "luxuries", they are by no means equal to the *pelucones* that Correa referred to. Being part of NAWE is very likely to be a temporary position, although the knowledge/experience gathered by working for NAWE and living in the city is highly appreciated. As Brightman (2016) has noted among the Trio, knowing the city carries a form of prestige, implying an ability to mediate the world of the city, in a similar way in which shamans mediate spiritual worlds.

Money, which the Waorani call *tucuri*, is increasingly important along oil roads. Young generations often reflect upon different ways in which the Waorani have learned to relate with money. A young friend pointed out to me:

> Have you seen some elderly people, when they go out to the city, they put the money in a plastic bag, and throw it to the very bottom of their travel bag [so when they need to use the money, it is very difficult to take it out]. (Nenki, middle aged, Waorani man)

He pointed this out jokingly, but also reflecting on the fact that the Waorani are learning about money, that he keeps his money in his pocket. Another potent image of this learning process was a workshop called 'Financial Education' that young Waorani from Yoweno were keen to attend. This workshop was provided by an NGO, which offered a list of topics for classes. The Waorani picked up on the financial class arguing that they need to learn how to better deal with money. The class was illuminating not so much for the teaching but for the Waorani debate regarding their relationship with money:

> We spend only for spending [with no good reason], some of them do not give to the family, only spend in El Coca [Amazonian city]. (Waorani woman)
> First, they spend on alcohol, then on clothes and shoes. (Waorani man)

> People spend the money on cell phone, clothes, but mainly on vices [liquor]. (Waorani man)
> We should save for emergencies, for the future. (Waorani woman)

Young Waorani attending this workshop emphasised the ephemeral quality of this resource. During my fieldwork the main source of money for Yoweno families was from oil-related works, due to the oil drilling that was opened at the beginning of 2017. In Epepare, money is mainly obtained by selling of crafts that women make, and the few stable jobs that are accessed in yearly turns, so each household has an income at some point. Even for people in Epepare who rely heavily on forest food, money is important to the point at which, in 2017, some men decided to work in very hard conditions[171] for restaurants in a town near the main oil road. Most of the men quit after a few weeks of work. Rival (2000:249) noted that the Waorani engaged initially on wage works for their own reasons, such as getting familiar again with land that belonged to their ancestors, from which the Waorani were removed in the process of contact. This exploration of ancestral land was most likely done with intentions of claiming it back through the opening of new settlements. The hard work that men from Epepare accepted is a recent development, although the fact that they quit shows how autonomy and health are more important than money. This Waorani "inconstancy" in wage labour and the preference for short-termed work is shared with other indigenous people in Amazonia (see Walker 2013c).

> My grandfather finds it difficult when he runs out of gas, he asks me if I have 4.5 USD, I said yes, what else can I say, I cannot tell him go and cook with wood. (23 years old Waorani man)

The fact that even elderly people along oil roads rely on stoves for cooking also increases the importance of money for the Waorani. People in Waorani villages pay 4.5 USD for a gas bulb that in any Andean city costs 1.60 USD. When the Waorani come back from a trip to the capital they often point out the differences in prices of food, which are often similar to the gas bulb price, more than double. Almost at the end of my fieldwork a situation related to money was heavily commented on in the village. One of the most beautiful young women in Yoweno, with formal education, was said to have been 'exchanged for five beer crates' in a feast. After more explanation, I learned that the woman had been married in another Waorani village, and the members of her family − except her father − accepted the virilocal marriage because 'her father in-law has lots

[171] Working 16 hours daily for a salary of 15 USD per day, which at the end of the month was not fulfilled, sometimes paid with tuna cans at high Amazonian prices.

of [oil-related] money'. The marriage was considered a good thing despite the jokes, although the girl's father told me 'my daughter has been stolen' because of the virilocal nature of this marriage.

While I have not conducted fieldwork in villages located far from oil roads and have only visited them, there seems to be a differentiation in the ways in which people relate to money. Young Waorani who grew up in villages without oil, who, after marriage, changed residence to Yoweno, often reflect upon these differences. They perceive that people far from the roads learn to 'save' money, and spend it only when they travel, but people near the roads spend immediately any money that they get. Interestingly, in these villages along oil roads there is a growing use of the Spanish word *pobreza (*poverty).

> [In a meeting with State officers, pointing out a car passing by] Look at the dust, *the poverty*, we are by the side of the oil company but empty hands. […] My grandparents were rich, but now they are becoming *un pobre mas* (another poor person). Here oil is extracted, but [they are] poorer. (Tomo, young man, Yoweno)
> [In a village Assembly] We asked the government to declare 'state of emergency' [in Epepare], the government is considering our situation of poverty. (Juan, young man Epepare)
> [Personal conversation] **We have no word for poverty, only recently we are using this word**, we have not hungry children on the streets as in the cities. (Vicente, middle aged Waorani man, Puyo)

Poverty is a relational category, which the Waorani use to justify their demands to Others. Juan's letter to the Ecuadorian President was presented to the President of the National Assembly in Quito. In the letter he explained that because of the peaceful contact, the Waorani have learned to eat sugar, salt and to study at the school, so they require an income to fulfil these needs. Besides, he expressed that along the oil roads there is not enough food[172]. Rival (2015) notes that this idea of 'state of emergency' was also expressed by the Waorani in the face of an imminent conflict with people in voluntary isolation. The Waorani are incorporating this notion, used by the State, to express the gravity of their own main concerns. When I asked Juan about his understanding of poverty, he referred primarily to money for buying food, but also mentioned that people with money 'go around and have fun', in short, they have freedom of mobility along the road. However, I have never seen a Waorani suffering for lack of money or celebrating the arrival of money, rather the celebratory atmosphere

[172] In a food frequency survey that I carried in both communities during two different seasons, families reported an abundance of food, but in Epepare primarily from the forest until several men found a job in a nearby town (appendix 1). Thus, Juan's perception of food scarcity is related to processed food, and the reduced game meat near the village. Also, in Epepare the average family did not report earning more than 40 USD per month.

is more connected with the moment in which money is translated into food or goods for sharing.

Alvarez (2013) suggests that Waorani are more concerned about acquiring formal education rather than integrating themselves to market economies. This regard for acquiring outsider's knowledge epitomized by the school was already discussed by Rival's ethnography (1992, 1996b, 2002). However, young Waorani people along oil roads gather knowledge about *kowori*'s world through a variety of channels, they watch TV, listen to the radio, explore the internet, travel to the cities, engage in regional football tournaments, ask for books, and so on. Very often, the knowledge and ability to navigate the *kowori*'s world, translates into assertive access to external resources.

Finally, how does access to *kowori*'s resources relates to the generative dimension of living well? I could only offer a preliminary response to what seems to be an ongoing process of adjustments, in which the Waorani living along oil roads attempt to harmonize their contemporary livelihoods with their traditional understandings of health and good life. I should start by recalling that to be courageous/strong is equated to having a lot of vitality; *teemo piyengue* (strong) individuals are often skilful people and as my Waorani friends say in Spanish, they are usually 'good workers' or *nangui omekete*, in the sense that they often go foraging, hunting and also have bountiful crops – bearing in mind that the Waorani work ethic disapproves of excessive or forced human labour, which is considered unhealthy. *Teemo piyengue* people also contribute to Waorani's collective living well through their acts of sharing – from food to laughter and sweat. Moreover, forest food, sounds, air and smells seem to favour the maintenance of people's vitality (chapters 2 and 3). In contrast, *kowori*'s food is considered to make Waorani bodies weak (see also High 2010b:758). Moreover, for obtaining such *kowodi* food, several Waorani people living along the oil roads engage in low-waged works were they often face conditions that are against their work ethic. However, there are cases such as women's collective selling of chambira crafts, which starts as a generative activity and finishes in the collective celebration of abundance. In other words, when the Waorani have more control over the process of accessing external resources, these add to the maintenance of thriving villages. The Waorani do not have an expression that can be translated as "thriving", but I use this notion for referring to villages in which people live well in Waorani terms; this implies that people live enjoying each other's company, have peaceful relations, people are healthy, all

households have *toma* (all they need, complete) in their daily lives and have an abundance of resources to share in big gatherings.

Egalitarian relationships and village life.

This section explores Waorani egalitarian practices and the emergence of some unequal relationships along oil roads. Waorani egalitarian ethos is closely related to their maintenance of living well, which implies equal access to resources among those who live together. In addition, I introduce here a study of Waorani laughter, which is relevant for the maintenance of egalitarian relationships and has not previously been systematically analysed.

Woodburn (2005:22-23) observes three main mechanisms through which egalitarian relations are maintained: 1. Direct access to material resources, knowledge and skills; 2. Autonomy; 3. Obligation to share. Among the Waorani, Rival (1996b, 2002) drawing upon hunter-gatherer literature, has consistently suggested that the Waorani have an egalitarian ethos. Their economy is mainly based on immediate-return[173], and people share with no expectations of reciprocity (see also High 2007:36). Rival notes that for the Waorani sharing among equals is mainly done on demand (Rival 2016:19-20), whereas sharing with children and guests is considered as a form of 'giving away' (Rival 2016:133). Only between a married couple is there a form of reciprocal exchange, based on complementary male and female activities (Rival 2002:107).

Village life.

Responding to Waorani demands, an NGO distributed chicks in Epepare village, which the Waorani would grow for consumption and selling. The Waorani were joyful when the chicks arrived, but the celebratory mood did not last; when they found out that "new" households were not on the list of distribution that the NGO had, women uttered angry complaints. Instead of redistributing the chickens that they already had, these

[173] 'People obtain a direct and immediate return from their labour' (Woodburn 1982:432), food is not stored but consumed the same day or in the following days, even money is spent in this logic along oil roads. Nowadays, a few people who have access to refrigerators keep meat for longer periods of time, instead of distributing it all at once. Waorani increased cultivation of crops also implies a "delay" in the return for labour, but what is harvested is never stored, if there is an excess which the household might be unable to consume in the following days, the harvest is broadly distributed, usually by organizing a party. In addition, some families decide to distribute their crops by inviting people from different clusters to harvest as much as they can carry back home.

Waorani women insisted on getting more chickens that were destined for another village, to which the NGO people finally agreed. Women's anger was an assertive "demand sharing" strategy, used in this case for the benefit of the whole village, even at the cost of leaving the other village with less chicken. It follows that even when some people in the village have no consanguineal or affinal relations, all belong to one of the cognatic clusters, and the group of clusters is thought as a collective that "should" have equal access to resources.

One of the ways in which people talk about *waponi kewemonipa (*living well), is with the synonym *watape,* which is also translated as 'to love', or 'to care', 'to care for someone as one cares for a brother'. A *watape* relationship is the ideal of sharing, it means sharing with love. In big villages not all the current relationships are done with such *watape* attitude, but some of them are done to maintain alliances. During fieldwork I was surprised at the ease of being "embraced" into Epepare village after coming back from a break, compared with the layers of "distance" that I perceived in Yoweno, outside my host family cluster. In Epepare it was very common that people would call me to their houses to feed me the day after my arrival, in one or two days I was "fed" by the main households of Epepare, and shared recent news and laughs with most adults of the village.

In Yoweno, sharing was done primarily with my household and our cluster. The network[174] was extended to few families outside the cluster, with whom we have frequent sharing of food or goods, such as shared use of a hacksaw. Most people in the network have a consanguineal link with my host mother, but not all her consanguineous kin were within the network. Moreover, there are households in Yoweno that seem to be at the edge of the main network of distribution of resources around the leading family. These edges are also spatially evident, the leading family at the core, my household included, in the village centre. In Epepare, there are also clusters, but the networks of sharing are often expanded beyond the clusters and connect the whole village more evenly.

The main egalitarian principle of direct access to resources seems to be respected in both villages in relation to forest resources, but in Yoweno, the leading

[174] The Waorani do not have a word that could be translated as network, but my use of this notion here is for analytical purposes. This network extends through relations of sharing, it ends where there is absence of sharing or caring. What I describe as a network resembles what Rival has seen among *waomoni*, regional groups that maintain an 'endogamous nexus' (2016:50) described as 'dispersed networks of intermarrying longhouses separated by vast stretches of unoccupied forests'(ibid:50); however, relations of frequent sharing, beyond the household group but within the village, that I describe here are not extended to all the *waomoni* group.

family have special rights over the distribution of non-forest resources, which sometimes they do not distribute evenly. Thus, the egalitarian Waorani ethos in Yoweno is often expressed –from those who are at the edges of the leading family core– through demand sharing claims such as: 'What are we? Are we perhaps tourists?'.

During my fieldwork Epepare village had no internal conflicts over distribution of resources; nevertheless, people desiring the same man or the same woman generated tensions, something that also happens in Yoweno, but Epepare's cohesion makes the competition over lovers more difficult to navigate. In Yoweno, a recent case in which a young man left his wife for another woman in the village was solved by changing home from one edge of the village to the other. The new couple now live in a cluster that has almost no relations of sharing with the cluster of the former couple.

Gordon (2016: 214) notes that among the Mebêngôkre-Xikrin, internal tension is generated from a lack of differentiation, when people are too similar they start competing over the same resources or the same position. This leads to village fission; distance is a way to build healthy differentiation. In Yoweno, tensions have historically led to fission, and Epepare is an outcome of that. I know that in 2019, there has been a new fission of a main family in Yoweno, who were already building a new village at the time of my fieldwork. Riviere (1984:27-28; 74-81) notes in the Guianas that when villages grow in size, disputes are almost inevitable, and they often end in the abandonment of one part involved in the dispute, or, in other cases, generate a major village fission.

As described in the introduction, the warrior Babe, who defended the territory of Yoweno against colonization, was joined by people who wanted his protection. Waorani highlight his warriorhood not as having predatory qualities but as responding to the encroachment of powerful Others, and effectively protecting the Waorani. His children have inherited Babe's rights over their ancestral land, without fully maintaining his generosity or capacity to protect people. The figure of this warrior contrasts with the peaceful attitude of Epepare founders, who have accepted the leadership of a non-close kin young man, Juan, pointing towards an economy based on projects and writing documents, rather than oil. As High (2007:37) has noted, before peaceful contact the Waorani had no notion of "chief", not even the one analysed by Clastres (1987), in which leaders have obligations rather than authority, they are expected to share generously and creatively ensure peace – see also Brightman (2007, 2016) for a discussion of how the sharing of speech and gifts could be considered a form of

influence. However, some Waorani used to voluntarily "follow" people (join the cluster) who were especially skilful in defending them against external dangers (Rival 2002:131). In addition, for certain events such as big feasts, the organizer has an ad-doc influential role as peace-maker.

The contemporary notion of "president" or village leader is new, it responds to 'the Ecuadorian custom, of electing men to the position of village president' (High 2007: 37); each village deals differently with this new figure, some of them more effectively to make these leaders proper moral persons, redistributive "givers" with no coercive authority. Temporary elected leaders are expected to access external resources for redistributing (High 2007 and Rival 2016:255-259), if they fail to distribute what they obtain from outside, it generates internal tensions that end up in redistribution or village fission. In the case of previous leaders of the national organization who are thought to have diverted external resources for themselves or their families, instead of redistributing them within the villages (see also High 2007:40), there are no mechanisms of coercion towards them, other than changing to a different representative.

Laughter.

Waorani people use a narrative style which I call *anka totamonapa* (how much we have laughed); this is not the experience of "spontaneous fun" but the narrative reproduction of it, the account of amusing situations that are shared several times with other Waorani with whom good relationships within the village are cultivated. The phrase *anka totamonapa* is repeated a few times while the amusing story is narrated and when it ends.

Many amusing *anka totamonapa* stories allow the Waorani to reflect upon different moralities in the encounter with outsiders, but also to point out what is not good or desirable. For making such evaluations young Waorani very often draw upon *kowori* features that are part of their contemporary life; for example, when some Waorani were invited to a demonstration in the city, and no lunch was offered, one said 'I am not *wengongui* (god) for fasting forty days' a joke that was repeated in the *anka totamonapa* genre several times. By joking about this lack of food, the Waorani shared their empirical knowledge about a stingy non-Waorani world, as opposed to Waorani abundant sharing; this kind of joking reflection is also a form of reflecting upon the asymmetric post-contact relations that this highly egalitarian society face. Perhaps, laughter could be considered as a form of 'collective thought' (Villar 2013:492).

Apart from the *anka totamonapa* story telling, witty utterances are also part of Waorani daily amusement. For example, we were at home chatting peacefully, when suddenly an acute cry of a child interrupted us, and my host reacted by saying *"árbitro"* (referee), because of the similarities with the annoying sound of the whistle, we all laughed and kept chatting. These reflections made by joking about what is good, pleasant, bad or unpleasant also draw upon Waorani knowledge of animal behaviour. For example, a friend noted that gossip is undesirable, by jokingly suggesting that people who gossip too much should be called *caata (Caracara plancus)*, which is a particularly noisy bird.

During a meeting between Epepare people and some State representatives – almost at the end of my fieldwork, when I was able to better understand conversations in *Wao terero* – I realized how much joking "irony" was expressed in a soft tone, to be shared and understood only among the group of Waorani sat in front of the State representatives. By this I mean, only people who have a *strong speech* (chapter 5) directed their utterances in Spanish towards the Others, but there was a Waorani group dynamic underneath the main speeches, they were laughing at the "Other" without making them aware of the content of this layer of interaction.

When I arrived at Yoweno during a strike against the oil company along the road, I joined my friends who immediately interacted with me making jokes, instead of asking about my family or sharing news as in other times. It seemed to me that the jokes were a sign of peace, as if they were saying that I should not be worried, that the strike was more about "appearing angry" towards the Others, namely oil people. "Inside" the jokes were a sign of good conviviality. Joking in moments of tension is also often seen within village assemblies, to ensure good conviviality. Chris Knight and Jerome Lewis (2017) have noted that laughter in egalitarian societies 'cuts over-assertive individuals down to size while bonding the in-group together'(2017: 438). Likewise, the Waorani often respond to someone's attempts at gaining "prestige" by laughing at them (High 2007:38). Among another egalitarian Amazonian society, the Piaroa, Overing (2000) suggests that thoughtless mockery is labelled as an illness; this resonates with studies of laughter beyond Amazonia, as among the Batek, hunter-gatherers who acknowledge several taboos regarding laughter (Rudge 2019). Waorani people do not seem to share such taboos about laughter, although they certainly avoid thoughtless mockery among themselves.

In addition, foreigners who are good at joking are more likely to be better at negotiating with the Waorani, or even building good co-residential relationships, as is the case of charismatic doctors. Interestingly, being ugly is expressed sometimes as being *toin-toin* (ludicrous), so behaving funnily is also a form of self-deprecation with healthy effects for egalitarian relations. Even some *teemo piyengue* strong people and some leaders behave in this *toin-toin* way, to generate laughing.

A study of Waorani humour is overdue, although most in-depth ethnographic works include accounts of the Waorani finding amusing a variety of situations – often misunderstandings of the encounter with the Other – that are repeatedly recalled in a humoristic way (Rival 2016; High 2015b). Good story tellers are often amusing, the ability to tell stories and cleverly amuse people are highly appreciated qualities. A friend of mine, who lacks that quality and therefore is not very influential among the Waorani, recalled –after taking part in a workshop in the city– how popular was another Waorani. My friend said 'everybody called him to sit with them at lunch time. Hey Marco! Come here, tell us the story of Manuel', meaning make us laugh. In this case, the good storyteller who tells amusing stories is not himself considered *toin-toin* in the sense of ugly, he is instead influential, but in a way that satisfies the Waorani egalitarian ethos.

Waorani as the "prey" seem to have the ability to deter or even defeat a predator by astuteness, which is reflected in a short myth recorded by Rival, about a turtle who is able to avoid being killed by a jaguar, by deceiving him (2016:242-243). The Waorani use laughter in different ways depending on which powerful outsider they are dealing with. Sometimes before meetings at State Institutions women sing and laugh among themselves, the same women could afterwards be delivering a *strong speech* against State officers. Furthermore, Waorani wittiness (Rival 2016: 242) is indeed a way to navigate relationships with powerful outsiders:

> Today I met Moipa, a young Waorani leader, we were sitting in a car, waiting for a ride to the conflict area. Moipa knew I was an anthropologist, and we could not stop talking about the many political difficulties that the Waorani have faced under Correa's government. Suddenly, a State health officer who was in the same car said to us, 'please, **stop talking about politics**', and to my surprise Moipa responded: 'No doctor, *we are not talking about politics, we are talking about anthropology'*.

The State officer sounded slightly uncomfortable with our chat about politics, he clearly preferred us to change the topic, but Moipa's response made all of us laugh. He behaved pretty much like a turtle with the jaguar, he did not confront directly the fact that we were asked to shut up or change topic, which is unacceptable for the Waorani. Instead,

Moipa, using a joking voice tone, suggested a clever change of perspective, which was more unexpected, and would allow us to keep talking without tensions.

Summing up, after establishing peaceful relationships with outsiders the Waorani are showing that the importance of laughter goes beyond its convivial function. What I have suggested here is that nowadays, when the Waorani have to deal with powerful outsiders while avoiding war, they also use laughter to reflect upon these encounters; more interestingly, they use laughter to navigate the prey perspective. Finally, it should be noted that many Waorani affirm pursuing activities such as playing football as ways of "having fun"; in turn, having fun was described to me as something that the Waorani do for overcoming sadness and *'falta de ánimo'* (low spirits). The emphasis on collective laughter among the Waorani should be considered in the light of this broader pursuit of fun, as a way to maintain a healthy and beautiful life.

Contemporary parties and football matches.

> The *durani* (ancestors) say, *memeiri* (grandparents) say that only when there are parties, they are well, living well, going hunting and cutting down trees. […] *Watape keweñimoni, watape keweguimamo waponi* (to live well without problems). (Wane, Waorani man).

Elderly Waorani mention parties when referring to the end of wars or/and the absence of war; parties are a sign of the Waorani *living well* understood as times of peace and prosperity (Colleoni 2016; High 2015b). In a detailed description of Waorani *eeme* (feast) Rival (2002:145) suggests that the created abundance that is generated for those parties is somehow naturalized. The host are called *awene* (from the tree) assuming the role of a giving tree. The guests consume from this tree, just as birds feed themselves from a tree, without an expectation of reciprocity.

My host mother, who to share her abundance of plantain organized a plantain party in the *durani onko* (palm house), preferred to celebrate birthdays *kowori bai* (non-Waorani style) in the cement house. The Waorani were not used to celebrating birthdays, and so she followed the *kowori style*; she bought a cake in a nearby town, prepared chicken for dinner, and asked me for some *kowori* music. For this party there was no beverage prepared for sharing in abundance. While the plantain party was carried out within the logic of alliances that Rival (2002) has described for *eeme* parties, the *kowori* birthday party was an event within our cluster. In the former, many people out of our cluster were invited, and laughing together was accompanied by constant circulation of the sweet beverage. In contrast, the *kowori* party included only our

cluster and the village doctor, with no abundance of food or beverages. My host mother explained that *kowori* parties were too expensive, and people do not bring gifts as *kowori* people do, so she preferred not to invite many people. The *kowori* party was organized on the ground floor of the cement house, which as pointed out in the previous chapter, is connected with less sharing, or at least sharing in smaller groups.

Another kind of parties are those called *fiesta de la comunidad* (village parties), which have a design initially promoted by school teachers working among the Waorani in the 1970s to 1980s (Rival 1996b, 2002: 170-171). In a recent ethnography, High (2015b) notes that schoolteachers are still feast organizers, whereas Waorani families in villages like Yoweno, with years of access to oil-related resources, have seen the need to take these village parties into their own hands, maybe to fulfil the need of controlling alliances and social reproduction. What is interesting about Yoweno's case is that they seem to have drawn a division between resources generated through schoolteachers, and those gathered or generated by Waorani people and distributed in the party, although the latter rely heavily on donations from the oil company. So, they celebrate two different types of party, those organized by teachers, and those organized by Yoweno's leaders; the latter is particularly focused on creating alliances.

These village parties are *kowori bai* (non-Waorani style) but they are carried out under Waorani logics. These "contemporary" feasts are still called *eeme* (party) and part of what Rival noted about *eeme* parties can be applied to *kowori* parties:

> Everything in the Huaorani ritual complex is made to stress that alliance is about celebrating abundance together. (Rival 2002:147)

Epepare also has an annual party that is not organized by the teachers, but Epepare's party is smaller than Yoweno's. More abundance within the feast is expected from the latter, because Yoweno people are perceived to "own" the oil pipes that are within their territory, for the Waorani this means they have rights to access to oil-related money and goods, even though they have to organize strikes against the oil company from time to time. In other words, village parties are still a celebration of abundance, but in the case of villages like Yoweno, abundance is achieved through a combination of forest food and oil-related money – the latter would be used to hire a sound-system, buy food, give prizes to football players, and so on. Overall, good parties on Waorani terms are those in which an abundance of food is shared in an atmosphere of peace and happiness. Waorani guests are likely to complain if there is an absence or scarcity of forest food – particularly meat – within the party; whereas the absence of processed food is not

regretted as long as there is an abundance of forest food. To clarify my argument related to the Waoranization of *kowori* parties, I will present in the following paragraphs two examples of contemporary parties, the first is from a Christian wedding carried out in Epepare in a massive ceremonial format, the second is about Yoweno's annual feast.

> Andrea: Have you attended a Christian wedding party before?
> Juan: No, this was the first time, but I did not like it.
> Andrea: What did you dislike?
> Juan: The *programa* (event that follows steps, a protocol) was well organized, Christians supported it with some food, but the married couples did not contribute anything. They should have prepared wild meat. A wedding with only chicken and rice from outside is not well set up. The preachers even gave 50 USD to the groom and bride, and they bought a cake. It should be the other way around.

Juan was not alone in criticizing a Christian wedding, which was promoted as a 'feast' but did not fulfilled the expectations of a feast. Most elderly Waorani and the grooms – there were two couples– wore Waorani crowns, which is a way of dressing up. The couples to be married had already been married in Waorani terms for years, but since they had converted to Christianity, they were encouraged by the missionaries to marry in the Christian way. Nevertheless, even in this case when the alliances were already made, it seemed that an alliance feast among the Waorani should not be done without abundance, shared by the hosts, and this was the main reason for dissatisfaction. Another reason was the lack of the celebratory *laughing* or dancing that sums up the *collective happiness*.

Moreover, even in *kowori* feasts, abundance is expected to have a continuity with the forest. Here, I will move to Yoweno's case. While abundant food from outside is collected from the oil company, the feast organizer asks the best hunters to contribute with meat, preferably monkey, and women are asked to bring manioc beverage. I witnessed the process of organizing the annual May party starting in February 2017 in Yoweno. At that time, there was tension related to uneven distribution of oil jobs. Consistently, meetings started by addressing these issues, but soon attention was shifted to the feast topic, as if the joyful idea of the feast was a way to overcome internal tensions.

Several young Waorani from Yoweno attend at least one feast in any part of the Waorani territory each month. Elderly people take part in feasts organized by their own villages, but more often this taking part is done by receiving guests at their homes. Most elderly people do not enjoy watching football tournaments during the day, nor do they enjoy dancing to *kowori* music at night. But even then, they attend some parties where they have close kin, to reinforce their bonds.

During party time, all household food is shared one way or other with visiting kin. In my young host family, life during this time is all around the party, playing or supporting football matches in the morning and afternoon, and attending the dance at night. After the party was over, the hosts seemed to be exhausted but joyful; after a few days of resting, they were ready for a new cycle of prosperity. This was true particularly when the party ended without troubles and when alliances –normally in the form of new marriages– have been made. Parties sometimes end in fights, but even then, they are often effective for alleviating village tensions. Abundant pictures of parties are posted on Facebook, placing particular emphasis on the fact that the party has finished without confrontations. In short, a successful party is an expression of a healthy and thriving village, which is ready for a new time of prosperity, with no foreseeable wars.

The aesthetics of the contemporary parties reflect the Waorani self/other in many ways, from the mix of processed food with wild food, to the mix of global electronic music combined with contemporary Amazonian popular music, but perhaps the most compelling aesthetic event is the election of the party Queen. Queen candidates walk in front of party attendees in a beauty pageant format up to four times: (1) in daily clothes they perform a dance with high pitched music, some choosing electronic songs; (2) if there is a school party they walk with their uniforms and a school book in their hands; (3) they adorn themselves like *durani* (ancestors) and dance with a background of Kichwa music when there is no Waorani song recorded, and during this 'performing like the ancestors time' they give manioc beverage or handicrafts to powerful visitors; finally (4) they dress up in elegant ball clothes and high heels, just before the election of the Queen. To my knowledge, there is nothing on the Waorani Queen election that resembles *eeme* Waorani parties, but the general emphasis on dressing up is often described in accounts of *eeme* parties. The beauty pageant performances described here are developed by young women; they appear to be different from public performances of warriorhood described by High (2009a, 2015b); in the Yoweno party, the emphasis is placed on different expressions of beauty that coexist in the oil frontier. However, the beauty pageant might respond to the same processes in which school teachers have a 'role in promoting what they see as 'typical'' (High 2009a:11) representations of Waorani culture; young people are encouraged to "perform" Waorani at school, and they extend these performances to their own village party.

During the dance at night, in contrast to *eeme* parties, there is no gender division. The gender division is seen in football matches during the day, although this division is more pragmatic, as women's football matches are less aggressive than men's matches, and they prefer to play separately. In Epepare, I have seen women playing football with men in daily life, and men reducing their energetic attitude, but these mixed matches are exceptional.

Football playing requires special consideration in relation to the Waorani living well. This activity which not only happens every day during the feast, but on most days in ordinary village life, was referred to by many young Waorani as a way to avoid drinking strong liquor, maintain health and feel well. It also consolidates village bonds. Waorani men and women have embraced football in daily life, different from the Urarina case, for whom Walker (2013a) describes it as a male activity. For Waorani playing football is a form of producing a social body by laughing and sweating together.

Saul, my host father, is a keen football player, and even criticized other players saying: 'you must be sick, you don't even sweat'. The day when Saul was sick himself, he refused to stay in bed, he left home saying 'my heart is not ill, if I don't play I might become sicker'. Such an attitude towards football encourages me to consider this practice as one of the contemporary paths for the maintenance of the Waorani health as a synonym of courage, or vitality.

The incorporation of football as something Waorani, rather than 'Other' could be seen in the names that they give to the teams and the tournaments: Jaguars championship, the Eagles football team, Championship *Daime* (rainbow), to name a few. In other words, young Waorani have domesticated football in a way that allows them to remain Waorani while embracing a global identity. Young Waorani feel particularly connected with South-American football players:

Picture 4.1 Football.

Walker (2013a) suggests that football playing is also 'a vehicle of strong moral sentiments and even wider forms of belonging, instrumental in the process of incorporation into the state and nation' (2013a:388). This consideration of football as a form of belonging is certainly present among the Waorani, and the rites and formalities of football, some of which are followed by the Waorani, have a role in this process, but there is also an element of "belonging" that is focused on a scale that is beyond the frontiers of the Ecuadorian national state. While they are interested in national football, they are often more interested in big figures of international football. There is no room in this thesis for a detailed analysis of Waorani football techniques, as have been analysed elsewhere in Amazonia (see Erikson 2013), but such analysis should illuminate the extent to which Waorani are domesticating football and making it a more egalitarian sport.

Conclusion.

This chapter has presented changes in Epepare and Yoweno's local economies, but it also has offered ethnographic accounts of how strong/ healthy people contribute to collective living well by engaging in generative activities and allowing the circulation of vitality across generations. I have noted that Waorani people-centred living well is not an economy of "control" over the circulation of people as scarce resource, but instead what is aimed at among the Waorani is that people "desire" or are willing to engage in convivial *living well*.

Widespread sharing contributes to peaceful daily life (eudaimonic wellbeing), but I have also shown that it encompasses laughter (hedonic) as a form of daily bonding. The epitome of *collective happiness* is the feast, a semblance of which can be seen in daily football playing. Along oil roads, the forest of plenty, which allows sharing an abundance of food, is getting farther from the road, this means that the economy of procurement is combined with a variety of strategies for accessing external resources. Despite the challenges and hardships of accessing external money and goods that I have presented in this chapter, Waorani living along oil roads have managed to adapt their values, find new ways for "making" strong people and channelling vitality, and maintain an ubiquitous background of laughter for their maintenance of *living well.* But one should not forget that the asymmetrical encounter with a national society that relies on Waorani oil has also generated a conceptualization of "poverty" that was unknown for the Waorani. The Waorani from Epepare and Yoweno are learning about poverty "ironically" along oil roads, from where the economic wealth of the Ecuadorian nation is maintained.

CHAPTER 5: STRONG SPEECH AND THE ENCROACHING SOCIETY

S*trong speech* is a form of communication closely related with Waorani strength and vitality, explored in this chapter through different interactions between Waorani and non-Waorani humans. These interactions with outsiders are an outcome of the peaceful contact and part of an ongoing process of adjustments. An exhaustive analysis of the Waorani relations with the encroaching society is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the analysis of some forms of speech that are shared within these interactions allows me to expand the analysis of Waorani *generative living well.* While vitality is related to the flourishing of healthy people (chapter 2) and collective happiness (chapter 4), it is also channelled through *strong speech* to elicit proper moral behaviour from outsiders. In addition, the study of Waorani *strong speech*, which is often uttered in village meetings with representatives of the Ecuadorian state, allows me to discuss how the Ecuadorian developmental model of *Buen Vivir* (living well) is deaf towards the Waorani own speech.

Amazonian studies have shown that the encounter between indigenous people and otherness – primarily with whites– should be considered not only as a historical event narrated from a Western point of view, but as a historical/cosmological affair narrated from the indigenous perspective (Albert 1988, 2002b; Buchillet 2002; Vilaça 2010). By "encounter" I am referring to contact situations but also to any other encounter after peaceful contact between Waorani and non-Waorani people. These encounters still compel an enormous effort due to the frequent adjustments of interpretations and strategies that indigenous people develop to better deal with "the Other". Moreover, dealing with outsiders, particularly with the Ecuadorian State and the oil company represents an important emotional and physical challenge for indigenous people.

The reasons why indigenous Amazonian people have accepted peaceful contact vary in each case, some scholars have noted an "openness" to the Other (Vilaça 2010; Viveiros de Castro 1992b) which includes the incorporation of outsiders' goods, vitality, medicine an even religion. There are pragmatic reasons for incorporating what Others bring, such as the fact that biomedicine has the power to deal with epidemics, or in the case of goods, their usefulness – in the Waorani case from machetes to social networks such as Facebook – but there are also cosmological reasons why Amazonians have been willing to integrate the Other – from their clothes, to religion. Viveiros de

Castro (1992b) suggests that in the XVI century, when the Jesuits attempted to convert the Tupinamba, the later were open to it in part because they related Jesuits to powerful characters of Tupinamba mythology, and thought they might have responses to crucial issues such as how to prolong life (ibid:30). More recently, Vilaça (2010) notes that while the Wari had a variety of reasons for seeing whites as potential allies, including access to goods, their main reason for peaceful contact was rebuilding 'their society, which had been destructured [sic] by the territorial invasions, and they believed that the whites would help them achieve this' (Vilaça 2010:2).

Among the Waorani, peaceful contact promoted by the Summer Institute of Linguistics SIL started in a time when some Waorani families were dealing with a prolonged cycle of internal warfare. Thus it is argued that peaceful contact was a way to finish this internal cycle of war[175] (Boster, Yost, and Peeke 2004; Cabodevilla 1994; High 2015b, 2016; Yost 1981 among others). Namo, one of my collaborators, decided to conduct extensive conversations with his grandfather, with whom I had little or no interactions even when I visited his wife several times. From Namo's conversations I learned that his grandfather, whose peaceful contact started in the late 1960's, affirms that he still lives *durani bai* (like the ancestors) because he has never established relationships with outsiders; instead, he notes that unlike his grandchildren, he only allows *kowori* (non-Waorani) to pass by – along the road – but he does not "speak" with *kowori*. High (2018) has argued in a recent article that 'speaking, like eating together, was part of how Waorani envisioned themselves creating a human relationship with *kowori*' (ibid:67). He refers primarily to "speaking" in *Wao terero* as the proper form of human sociality (ibid:68); however, the *strong speech* interactions that I analyse in this chapter could also be considered as Wao speech even when uttered in Spanish.

For many Waorani, the establishment of peaceful contact also meant a conversion to Christianity. High (2016) notes that the majority of Waorani abandoned the Christian identity after the Ecuadorian government expelled the SIL missionaries in 1981. For many young Waorani, Christianity is no longer appealing (ibid 2016:271), but

[175] As Wasserstrom (2016) has noted, Waorani internal warfare was heightened by external pressures. Elderly people with whom I have conducted interviews started the peaceful contact in late 1960's and 1970's, their process of peaceful contact was also promoted by the SIL with the help of Waorani people who were already converted to Christianity. These interviews with Waorani elders suggest that they did not fully agree with stablishing permanent contact, instead, they perceived their mobilization to the settlement organized by the SIL as a temporary situation, but after dealing with the first foreign diseases, a sustained peaceful contact for accessing biomedicine and goods was almost inevitable. I have been unable to interview families who were contacted in 1970's by Catholic missionaries; an historical account of the contact is offered by Cabodevilla (1994: 351-410).

as noted in chapter 2, and further developed here, there is an ongoing second wave of evangelization among Waorani.

Nowadays the "encounter" milieu is not only populated by missionaries but by a variety of Others. The Waorani make clear distinctions in the way they understand different categories of Others –State representatives, non-indigenous Ecuadorians, other indigenous people, anthropologists, environmentalists, and so on. Relationships with alterity in Amazonia are broadly informed by cosmologies of predation (Descola 1993; Fausto 2012; Vilaça 2010; Viveiros de Castro 1992a; among others), and the study of these cosmologies has been approached primarily through what Viveiros de Castro (1996) called the analytical style of 'symbolic economy of alterity', which places strong emphasis on liminal process (warfare, shamanism, hunting) where symbolic exchange pervades. Unlike other Amazonian people, Waorani do not consider predatory relationships to be essential for their social reproduction (Rival 2002:177:188), but instead Waorani see themselves as surrounded by predatory Others and 'continuously try to escape being consumed by these numerous and powerful predators' (2002:181). High's (2015b: 27-49) study confirms that in Waorani narratives of past violence the Waorani often assume the position of victims; although warriorhood is praised in the cases of legendary warriors who acted as defenders of the otherwise victims (e.g., Niwa, Babe). Waorani narratives of victimhood are also triggered by any daily life misfortunes, generally perceived as being caused by external Others (High 2015b: 39). In addition, High (2015b: 50-75) suggests that among new generations the victimhood ethos is encompassed by a "warriorhood" identity that is developed and expressed particularly in intercultural contexts. The practice of *strong speech* described in the first section of this chapter should be considered in this context of intercultural encounters, in which the "prey" instead of avoiding the "powerful" (Rival 2002:186) Others, prefers to confront them while avoiding warfare.

The second section of this chapter offers a brief exploration of relationships with outsiders that the Waorani consider to be friendships, which are pursued as means to channel external resources into Wao villages. Following the analysis of *strong speech*, I explore these relationships with outsiders by focusing on Waorani appreciation of some forms of outsider's speech.

Strong Speech.

A prominent feature of Waorani speech is the modulation of the voice tone and gestures between extremes depending on the circumstances[176]. In one extreme of this modulation is an imitation of a childlike voice – an acute but faint-hearted voice tone which undoubtedly signals peace. I heard this tone mainly in accounts of forest encounters when a person (even a male warrior) would shout to another in this childlike tone to assure him that he intends a peaceful encounter. Some Waorani women use a similar version of this voice tone, a less-acute tone with a fading voice as if they were running out of breath – I heard this breathless tone in several demand-sharing interactions with women and in some narrative styles, normally when some gossip was involved in the account. At the other extreme of the modulation is what I call *strong speech,* a loud voice tone that tends towards a grave sound, which can reach the form of a gruff yelling; this *strong speech* is rarely used within peaceful convivial relations. Strong speeches are more commonly heard in meetings with outsiders, but I also heard some low-key strong speeches in village assemblies, normally from women or well-respected elderly people. If for the Waorani convivial harmonious relations are those of building similarity while maintaining differentiation, in village assemblies the *strong speech* speaker creates a discursive level of differentiation in order to influence similarity; for example, an elderly person may use *strong speech* to talk about how oil compensations should be distributed equally to the whole village, when attempts at unequal distribution have been seen. However, when there is a person particularly skilful in *"hablar duro"* (speaking loudly), their *strong speech* is normally expressed against outsiders, and it is not understood as an individualized act, but a collective one, the strong speech is so *because* of the group (cf. Brightman 2007:17).

Speech is a vehicle for communication that encompasses other forms of sharing and circulation that have been referred in previous chapters, particularly laughter (chapter 4). Among the Trio in the Guianas, Brightman (2007, 20016) has noted that communication 'is a key part of the good life' (Brightman 2007: 35), speeches developed by Trio leaders emphasise convivial values and generate solidarity. In contrast, Waorani speeches along oil roads are not developed only by leaders, and elderly women's speeches enjoy respect across generations.

I agree with Brightman's suggestion that 'in practice what is shared and transferred when people communicate is humanity'(ibid:35). Such communication of

[176] Another central aspect of Waorani speech is the use of ideophones, analysed by High (2018).

humanity among the Waorani (humans) is also seen in some interactions with *kowori* (non-Waorani); High (2018:67) notes that this acknowledgement of *kowori* humanity is done when Waorani speak to us in *Wao terero*. The *strong speech* that I analyse in this section is uttered sometimes in Spanish, but even then, it is used to elicit proper human behaviour from *kowori* people.

Strong speech is a practical solution for communicating with outsiders while avoiding warfare. 'For Waorani, language, rather than being a uniquely human capacity, is about relations with beings who share the same bodily form' (High 2018:66). People sometimes talk with animals in dreams and in shamanic experiences; moreover, as noted in chapter 3, the calls and sounds of some animals – particularly birds – are understood to be meaningful (see also High 2018:69), and hunters are experts in imitating animal calls. Communication with spirits is generally avoided; accounts of Waorani shamanism point towards communication with animal spirits more than other kind of spirits, such shamanic communication is described as a radio tuning or streaming from the animal spirit through the shaman, as if the shaman's role was passive (Rival 2002:79).

A characteristic of *strong speech* is that it requires strength (vitality). A collaborator suggested that some people drink *tiname* (strong liquor) in order to gain strength to express themselves. While *strong speech* is widely appreciated, *strong speech* generated by *tiname* is not, because it is perceived as closer to 'being mad', and as noted in chapter 2, madness caused by strong alcohol is considered a form of anger, a form of disrupted vitality. Thus, while *strong speech* is said to be developed when people are 'angry' it is not that of *piinte* (the sort of anger that generates revenge killing), but more a channelling of vitality that is described as "appearing angry", which during my fieldwork was more often described as *enguin bate* (angry/upset)[177]. Being upset is opposed to *piyenekete* (doing peace).

> When you are healthy you speak loudly [strong speech], when not, you let it go [you cannot confront the oil company or other powerful others], health is the most important thing. (Pedro, Waorani man)

Pedro makes a connection between strength and health (chapter 2) that allows people to 'speak loudly'. At the same time, *strong speech* is an ability that people polish, and is mastered by middle aged rather than young people. I have met several elderly women

[177] While I am aware these words are synonyms, I recorded more often people using *piinte* to refer an anger that seemed out of control, whereas *enguin bate* was used more as a way of saying 'I am upset'. Waorani translate both of these words as to be angry. Yost (Boster, Yost, and Peeke 2004) also see these words as synonyms.

with *strong speech* but few elderly man with the same kind of speech; perhaps this is due to the gender differences in the channelling of vitality that were already noted in chapter 2, meaning that men are prone to an anger towards killing, whereas women seem to be able to better channel a non-lethal anger.

Strong speech is not separated from other forms of communication; many Waorani meetings or assemblies start with joyful chants and laughter promoted often by elderly women. Women lift up people's vitality through these two powerful expressions at the core of Waorani identity. Young Waorani women are encouraged to join these pre-assembly chants, and elderly women take the opportunity to share some moral guidance, while joking in between songs. This is a potent way in which Waorani values are transmitted through generations, I have seen this happening even before meetings with State officers in their own institutions[178], but I have never seen it before meetings with the oil company, which are more male-dominated environments. In both kinds of meeting the *strong speech* is taken to the highest pitch by elderly women and some middle aged men.

Skills for *strong speech* among elderly women were noted as a virtue by a young collaborator in a meeting with a state institution. An elderly Waorani woman with a spear in her hands shouted at the state officers asking for proper healthcare attention. The potency of her speech was such that even I, sitting in the middle of the Waorani group, felt uneasy until Juana, a young Waorani woman, said to me 'like that is the *vida política* (political life)' adding 'I want to be like that' when I become old[179]. Juana was

[178] During the last year people from 16 Waorani villages presented a demand against the Ecuadorian State to stop oil drilling explorations, arguing that their informed consent had irregularities, they did not agree with oil extraction. The Waorani won the case and the Ecuadorian State presented an appeal, which was again won in court by the Waorani. In the videos that have circulated on the web one can see Waorani women singing in front of the courts, as if singing was an essential part of this process of "struggle" through written documents, as some of Waorani call the trial.

[179] This kind of *strong speech* is different from young – often male – leaders' political speech, which is often expressed in Spanish, and as High (2018) describes, there is a 'general perception that their words should not be trusted' (ibid:72), particularly those from leaders living in the cities rather than the forest. This is also different from what Gallois (2002) discusses as 'strong speech' among the Waiãpi in Brazil. Gallois describes a political discourse that is developed by leaders and young people with skills in navigating intercultural contexts. This Waiãpi discourse is rarely developed by women, (2002:213) and from Gallois description they can be elaborated and recorded to circulate in institutions and also for collective reflection. In the Waorani case a main characteristic of *strong speech* is that it is spontaneous even when it is uttered as part of the '*vida política*' (political life), it is not an organized strategy for navigating relations with outsiders; it is often uttered by women in *Wao terero*, with the awareness that the Other would not understand the content of the speech, but will perceive the strength. It may be translated to the Other in Spanish, but normally in a very succinct way. It "emerges" in a moment, a person decides to utter a *strong speech* because she feels the courage to channel her anger in that form, in that moment. Just like a chant, which a Waorani explained is like the hummingbird, it just arrives in the least expected moment. Still, I do believe that chants followed by strong speeches in encounters with the State could be further understood in the light of ceremonial dialogues and ritual diplomacy described

smiling and it helped me to calm down, not to fear the outcomes of this "political" strategy. I can also recall the same friend, Juana, who admires *strong speech*, shouting at an oil company officer in Yoweno, but her voice trembled, and she was unable to maintain the *strong speech* pitch in front of that man. The ethnography of the Waorani relationship with the Ecuadorian State, presented in the following sections, shows that *strong speech* is a device for navigating what Juana calls the *vida política* (political life), and so it could also be considered as a form of Wao diplomacy. For this, I find helpful to think, in the terms proposed by Chloe Nahum-Claudel (2018), that diplomacy here should not be considered as an 'individualised social skill akin to tact or discretion' (ibid:10), nor a set of protocols or laws followed by institutions such as nation state's embassies; instead we can see these Amazonian 'diplomatic encounters as moments of incorporation, in which boundaries are crossed and affirmed at the same time' (ibid:10). They are 'dialogic, and more often collective' (ibid:10), and in the Waorani case are part of the ongoing process of creative adjustments that the Waorani develop for dealing with an ambiguous and ever-changing Ecuadorian State.

Ecuadorian State and the oil company.

In Epepare and Yoweno there is an increasing relevance of the State – from public services to coercive public force – as a main actor in the Waorani encounter with otherness. For the Waorani living along oil roads the State is seen as the most important provider of external resources[180]– particularly since local authorities manage the money allocated for oil compensations – but also because Waorani are learning to deal with policies, procedures and laws, some of which are perceived as harmful for their autonomy. The latter aspect of the State has inspired young people along oil roads to quote a phrase coined by a Waorani leader, they say *"dejanos vivir"* (let us live),

elsewhere in Amazonia (Brightman 2016; Nahum-Claudel 2018), but to advance this idea, a more in-depth understanding of Waorani chants is pending. When I recorded one of these chants, before a meeting with health authorities, I pursued a translation of a particular song with several of my collaborators, but only one of them, a woman, was able to translate the chant in a way that resonated with the meaning that afterwards was explained to us by the author of the chant, an elderly woman from Yoweno. I learned from this that the study of chants would require a more focalized work with Waorani singers. This particular chant that we were able to translate was related to the growing of manioc, it referred to convivial values rather than the encounter with alterity.

[180] Penfield (2019) offers an analysis of the Venezuelan case in which indigenous Sanema (Yanomami) are proactive in engaging with 'petro-projects'(ibid:87) integrating them in their own logics, but also with a great deal of frustration in navigating the bureaucratic processes of what Valdivia, for the Ecuadorian case, has called 'petro-citizenship' (Valdivia 2008). For a detailed analysis of the intricacies of oil extraction in the Ecuadorian Amazonia see (Cepek 2018; Kimerling 1991; Lu, Valdivia, and Silva 2017; Sawyer 2004).

meaning we might not want an encounter in these terms, we might be better without you[181].

Ecuadorian government and the extractive developmental model.

The ethnographic material that informs this section is from 2017 and early 2018, meaning that this research was carried on during the time when Lenin Moreno succeeded Rafael Correa as president of Ecuador[182]. This transitional time in the Ecuadorian government had implications for the way in which State representatives related with indigenous people, which then required adjustments in how Waorani people perceive the State. This moment of transition allows an exploration of how Waorani consider the State not as an institution but primarily as people with whom they can develop relationships. The transition moment in the State also brought a discursive change in the Ecuadorian developmental model known as *Buen Vivir* (living well)[183]. The Waorani used discursively some apparent overlaps between the Ecuadorian *Buen Vivir* and the Waorani *waa kiwingui* (to live well)[184] in order to access State services and material goods, but also to translate their own understanding of *living well*[185].

> I have been told that Correa's *Buen Vivir* planning has stopped, until there, no more. Now we as human beings, we have to work for what we want to live now (Namo, Waorani man)

When I asked Namo whether he perceived any changes regarding the new government, he regretted that due to his change of village he was not as well informed as he used to be. Still, Namo provided in Spanish a Waorani interpretation of the discursive transition in the Ecuadorian government, from Correa's "Socialist living well"[186] to

[181] In a recent publication Penti Baihua (Baihua and Kimerling 2018) describes in detail the proposal "*Deje vivir*" (let us live), in which he demands the recognition of rights over his family's territory and the end of oil extraction in it.

[182] Elections were held in February 2017 and the new government took office in May 2017.

[183] There is no agreement regarding an exact translation to English, I use the translation that is most generally accepted (see Acosta 2017:2600)

[184] As Rival (2016:256) has noted, Waorani, often young bilingual people, translate the Spanish infinitive form of the verb "to live" (*vivir*) for the equivalent in *Wao terero*, *kewingui*.

[185] An example of this is Ima's (2012) book, which offers an interesting definition of Waorani *living well* as connected with the environment, despite having been heavily edited by non-Waorani people and reducing the wellbeing section to the use of plants, an approach presumably promoted by editors responding to the funders' (Ecuadorian Institutions) tendency to reduce indigenous affairs to *"saberes ancestrales"* (ancestral wisdoms).

[186] Correa was part of a Latin American "new wave of radical populists" (De La Torre 2018:78) who promoted a political agenda called the XXI Century Socialism. In 2013, this political orientation informed the redesignation of the Ecuadorian *Buen Vivir* (Living Well) – included previously in the 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution as the guiding notion of the Ecuadorian developmental regime – as a political

Moreno's emphasis on individuals[187]. When Namo links the notion of *Buen Vivir* (living well*)* with Correa, he resonates with a general perception among the Waorani, for whom Correa was seen as a powerful figure (Rival 2016:251) who promoted a developmental model that in Waorani territory was connected with an increase in the role of the State as a provider, hand in hand with oil extraction. Correa's government offered little recognition to non-extractive alternatives of *Buen Vivir* and dismissed those who opposed his extractive model as "infantile" leftists (De La Torre 2018:82). Thus, from a Waorani point of view Namo does not see any problem in abandoning the idea that the State has to decide the whole nation's *Buen Vivir*, because Waorani appreciate the value of autonomy. He chooses the Spanish word for "work" meaning that Waorani "make" what and how they want to live. Autonomy is an expression of egalitarian relations, but as with other Amazonian people each body is made through relations (Conklin 2001a; Seeger, DaMatta, and Viveiros de Castro 1979) – relations of sharing substances, as described in earlier chapters.

The agreement with Moreno's discourse does not mean that the Waorani do not expect social benefits from the State, but that they agree with the lack of imposition of an idea of *Buen Vivir*. In turn, this lack of imposition of the *Buen Vivir* model does not mean that the government is not imposing its "point of view" in practical ways, with a predatory extractive economic model that relies heavily on Amazonian non-renewable resources. During the presidential elections many Waorani living along the roads argued that they would not be voting for Moreno, because a change was healthy – Moreno was

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socialist project described in the 2013 developmental 'National Plan for Living Well'. Correa's redefinition of *Buen Vivir* was at odds with initial definitions. On its debut in the national political scenario in 2007 – for a discussion about the use of this notion as early as 2002 see Altmann (2017) – *Buen Vivir* was presented by social movements as a national version of the Kichwa *Sumak Kawsay* (living well) defined broadly as an ideal of good life in harmony with the environment, and in some versions this was extended to the cosmos (Acosta 2008, 2017; Kowii 2011; Oviedo 2011 among others). The Amazonian notion of *Sumak Kawsay* which is said to be the original inspiration of the *Buen Vivir* proposal, has been ethnographically analysed by Whitten and Whitten (2015). It is translated as "beautiful life force" and embraces a different set of values from good conviviality, to harmonic relations with the cosmos, and even creative knowledge (ibid:193). The version of *Buen Vivir* included in the Ecuadorian Constitution has been defended as an Andean alternative to development, therefore an alternative to the notion of "progress" inspired by "first world" ways of life (Acosta 2008; Escobar 2010; Gudynas 2011, 2014 among others), a biocentric political model (Gudynas 2009, 2016) or even a decolonial pathway (Quijano 2011). The difficulties that Correa's government faced in harmonizing this biocentric notion with his developmental model have been extensively analysed (see Bretón, Cortez, and García 2014). For Correa's government *Buen Vivir* was not an alternative to development but more a "XXI century socialist" kind of development which allowed a strong dependence on extractive resources with an aspiration of eventually becoming an eco-socialist model (for a discussion about these changes see Hidalgo-Capitán and Cubillo-Guevara 2018).

[187] While the notion is still part of the Ecuadorian Constitution, Moreno's government has taken distance from the notion in its discourse, which is also evident in the reduction of the number of times it is used in the new National Developmental Plan 2017-2021 (see Hidalgo-Capitán and Cubillo-Guevara 2018).

identified with Correa's government and was indeed from Correa's party – and they perceived the accumulation of power in the hands of one person and one party as very dangerous. Thus, after the elections, when Moreno took his distance from Correa, and declared him to be part of the "opposition", the Waorani understood that as a healthy sign and in both villages Moreno's discourse was well received:

> With Lenin Moreno it is not *como para hacer relajo* (making troubles), as it was in Correa's times, Lenin said he want to *dialogar* (discuss) with everybody. (Juan, Waorani man, Epepare)

Juan was not alone in quoting the word "*dialogar*" repeated *ad nauseam* by Lenin Moreno and by State officers who visited the Waorani villages after he was elected. The ideal of an inclusive dialogue was well received by Juan, who is a member of the indigenous political party Pachakutik – which took its distance from the Correa government almost at the beginning of his first mandate. Juan could not stand Correa's authoritarian ways, but this does not mean that he was not interested in obtaining benefits from the government for his village, but that this was often done by organizing demonstrations to access to such benefits[188]. What is worth noting from Juan's reflection about the current Ecuadorian president is that he shows how effective Moreno's discourse has been for calming indigenous activists. The discourse of "dialogue" spread like fire, and soon many Waorani were commenting 'Moreno wants to talk'; in other words, he offered peaceful encounter.

Moreno's dialogue at a national level has meant also a rapprochement with the Ecuadorian right wing, while social movements were initially "pacified"[189]. Moreno's "dialogue" resonated with Waorani understanding of peaceful relations through speech sharing. This was a sort of "equivocal compatibility" (Pina-Cabral 2010), in which, while both parties seemed to agree in their engagement, the terms of such agreement was defined in 'divergent ways'(ibid:182). While finishing the writing up of this thesis, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), in a meeting

[188] He also had good friendships with some people from the government, and with local authorities that were part of Pachakutik.

[189] De la Torre (2018) argues that until August 2018 the Ecuadorian government declared no intention of implementing neoliberal policies, and concessions towards right wing parties were done as a sign of democratic inclusion. At the end of 2018 and in 2019, a series of economic measures, from attempts to reduce public investment in education, to changes in workers legislation and a new agreement with the International Monetary Fund IMF generated reactions from social movements, including the national indigenous organization; the latter published a letter in May 2019 expressing disagreement with the government, noting a scenario of 'economic crisis, distrust, corruption and implementation of neoliberal economic policies' (Vargas 2018). In October 2019, Ecuadorian indigenous people took the lead in a national strike in reaction to new austerity measures, an outcome of what has been labelled as the Ecuadorian "back to neoliberalism" (Ramírez 2018).

attended by several Waorani leaders, decided to stop any kind of "dialogue" with president Moreno. I am unsure about how the Waorani with whom I conducted fieldwork navigated the shifts in their understanding of Moreno's "dialogue", but from their posts in the social network Facebook, it is clear that they have joined a national protest against Moreno's regime in October 2019.

In Yoweno, where a new oil drilling started in 2017, Waorani people engaged less with the friendly tone of Moreno's "dialogue", and more often addressed state representatives through *strong speech*, particularly complaining about irregularities in the informed consent to the agreement of compensation for the drilling.

> Tell Lenin's government 'in May you are going to cry, I am going to close oil pipes, not a single oil will be there'.[..] There it is, twenty meters from here, I will close the oil pipe in May and instead I will run a hotel. Thirty-five years we are with oil and how are we? I will close it in May, I will sell it directly to other country. (Eque, Yoweno's president)

Eque, the president of Yoweno uttered in Spanish the above quoted *strong speech* in a meeting between Yoweno people, State and oil representatives. Eque rarely talked like that in front of oil people[190]. This meeting occurred almost a year after the oil drilling started, when the delivery of some of the oil compensations – such as the delivery of monthly processed food and wage work – had stopped. When Eque says 'you are going to cry', he is providing a powerful image of a State – perceived in the figure of a person rather than an institution – highly dependent on Waorani oil. This understanding of the State was consolidated during Correa's government when the state assumed the administration of oil compensations. Here a Waorani man reflects and quotes Eque in a meeting with local authorities:

> My young people teach me to push the State, before we only asked the oil company, but they have said that now the State has the funding, they have given to them, now "*molesten"* (hassle out) the State. The State has to give everything now, that is why I come to ask for what is mine, because by the side of my house there is an oil pipe. (Yoweno's president quoted by Daniel).

There is not much to add to this reflection, it clearly explains how the role of the oil company as the main powerful provider was replaced by the State. This was due to the governmental decision to reduce *assistencialismo* (welfarism) (Rival 2015:292) developed by oil companies with little regulation, focused mainly on calming down the Waorani – among some well-known Waorani practices for obtaining oil benefits was pulling a rope across a street to make each car passing by pay a sort of tribute, which

[190] Negotiations with the oil company are carried out by men in small and private meetings different from the collective meetings that I describe in this section.

could be from a Coca-Cola can to a package of 1 USD notes. In the following sections, I offer a brief account of the main ways in which Waorani people living in the villages along oil roads deal with the Ecuadorian State.

Agriculture and projects.

> Wao people are a little bit anthropologists, we understand how the State plays with the *nacionalidades* (indigenous nationalities). Before, the one who shouted the most was the one who received more, then, with Correa the one who put more papers (bureaucratic documents), that one won. Now, with Lenin we depend on the system. (Luis, Waorani man)

This was expressed in a meeting between the State, the oil company and people from Yoweno, by a Waorani leader who spend a great deal of his time traveling to the Amazonian cities to apply for State benefits. He has attended high school in an Amazonian city and has a historical memory of negotiations with the State, which allows him to generate quite a clear analysis of the Waorani relationship with bureaucratic processes. It is interesting that he sees Correa's government that promoted the "modernization" of Ecuadorian State as a regime based on papers, and the new government appears to maintain such a bureaucratic State but with no results and painful "system" (digitalized processes) failures. The centrality of bureaucratic procedures in the interface with national states has been widely discussed in anthropology (see Das and Poole 2004; Sharma and Gupta 2006). But as Allard and Walker (2016) have argued, the Amazonian case impels us to go beyond the study of domination and subversion; 'Amazonian peoples today are not just reactive, but eminently proactive: they seek out, as much as resist, the power of the outside or the unknown' (ibid:411). For example, I have seen young men from both villages proactively approaching the Ministry of Sports for obtaining a legal recognition of their football teams, expecting to be invited to national tournaments. There is no governmental institution such as the Brazilian National Indian Foundation FUNAI (See Costa 2016) that the Waorani might identify as a provider or protector, instead there are many State Institutions with whom the Waorani deal in different ways.

In 2018, local authorities and officers from most of the ministries, as well as people from the oil company, arrived in Yoweno. The meeting was meant to be a follow-up to State benefits that were expected to be delivered in Yoweno as due from the 2017 oil drilling. The whole village showed up, but only three male leaders, three elderly women, and one widowed woman - whose husband was killed in a confrontation

with isolated people – expressed their concerns through *strong speech*, while the rest of the village listened and talked in *Wao terero* among themselves. At the opening of the meeting, one local authority said that they had travelled to Yoweno in order to 'provide a preferential attention to the peoples affected by oil'. Interestingly, none of the "benefits" that they offered differed from what local authorities and ministries already offer to rural communities not affected by oil. What they offer is mainly infrastructure, agricultural projects and projects of pisciculture, which are standard projects managed by local authorities now that they manage the 12% of oil revenues allocated from oil business for social investment.

For the follow up, State representatives delivered a "*hoja de ruta*" (roadmap), and technicians talked about "steps, phases, stages" required for delivering such benefits to the Waorani. Waorani leaders reacted impatiently, they seemed to have had enough of bureaucratic litany, but they were not alone, as even one local authority noted that technocratic "problems" within the ministries should not be an excuse for lack of efficacy. One of the "projects" was offered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries MAGAP. They mainly promote growing cacao, coffee and fish by delivering plants, fish and technical aid to care for them. One of the MAGAP's technicians explained the aim of the project by saying 'what we care for is about money, production'. However, the "production" of money *per se* without *waponi kewemonipa* (living well) would have no value from a Waorani perspective. Until the end of my fieldwork they did not manage to actually deliver such a project in Yoweno, whereas in Epepare, which had no direct oil drilling compensation, the same projects were already delivered. The reason for this is that Juan and few other young people from Epepare have tamed the world of the "written documents" to the extent that they have managed to get what Juan calls the first legalization of a Waorani "commune". He has generated a legal statute for Epepare, registered as a *comuna* (commune) with productive aims, precisely in the MAGAP. Juan explains this as 'now we are *jurídicos* (legal)'. Thus, at the time of my fieldwork each household in Epepare received at least 500 coffee plants[191] to sow in the border of the protected area of the Yasuní National Park. In short, the developmental model that Correa initiated, which is no longer called *Buen Vivir* – even though *Buen vivir* is still in the Ecuadorian Constitution – keeps on track regarding the promotion of agriculture among Waorani hunter-gatherers, and with its reliance on extractive industries. This ethnographic account also suggest that oral

[191] They require at least half a hectare for each 600 plants.

strong speech is less effective than written documents for obtaining benefits from the State, but few Waorani have skills for written "speech"[192]. Allard's (2012) analysis of Warao dealings with written documents and Venezuelan bureaucracy offers several parallels with the Waorani case and the Ecuadorian bureaucracy; in these contexts for indigenous people 'writing is a specific form of action'(ibid:249) although the results are uncertain particularly because the morality of those involved (*kowori*) is untrustworthy. Walker (2016) among the Urarina from Peru also describes documents as delegated voice or a 'mode of action'(ibid:423).

State projects are labelled as compensations for oil extraction, and maintain a neo-colonial developmental logic, for example, by promoting the conversion of Waorani (forest people) into agriculturists for engagement in the market economy. Therefore the logic is different from what is seen in NGO projects, the latter being more 'linked to the virtualization of value and knowledge in postindustrial capitalism' (Brightman, Fausto, and Grotti 2016:2) and concerned with ''intangible heritage' or 'cultural property'' (ibid:2).

People provide accounts of agricultural projects already delivered years ago in Yoweno, when they still had more direct access to oil revenues. From those projects few plants have survived. Some young Waorani explain that people are not really interested in becoming big scale growers, others say that they do not know how to take care of those plants. The most "successful" of such initiatives was promoted by the women's organization AMWAE; they visit each village and walk with people to the cacao gardens, doing the trimming practices themselves, and hoping the owners of the plants will continue with that in the future. Since women and children enjoy cacao fruit, they often visit those gardens and check for fruit, keeping the seeds that are given to the AMWAE for selling. Nevertheless, a young man from a village located near Yoweno suggested a different perspective about the "projects":

> Money brings hatred, that is why I am against projects. I tell you, that fish pool that people are building [in Yoweno], that is going to bring conflicts. You have to think how the projects are going to grow, they do not think about the consequences. Besides, when have you seen a Wao selling cacao? (Tomo, Yoweno)

As I have argued in chapter 4, it is not the money *per se* that is problematic for the Waorani, but the lack of egalitarian distribution or access to it. In Epepare, I was astonished during a few "payment days" in which several women received money for

[192] During my fieldwork the Waorani demanded to share my skills for writing on several occasions, and it is expected that in the future I will keep putting my "written speech" skills in the services of their causes, which was made explicit by some village leaders.

crafts they have previously sent to the city for selling; almost immediately after receiving the payment, the whole village appeared to be engaged in going to the nearest shop to buy ice cream, or any other food from outside. Children and adults were delighted, it was as if the vitality, and therefore the *living well* of the village was increased by the joys of collectively transforming money into food.

Back at Yoweno's meeting, another important aspect was the constant mention of "12%" referring to the money that the State receives from the oil company for social investment. The way in which Yoweno demands access to this money made clear that they have accepted new oil drilling only to obtain such benefits, and they consider the drilling to be a burden:

> They drilled us, they did a *comilona* (big feast) and they left. When they were going to drill, then all of them came. *Nos saquearon* (they looted us). (Luis, middle aged Waorani)
> Like that, the same as you but other people, they were pushing us to accept the drilling, now what we have? You only hear when there is *problema* (meaning when they go on strike). If you are not going to help us, better if you *"dejanos vivir"* (let us live, let as alone) as Penty says. (Tomo, young Waorani)

These two Waorani men are quite clear in pointing out that they were encouraged by State representatives to accept the oil drilling under the promise of benefits; a decision that in the end was taken mainly by the men who were in charge of the negotiation, whereas women were against it, as they expressed in an intimate meeting with AMWAE women. This not only means that the process of "informed consent"[193] failed to engage the whole population, it also means that such a process generated gender differences in the power of decision making that otherwise is not observed among the Waorani.

The meeting continued as described above, with angry interventions by Waorani people, and bureaucratic excuses by State technicians. The latter offered to open access to productive loans for the Waorani, to deliver furniture for the school, to maintain a good stock of medicines, to open access to "developmental vouchers", and social housing. When elderly people started shouting in *Wao terero*, State representatives rushed into finishing the meeting by saying 'he has taken note, thanks', and holding hands with the president of the village, they left.

[193] I use this notion for referring to the process of consulting people about whether or not they agree with an extractive intervention, which is established by the Ecuadorian Constitution Art. 57. The consent should be given by the village Assembly which is formed by all adults living in the village. In 2019, an Ecuadorian court has acknowledged irregularities in the process of informed consent in other parts of the Waorani territory.

I have described this meeting in order to illustrate the main aspects of the current Ecuadorian extractive model in Waorani territory, which shows a continuity with Correa's "XXI century socialism" model. Social investment by the State is quite literally intertwined with the acceptance of oil drilling in the village (Guzmán-Gallegos 2015:118); once the drilling is accepted, local authorities organize the "social investment" and the oil company avoids the moral debt for the damages it causes. The Waorani, already living along oil roads, accept compensations in the form of "projects" not because they want to become "productive" in the sense suggested by the State, but because they want to try different options to access money (chapter 4), without having to engage in wage labour out of the village.

Formal education and biomedicine, building co-residence.

> Here, *dotoro onko* (doctor's house) *ate wakete bete kewenke* (to live well caring for), if they leave, how are we going to live? (Naima, elderly woman)

Waorani memories of contact are connected with epidemics[194] which only biomedicine was effective to tackle; thus, from the very beginning of the encounter with the whites, biomedicine was a principal knowledge/good to be incorporated. When I asked Waorani people what they consider important for *living well* many of them mentioned having a *dotoro onko* (doctor's house or health post), although my close collaborator Daniel commented to me – when considering this abundance of responses linking *living well* and health posts – that the Waorani *living well* is not about that. He, Daniel, used to say that real *living well* would be to live far from the oil company noise, and I recently learnt that he has indeed changed residence to a new village far from main roads, although his children have remained in Yoweno to attend school. Daniel's disagreement with the majority of Waorani living along the roads regarding the importance of the health post is even more relevant if we consider that he was trained for several years as a health post assistant. Moreover, he and his wife were among the most frequent "visitors" to the health post for socialization, and proactively took their children for

[194] For a description of the Waorani reliance on biomedicine after the first epidemics see Fuentes (1997). She notes that there was little acknowledgment from the State about the particularities of the recent contact people in relation to their vulnerability to diseases (1997:22). Robarcheck and Robarcheck (1998:67) provide an account of how the Waorani addressed their concerns about health issues during a national assembly in 1993. While the president of the Waorani national organization encouraged people to consider oil pollution and trash, the talks were focused on having free access to biomedical healthcare, in the form of pills and hospitals.

health care at the *dotoro onko* for attention whenever they fell ill. Daniel, like other Waorani, also seems to care for the doctors' wellbeing:

> Andrea: Do the Waorani feed you or share something with you?
> Doctor: I would say that they do that on a daily basis […] they bring a lot of plantain, now they do not bring as much manioc because we let it rot […].
> When there is hunting, they bring a little bit of meat. I visited Daniel, those kind of details one cannot forget, I was chatting with him, he gave me plantain beverage, and at the end he gave me a piece of *guanta* (lowland paca) to bring with me. (Gabriel, Yoweno's doctor)

In this interview, the doctor from Yoweno, without me asking for specific names, remembered Daniel's caring attitude, which is very telling about the ethics behind the Waorani relationship with the health post. Waorani do not relate to an institution, they relate to people. It is a relationship between *Kowori* (non Waorani) doctors and Waorani patients (cf. Kelly 2011). This is particularly true in Yoweno where there is a health post in the middle of the village. The differentiation between *Kowori* doctors and Waorani patients is still valid in Epepare, but in that case, where the health post is far from the village, there is no relationship of caring through the sharing of substances, no attempts to build identity out of affinity, although that might be done when there is a particular charismatic doctor, through sharing laughter.

Doctors, who are all *kowori*, and non-Waorani teachers – there are Waorani teachers[195]– are integrated to the village life in different ways. While the school is considered to be an integral part of a village located along oil roads, only a few of them have health posts. In Yoweno, which has a health post, the integration of the doctors to the village life is favoured by Waorani people who spend time at the doctor's house and feed the doctors with several forms of speech – jokes, tales, cultural knowledge, village news and gossip – and food. However, the Waorani relationship with the doctors is paradoxical. The doctor's residence and the health post are visited on a daily basis by Waorani adults who cultivate friendship relationships with the doctors. At the same time, during the last years there have been at least five Waorani physical attacks on the health post and on doctors. I asked several Waorani and doctors for possible reasons for this paradoxical relation of care and anger. All of them linked recent attacks with liquor consumption, but would not explain "why", when consuming liquor, young Waorani attack the health post building, and not the school. Moreover, according to the details of

[195] At the time of my fieldwork there were five Waorani teachers. Only one had attended University, and he, who was also older, was the only teacher who expressed criticism of the curriculum; but I never conducted ethnographic work within their classes, which would provide a better idea of how their methods differed from non-Waorani teachers.

attacks that I recorded, not all of them were related to alcohol, some of them were done after the death of close kin. Although we attempted to make sense of this with my collaborators, we reached no sensible explanations[196].

My analysis has focused mainly on the relation between doctors and Waorani because I have followed that closely; whereas I have little data about the relations that are developed within the school or between parents and teachers, apart from my host family's interactions with them, which were few. A revision of Rival's in-depth study of the first schools in Waorani territory is pending, but I have the perception that most of what she noted can still be seen within contemporary schools. The school still focuses heavily on modifying Waorani ethos (Rival 1992), which was acknowledged by a Waorani leader by noting that Waorani speak at the same time, and it is fine, but at school, children learn to contain their speech, to wait for the other to speak, in a way that is not the Waorani way, this might be understood as changes in the Waorani embodied knowledge as discussed by High (2015a). Indeed, when interacting with elderly Waorani they develop a very egalitarian approach towards speech, so it is very likely that in a conversation, two or even three people decide to speak at same time and the interlocutor is expected to pay attention to all speakers; whereas children who go to school learn the "order" of the *kowori* speech, and the teachers decide who speaks.

Ecuadorian law and Waorani tales from jail.

Waorani engagement with Ecuadorian public force has a dual nature. On the one hand, the Waorani living along the roads are developing discomfort and fear regarding the potential of public force[197] to harm Waorani people; on the other hand, the Waorani make use of the "whites" discourse of "rights" as a political tool to defend their land and autonomy, in a similar way to the one described by Bruce Albert (2002b) among the Yanomami, as part of the same global discourse related to indigenous rights and environment.

[196] My collaborators were as puzzled as myself, regarding why the attacks were directed to the health post and not other institutions such as the school. I was unable to interview the young people involved in the attacks, but I know they have all attended school in their childhood, which might inform the way they related with the school as an institution. However, a full explanation of this differentiation between institutions would require further consideration.

[197] I am referring here to the use of public force against the Waorani. There are also elderly warriors who used to dress in military and police outfits, so as to integrate a new kind of warrior like identity. Nowadays, there are young people interested in being part of the Ecuadorian public force, but that does not contradict the sense of harm that is seen in the application of public force against the Waorani.

When we travelled with my host family from Yoweno to Cuenca, my hometown in the Andes, my host father, noted with surprise there was "no police", something that to my eyes passed unnoticed. His standard for comparison was the Amazonian city of El Coca, and oil camps which are constantly watched over by a public force of private guards. My host parents from Yoweno considered the city without police more "beautiful" than the city of El Coca; this aesthetic appreciation was also connected with the sense of having more space, less noise. Therefore, to complete the image of why oil roads are related with so much discomfort in Waorani narratives, it is worth having a closer look at the role of public force.

During 2017, Yoweno took part in some *paros* (strikes), which consist in blocking the access road for the oil company cars. This was done in response to unfair oil drilling compensations. Strikes organized by the Waorani did not last more than few hours, but the day after each strike my host parents, upset, always pointed out: 'look, so soon, soldiers'[198]. They pointed out soldiers passing by in oil company cars. There was also a strike promoted in Dayuma, an Amazonian town along the Auca road[199], which the Waorani from Yoweno and Epepare joined. During the month of that strike my host mother often pointed out with discomfort 'look, flying so closely, it seems like they will land over us', referring to helicopters patrolling the area. It is not that the Waorani feel upset whenever they see police on their land; when the police "appears" to support Waorani people – as when looking for invaders of Waorani land – they are not upset, but what generates Waorani discomfort is the presence of public force as an act of intimidation.

> Now *Kowori* has paper, tomorrow problem, next month problem, another month problem, *momeniquimi, wenguimi* (you will go to jail, you will die). Waorani before only one day of war, they cry, tomorrow they drink manioc beverage, they dance. Calm, problem ends there. *Kowori* has paper, paper, ohh when that is going to end, *bito weñimi, weñimi* (you will die, you will die), Waorani hot, hot, hot, angry, angry. (Kengowento, middle aged Waorani)

Kengowento compares Waorani and *kowori* law systems. He developed a critique of the lengthy *Kowori* law procedures and jail, for him Ecuadorian justice is a prolonged death threat. In contrast, he says that Waorani law overcomes problems fast, if there is a war, well, there must soon be a feast, they should dance, so people cool down and a new time

[198] In 1941 Ecuador was defeated in a war with Peru, losing 200.000 km². Oil exploration from the 1940's by the Shell company was not only an economic strategy, but also a way for the Ecuadorian State to gain more control over Amazonian land. This is why there is an understudied but important relationship between the militaries and the oil business from early 1940's (see Cabodevilla 1994:284). For an account of military repression in other part of the Waorani territory see Almeida and Proaño (2008:116).

[199] Almeida and Proaño (2008:119-120) also note violent repression of civil protest against oil companies along the Auca road.

of prosperity is possible. The prolonged "death threat" of Ecuadorian procedures maintains an unhealthy heat, which means people live in a state of anger, as opposed to the peace required for *living well*. In short, Ecuadorian judicial procedures are considered harmful for the Waorani ideal of *living well*. This does not mean that the Waorani do not exploit them: people from Epepare who have a strong commitment to peaceful relationships, decided to respond to what they consider shamanic attacks from Kichwa people with a legal claim[200]. Likewise, after a woman abandoned her husband, the Waorani commented that her ex-husband was uncertain whether he should hire a shaman to harm her or put in a lawsuit claiming money for the five children she abandoned[201]. Both in Epepare and Yoweno, I have heard people using the language of "rights"; they mention 'having rights as Ecuadorians' in order to justify equal access to benefits.

Thus, while the Waorani consider Ecuadorian law as a way to deal with conflicts, they criticize the length of the procedures because it feels like living under a death threat. Regarding jail, there are now many stories of Waorani who have been jailed after oil strikes and confrontations with isolated people. The narrative of jail includes a mixture of suffering and illness. Stories of suffering from close family put in jail are now part of the Waorani repertoire of tales from the *Kowori* world. These tales from jail, despite "peaceful contact" sound like reminiscences of the *Kowori* cannibalistic nature, whose main characteristic is to cruelly predate on Waorani vitality (Rival 2005). A close Waorani friend, who was put in jail after confronting Ecuadorian soldiers during a strike against the oil company, describes his jail time –a few months– as the most painful event in his lifetime. In the process of recovering his vitality after jail, my friend decided to pierce his ear lobes as the ancestors did[202]. More research

[200] Several Waorani versions confirmed that the family affected presented a demand to the public prosecutor's office, where there are two Waorani working, but it was unclear to me whether they pursued the demand or it was more a threat against Kichwa people; it was also unclear to me what kind of offence under the Ecuadorian law was used by the Waorani to deter Kichwa shamanism.

[201] I agree with Walker (2015b) in his analysis of the difference between shamanism and law. The latter is the epitome of the centralized power of the state and therefore opposite to Amazonian cosmopolitics; however, in the Waorani case in which they considered starting a lawsuit as an alternative to hiring a Kichwa shaman, I understand that they perceive both as ways to "externalize" the conflict. For a discussion of the reduction of Waorani shamans and the attendance to shamans "out" of the community see High (2012b).

[202] After witnessing that this young friend was put in jail in 2015, I met him again in 2017. The first thing he noted was 'I know you helped us', meaning that he was told in jail that the doctors from the health post and I confronted the public force that threatened to keep throwing gas bombs at the Waorani, who were still on strike after he was put in jail. He now faces the challenging situation of working for the oil company, while he considers his work increases his knowledge to deal with the oil company, in practice the oil company offers jobs to young brave Waorani as form of pacifying them, a strategy that has weakened the capacity of Waorani younger generations to confront the oil business.

should be done with young Waorani people, but here it is worth noting that despite the multiple changes that they face by living along the oil roads, these young people show a consistent continuity with *durani* (ancestors) ways when choosing "pathways" for re-establishing vitality – I have noted over this thesis a few of these "pathways" from intentionally trekking into the forest in order to overcome weakness, to preferring to eat forest food, and corporeal changes such as ear lobes piercing.

High (2015b:153) describes a case in which some young Waorani people took someone else's clothes without authorization, an act labelled as "*wiwa keranitapa"* (done badly); High notes that the person from whom the clothes were stolen avoided claiming back his clothes in order to avoid "problems" or confrontations within the village. I have seen similar reactions from Waorani people living along oil roads, but in addition, some reactions were beyond the avoidance of conflicts. For example, a friend whose chickens were taken without consent said, 'they stole our chicken, but what can we say, there is not enough food in the village'. In short, "stealing" was understood as an extreme act of sharing by demand, however, still labelled as "doing wrong", not conducive to *living well*.

In exceptional cases, when an adult is perceived to be a harmful influence in the village, a village assembly would decide to expel the person. I only observed this towards non-Waorani people living in the village[203]. In other words, Waorani people do not have a notion of "punishment" among adults who live together, relationships should either be harmonious or there should be no relations. In the case of children as I have noted in chapter 2 and 4, Waorani use the Spanish word for "punishment", but it does not have the same meaning as in Western society. In the Waorani case whipping children is more a way of making their bodies strong (see also High 2010b), and by sharing sweat, they also share skills and vitality to stimulate children to grow as courageous humans.

[203] Riviere (1984:27-28; 74-81) notes that in the Guianas disputes often end in the abandonment of the village by one of the parts in dispute, or a major village fission. Among the Waorani, people currently decide in village assemblies about the externalization of the conflict, by expelling a full household or a person whose behaviour is considered anti-social. I witnessed the case of a young man whose mother is Waorani and his father is Shuar. Because of this mixed-blood birth, the man was considered not fully Waorani, and he also has spent a few years living outside the village, so this might have influenced the village decision to expel him. The young man fled the village after attacking a doctor while drunk, and the village assembly decided not to allow back him for a few years, which was communicated to his mother. A few months later the man was back in the village, and asked the village assembly to allow him to stay; an elderly man gave a *strong speech* about how *durani* (ancestors) would organize a party and forget about the conflict, he stated that it is better to *live well* and forget, rather than keep thinking about the wrong behaviour. People agreed with this *speech* and they welcomed back the young man, encouraging him to use his formal education for the *living well* of the village by sharing his knowledge with children.

Overall, despite the critique that the Waorani have developed regarding the harmful effects of Ecuadorian judicial procedures, they also acknowledge that it is precisely through "becoming legal" and in courts that they can win contemporary battles over their land; here they have learn very fast that *strong speech* is not enough. This is why Epepare has embraced a legal process to become a "commune", acknowledging the power of papers for defending their land and for accessing benefits from the State (cf. Allard 2012).

Friendship and other forms of speech.

In Amazonia, the symbolic incorporation of the Other through predation (Viveiros de Castro 1996) is also encompassed by friendship (Fausto 2012; Reeve and High 2012; Santos-Granero 2012b, among others). The role of shamans and leaders is often directed to dealing with Others 'either by fighting them off through symbolic or physical violence, or by turning them into friends through sharing, exchange, and consubstantiality' (Santos-Granero 2012b:144). In some Amazonian societies the incorporation of the Other requires mechanisms for "capturing" or familiarizing them (Fausto 2007a, 2012; Santos-Granero 2009, 2012b). However, across Amazonia there are also descriptions of relationships where amity does not encompass predation, but stands as a form of relationality on its own; this is often the case between trade partners (see Grotti 2013; Killick 2009; Santos-Granero 2007). This section offers a brief exploration of non-predatory relationships that Waorani label as "friendships" with different categories of Others.

Rival (1992: 135-138) provides an account of how during the early years of contact Waorani used an affinal term from brother-in-law *(menki)* for referring to non-Waorani co-workers in the oil camps, workers who were considered friends. I agree with High (2015b) in considering that the current use of the notion of "friend" in Spanish does not refer necessary to affinal relations. Across Amazonia, notions of friendship can be used among people who are already related through consanguinity or affinity, such as ceremonial friendship among the Parakanã (Fausto 2012). This is normally a same-sex relation of symmetric affinity (Fausto:2012:151; Grotti 2013:22); friendships are also seen between people from the same ethnic group but who are separated by 'social or geographical distance' (Santos-Granero 2007:2). The terms used for referring to the above mentioned friendships are also "borrowed" for referring to 'strangers with whom one wishes to mark friendship or simply good will' (Carneiro da

Cunha 1978:75 in Fausto 2012:151). My collaborators translated as "friend" the notion of *guiri* or *guirinani* (relatives) when it was used to refer to same-sex contemporaries who do not belong to the same cluster. This translation to the Spanish "friend" is a way to note that they are not close relatives, but the fact that in practice they use the word *guiri* denotes that the relation is understood in kinship terms, whereas strangers with whom they pursue a friendship are never called *guiri*; they are called *kowori* when talking among Waorani, and when addressed directly or referred to in a conversation with other *kowori*, they use the Spanish word for friend.

The Waorani who accepted peaceful contact have been for decades – and still are – in a process that resembles what Albert (2002a) has called "white pacification", meaning domestication of the whites and their objects so they can be integrated into indigenous lives without being harmful. There are aspects of the "whites" that the Waorani are open to, and others that they do not wish to integrate in their lives but have to navigate strategically for their own social reproduction. As Casey High has analysed extensively, 'Waorani people conceive of relations of otherness not merely in terms of exclusion and enmity but also in terms of potential social connection' (High 2013:196). *Living well* is now also connected with having a flourishing life with good relationships within villages and among neighbours (High 2015b) 'in a context where cultural difference is lived through increased proximity and interaction' (Rival 2015:304). Apart from the stories of cannibal predators, the Waorani also have mythological accounts of encounters with Others after which the Waorani incorporated some technology and knowledge; for example, Waorani claim to have learned from the son of the sun how to make hardwood spears (Rival 2002:51), and from the tapir how to grow manioc (Zurita 2014).

Since *kowori* were historically considered predators from the Waorani prey perspective, *kowori* were also seen as enemies, but some Waorani seem to have embraced other kinds of relationship with those predators. Based on historical accounts, Reeve and High (2012) have noted that even before the contact with the SIL, some Waorani groups – living in the South West of Waorani territory – maintained relationships with Kichwa people that oscillated 'between hostilities and cautious friendship' (High 2015b:123; Reeve and High 2012:142). Friendship allowed 'sporadic trading, shared use of fishing territory, and incorporation of a few Kichwa wives into Wao families' (ibib:146).

Unlike the village studied by High (2015b), where there is a great number of interethnic alliances through marriages, in Epepare and Yoweno people marry primarily among Waorani. Still, Kichwa people are their main allies, not only because as a Waorani said to me 'Kichwa understand them better than the whites', but also because Waorani people consult Kichwa shamans for healing treatments. As noted in chapter 2, Kichwa shamans are considered the most powerful shamans precisely because they have cosmopolitan knowledge of the whites' world, they are the translators not only of the spiritual world but of the world of the whites (see Taylor 2014). This is encompassed within what High (2012b) has analysed in terms of the Waorani fear of Kichwa sorcery, which is often noted as a cause of illness and misfortunes among the Waorani. It is difficult to talk about a "general" attitude of the Waorani towards other indigenous people, as there is a gradient between intense relationality and repulsion of relations. Intense relationality is normally experienced by leaders who interact with indigenous national organizations, but also by Waorani with marital alliances with other indigenous people. In the middle of the gradient are the majority of young Waorani who have Kichwa and Shuar teachers, who play football with them, and so on. At the "repulsion" side of the gradient, are middle aged and elderly people, particularly women who cannot even stand the smell of Other indigenous people[204]. Waorani openness to other indigenous people depends on whether they feel they might be "allies". as with healer shamans and indigenous politicians, or enemies as with "sorcerers".

Another category of Other are *kowori colono* non-indigenous Ecuadorians who came to live along the roads with the oil boom[205]; there are a few marriages with this *colono* people. Waorani are very keen to learn about *colono* ways, which is a way to understand the Other. Differences between Waorani and them are often noted; for example, Waorani people contrast their attitudes towards forest management. At the end of the 1980's the border of Yoweno territory was already occupied[206] by *kowori colonos* who had transformed the forest into pasture for cattle, but when Yoweno people reclaimed that land they allowed trees to grow around the village, an intentional act noted by village leaders explaining that they want animals to get closer.

[204] After shaking hands with a Shuar a Waorani woman lamented by saying 'I do not like his smell, he smells like termites'.
[205] Cabodevilla (1994) provides an historical account of the relation between intense colonization and oil business.
[206] Tassi (1992) notes that the colonization of this area bloomed with the opening of the Auca road in the 1970's, and the encouragement of such colonization by the Ecuadorian State through the institution for land reform IERAC (Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización = Ecuadorian Institute of Agrarian Reform and Colonization).

> In the 1990s, I came [to Yoweno] to visit my grandmother, here were only my mother's family. […] They told us to stay, they were only four families. My father wanted to go to his paradise [in the Yasuní National Park], we stay here.
> Then, I started to see the vision of how it is, [I saw] rural technology, the road [before we lived far from the road], first, we observed, that was our socialization with *Kowori colono*, they work everyday, then go to buy something, then eat, we saw that reality. (Walter, Waorani man, 35 years)

Walter's account shows that living along the oil roads was not as good as "the paradise" of the deep forest, but by staying in Yoweno his father supported the process of claiming back Yoweno's territory. They also had access to oil compensations and social services in times when there was little presence of the Ecuadorian state in that area. But what Walter particularly notes is that by staying along the oil road they learned about the ways of *kowori colono*, those people who work every day to buy food. In chapter 4, I noted that the Waorani consider it harmful to work hard every day, instead they appreciate rest and a change of activities. In this process of learning about the Other, Waorani also developed *strong speech* towards outsiders.

> Whenever a *colono* came to bother us, [Babe] said to them 'if you do not obey, you would have to die'. Like that, he was the only one who defended us. (Byron, Young Waorani)

Both villages provide historical accounts of confrontations with *kowori* people, some of them physical, others through written documents. During my own fieldwork, the prevalent form of relation with *colonos* was peaceful, although I knew about a family in another village who burned a *colono* house to defend a border that was being invaded by livestock activities.

Young Waorani are very keen to attend regional football matches in which they play against *colonos* and other indigenous people. As Walker (2013a) describes among the Urarina in Peru, tournaments are a major form of integration into national society, but here Waorani women are not excluded from this integration, they somehow challenge the male dominated national sport. Indeed, my host mother and her sisters were often more proactive and excited than their male partners about *peibo owonpoke* or *peibo opoki* (playing football) with the colonos. In 2017, some Waorani from Yoweno and Epepare also supported neighbouring indigenous people and *colonos*, in strikes against the oil company, meaning that this regional alliance is also activated to fight common enemies.

Waorani also consider as potential friends some Ecuadorians and non-Ecuadorians who are not from Amazonia but are interested in Amazonian issues, some environmentalists, scientists and even tourists. While there are differences between the

ways in which an anthropologist or a tourist approaches a Waorani – the former spending a long time to learn from the Waorani how they live nowadays, the latter through short visits to learn how the Waorani "used to live" – from the Waorani perspective there seems to be little difference regarding their intentions, although there are differences in terms of the intensity of the relationships. Overall, the Waorani understand these *kowori* as people interested in the forest, or in the *durani* (ancestral) ways, and also people who provide access to external resources and therefore potential allies.

These alliances are often translated as friendships, for example, people from Epepare are often invited to attend events by an environmentalist group, but when the Waorani talk about them in Assemblies they rarely say "the group X", but instead they refer to "the group *of* X". Thus, they have very well identified a certain person within that environmentalist group, who acts as a mediator, and is referred to as a friend. This friendship is an asymmetric "middle ground" (Conklin and Graham 1995) which offers occasions for agreement in action, but often informed by different understandings. For example, when an environmentalist group funded a trip for Epepare people to attend a pro-Yasuní demonstration, which included a meeting with national authorities in Quito, I asked the almost 40 Waorani who joined the trip about their reasons for joining it, but no more than three mentioned the environmentalist purpose of the trip. No doubt the activists from Quito expressed the motive of the trip, but for the Waorani an occasion for "visiting" the Ecuadorian President was seen as a crucial opportunity for complaining about "*toma*" (all) their concerns, among which they highlighted the lack of access to external resources; they mentioned that the Chinese company Andes Petroleum does not offer work or goods as the Canadian company used to do a few years ago. At the same time the Waorani, particularly young people, often affirm that they do envision a time where the Yasuní Park is free from oil damages, as the environmentalists campaign for. However, in this village located along oil roads – distant from the forest of plenty (chapter 3) and with an increasing need for access to money (chapter 4) – the meeting with the Ecuadorian President was primarily seen as an opportunity for asking for benefits from the extractivist State.

Waorani who navigate the world of "activist speech" are frequently called upon by environmentalist groups[207] to speak in the name of the Waorani, but in the villages

[207] Sempértegui (2019) has studied the relationship between the feminist and environmentalist Ecuadorian movement with several indigenous women, including Waorani. She understands their interactions as

where I conducted fieldwork, most of the people suggested that they do not feel "represented" by many of these "activist speeches". That disagreement is normally not based on the content of the speech, which they tend to agree with, but on the fact that Waorani people do not feel comfortable with leaders gaining too much "prestige" through alliances with environmentalists, particularly when those speakers do not redistribute the resources that they are "thought" to be getting from those alliances[208].

Alliance with environmentalists and NGOs appears to be a possibility mainly for Waorani living in the Yasuní Park, and those living in areas where oil extraction has not been carried out yet. This means that people from Yoweno rarely have access to such "potential allies". Some non-indigenous urban environmentalists said to me that they see Yoweno as "too" conflictive a place, a place where people "do not laugh" anymore, and in practice a place that does not seem as attractive as the Yasuní. This essentialist view from some urban environmentalists reflects their own idealization of the environmentally friendly indigenous people[209]. People from Yoweno are aware of this outsiders' perception of them as Waorani *"petroleros"* (oil people) as opposed to the Waorani "environmentalists". I am inclined to think that Waorani people living along oil roads do not see themselves as "oil people", even when they might joke about that when someone gets a job with the oil company. Here I should recall Waorani concerns about their body getting weaker along oil roads (chapter 2), and the stress they put on a sensorial *living well* related to the forest of plenty (chapter 3). By this I mean that living along the oil roads is not seen as an ideal state of being. Even people who work for the oil company, who are often referred as "oil people", tend to perceive their "becoming oil people" as an ontological change to be navigated and at the same time never fully embraced; for example, some of these oil workers prefer to spend their days off in settlements far from oil roads.

The children of the leader who openly embraced oil extraction and logging in Yoweno two decades ago – similar to some Kayapo elders described by Turner (1995a) – nowadays have a more critical approach towards the dangers of extractive activities; even when they accept new oil drilling in the area near the village, they oppose the

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alliances that are based in shared aims (e.g. confronting the oil companies) but presenting several tensions due to the asymmetries between those who are part of the alliances.

[208] The issue of "elite-capture" is a classic discussion in development studies (see Araujo et al. 2008; Bardhan and Mookherjee 2000; Dasgupta and Beard 2007; Platteau 2004). Among the Waorani, each village has developed its own ways of ensuring equal access to external resources, which is often mediated by the village leader; as discussed in chapter 4, failures in redistributing external resources is an ongoing cause of tensions in some villages (see also High 2007 and Rival 2012).

[209] For the discussion on the 'ecologically noble savage' see Redford (1991) and for this discussion in the Ecuadorian case see Cepek (2018: 193-194).

advance of the oil frontier in what they call *reserves*. In Epepare the shift is sharper, with some young charismatic leaders embracing the national environmental activist movement for the protection of the Yasuní Park.

I did not conduct detailed ethnography of Waorani relationships with tourists or scientists, apart from myself. It struck me that Waorani people, in the villages where I worked, had a perception of these outsiders as the "least" risky friendships for accessing external resources, and they proactively pursue them. Apart from the assertive demands for sharing external goods that has been noted by Colleoni (2016), High (2007) and Rival (1992, 2000, 2002, 2016), many young adults and middle aged Waorani seemed equally interested in non-material *kowori* features – from music to speech. Nevertheless, encounters with "generous" outsiders are also occasions for "equivocal compatibility" (Pina-Cabral 2010), an example of which is the following described Christian speech.

Missionaries speech.

When the Summer Institute of Linguistics promoted the peaceful contact with the Waorani in the late 1950's, they also developed a process of evangelization which resulted in the Waorani mass conversion to Christianity (Cabodevilla 1994, High 2015b). High (2016) notes that the Waorani acceptance of Christianity was not the kind of spiritual conversion promoted by the SIL but more a 'temporary and more or less superficial change' (ibid:274), which was primarily related to their acceptance of peaceful relations rather than a conversion of the soul. I agree with High's interpretation of Waorani's conversion to Christianity and also with his observation that after the SIL was expelled from Ecuador in 1981, conversion to Christianity was no longer appealing for young people, and few elderly Waorani Christians remain. Only in recent years, Waorani people from Epepare and Yoweno appear to be open again to what can be called a second wave of Christianization; this evangelization is now promoted by Ecuadorian missionaries from Amazonian cities, and some others from the Coast of Ecuador, those with whom I have been able to talk state they are Baptists. Epepare and Yoweno's proximity to the roads facilitates the access of these missionaries who frequently visit the villages, which offers a different context from the more remote villages studied by High (2016).

In Epepare village, there is a middle aged man, a recently converted Waorani preacher, and at least half of the village, including young people, consider themselves Christians, which for the Waorani loosely means attending church and avoiding dancing

and drinking. Christians also talk about avoidance of sex out of marriage and not "stealing", but many informants suggest that this is more an ideal for avoiding conflicts, which is not always followed. Ethnographies in other parts of Amazonia tend to emphasise the collective character of Christian conversion (Vilaça 2010; Viveiros de Castro 1992b) but among the Waorani, as High (2016) has argued, personal autonomy has a role in the decision to become Christian, which means that some people may decide to be Christians without this implying a collective conversion. High also notes that elderly people who remain Christians maintain a *durani bai* (like ancestors) set of values, meaning that their Christian identity is compatible with the more traditional way of being Waorani. While this is true in terms of conviviality, there are exceptional roles and practices that have been affected by Christianization, as noted in chapter 2, for example some *Cristianos* who are seen as potential shamans – *meñera* (parent of jaguars) – refuse to embrace the relationship with the jaguar that is essential for *meñera* shamanism. The other aspect that was suggested to me by a Waorani leader is that Christian Waorani do not perform as much the *toki beye* (for laughing) dance "Waorani reggaeton" described in chapter 4, in which men dance[210] in a state of euphoria putting their buttocks into the attendants' faces, and once they are sweating, they share their sweat-vitality with children.

Viveiros de Castro (1992) suggests that the flexibility with which Tupinamba people embraced and abandoned the whites' religion is because it was not a transformation of the "soul" as the missionaries expected, it was more an incorporation of the Other's point of view without changing their own belief system that was embedded in their rituals, in their culture. At the same time Tupinamba were interested in finding out if the missionaries had responses to major human concerns such as mortality. Waorani people from Epepare and Yoweno refer to an afterlife similar to their current life but with constant abundance, and I have heard young Waorani considering becoming Christians when getting old, so as to ensure the ideal afterlife that is promoted by the Christian discourse. This belief among Waorani who are as High (2016) puts it "little bit Christians" – Waorani who do not assume the Christian

[210] It has been said to me that this dance used to be performed mainly by men at some point during Waorani big feasts. At the beginning of *toki beye* they also play a flute, and some imitate the sounds of peccary. When I saw a euphoric Waorani woman performing this dance on her own, to celebrate the success of an event, I was told that deeply committed Christians do not perform this dance. While it seems contradictory, the only time when I saw this dance performed in group was by Waorani Christians in front of missionaries, in order to share the "more traditional" Waorani dances, but it was downplayed, perhaps deliberately, and not as euphoric as people recall *toki beye*, and it was afterwards pointed out by other Christian Waorani as an improper dance to perform in front of the missionaries.

identity, but attend Christian camps and church events – is developed by their regular attendance at Christian preaching, which is sometimes accompanied by low-quality horror videos about hell and performances that promote the idea that Christianity is the only way to a good after life.

When I have asked Waorani people what they think about Christian missionaries, they consider that, as a Waorani woman put it, 'it is good that they come and give nice speeches for us.' So Christian speech is considered a form of caring for the Waorani, especially when those visits of missionaries are accompanied by gifts such as second-hand clothes and a number of group games for Waorani entertainment. However, I should clarify that for the Waorani speech is not a form of "exchange" and no reciprocity is expected; therefore, it is different from Lévi-Strauss (1944) and Clastres (1987) analysis of leader's oratory and their access to women.

Apart from a positive moral evaluation towards some speeches[211], many male young adults have embraced Christian conversion as a way to avoid alcohol-related conflicts, and a pathway for expanding their relations through Ecuadorian missionaries living in the cities. Epepare, a village that has no warriors and was formed after fleeing from tensions in Yoweno, seems to be more open to this conversion. There, young people have grown up with a Waorani identity of avoidance of war, not only promoted by the few elderly Waorani Christians, but assumed as a Waorani way of life[212]. This means that when alcohol-related problems arose a few years ago, Christian identity was seen as a tool for internal peace, although almost half of the village have not converted, confirming that for Waorani conversion is not collective, and the egalitarian value of autonomy prevails.

Yoweno's case is different because the last wave of Christian conversion was promoted by two health workers living in Yoweno's health post when internal conflicts were unmanageable after the death of their main leader Babe, who avoided conversion during his lifetime[213]. Between 2014 and 2017, people from Yoweno welcomed the

[211] The positive evaluation of speeches was not only towards Christians, a similar kind of evaluation was developed towards speeches in workshops organized by some NGOs, and some State institutions such as health promotion workshops organized by doctors. I also was asked by a parent to share my speech with his children '*habla con ellos'* (talk with them), he explained to me that his children 'live in the forest but are "contemporary"' – they use internet, they are interested in the world, and need outsiders' skills as well as *durani* skills for navigating their contemporariness.

[212] This does not mean that they do not engage in forms of struggle through documents and strikes; in these struggles they also use spears as a symbol of a warriorhood identity.

[213] Babe made peaceful contact at the end of 1960's and joined the SIL settlement just before a main epidemic arose; as soon as he recovered from the shock generated by contact and the death of his wife in the first epidemic, Babe and his family fled the Christian settlement.

Christian speech promoted by some health workers particularly for children; and many young people embraced the conversion to give up alcohol. Waorani parents, often the same young adults, argued that by listening to Christian speech their children would grow up "good", although the protestant ethic is different from the Waorani, as can be seen in considerations from sexual behaviour, to dance and work ethic (chapter 4). The openness to Christianity stopped for a while when oil-related conflicts arose. When I started my fieldwork in January 2017 there were well-attended church services every single Sunday. By the end of 2017, the church services had stopped; religious conversion was not maintaining internal harmony, and people had abandoned the conversion process.

> I became mad, I got lost in the forest. I did not like to see my wife or my children, I thought like that. Then, I fainted and '*enseñó palabra de vida'* (taught the word of life), the dream gave me that. (Oyo, middle aged man from Epepare)

´The word of life´ is an expression that is used very often by the Waorani who have become Christian. It is a reference to God's speech contained in the bible that is used by missionaries. This kind of conversion to Christianity, generated after dreaming with God or with his words, is very common among middle aged and elderly Waorani who have overcome a severe illness or alcohol-related "madness". The links between dreaming and self-healing were noted in chapter 2; here I shall focus on the relation between *tiname* (strong liquor) and Christian conversion. Particularly in Epepare, Christian Waorani, who have recently converted to Christianity but also some elders who became Christians after peaceful contact, consider that the Bible is literally 'the word of God' and some of them attribute healing powers to this book[214]. Such healing powers are the ones that are connected to 'recovering from the madness of *tiname*'.

> *Durani bai* lived without drinking *tiname*, listening to God, I see that to be good. I am crying, I live like this. (Wiña, elderly woman from Epepare)

[214] The incorporation of external objects such as the Bible, which some Christian Waorani in Epepare and Yoweno considered to be an agent, requires a discussion that I have not been able to resolve. On the one hand, I see Waorani understanding of object's agency resonating with Walker's (2009) study of a processual subjectivisation. He suggests that the process of 'taming' some objects is also a process of subjectivisation; the objects become 'agents for the instruction and transformation of humans' (2009:98). Walker's analysis goes beyond the perspectival debate of predator/prey, and Waorani agency is also processual, rather than based on predation. On the other hand, in cases such as the Bible, Fausto's (1999, 2012) notion of familiarizing predation might find a place from the prey perspective. Fausto notes that predation 'is one moment in the process of producing persons of which familiarization is another' (2012:230), this implies that 'social reproduction depends on the external appropriation of agentive capacities' (ibid: 301). When the prey is the one who incorporates the other, it is somehow an act of reversal predation, perhaps more focused on familiarization, but this is requiring of further research.

When I asked Wiña about her understanding of God, she referred primarily to the Bible, and to "God's speech" in a Christian sense. Since Wiña accepted peaceful contact when she was at least 16 years old, she has vivid memories of life before contact with the missionaries. Thus, when I asked about how was God for the *durani*, she explained that they knew about *Wengongui*, which is the word that she uses for saying 'I talk with *Wengongui* (God)', but they did not know God's speech, or the life of *Itota* (Jesus) his son. She says that they understood God through signs of his power:

> Likewise, *durani* talked, we lived listening to God. Our elders said that God existed. Inside an old tree there was a sound *´wengo, wengo´*, there was a squirrel, people cut the tree and with that the squirrel´s tail was cut, she went up [towards the sky], like that *durani* told us. […] It was the eagle who make the sound '*wengo, wengo'* but it was God's spirit. Like that they said, like that *durani* said to us, I don't know if that is true. (Wiña, elderly woman from Epepare)

Thus, the roots of the word for God '*Wengongui'* are attributed to a sound in the forest, which Wiña describes as more like the acknowledging of a power. In an origin myth *wengongui* is acknowledged in a more anthropomorphic form as one who caused suffering to the Waorani because he decided to transform humans into animals whenever he wanted. After that time of uncertainty about "remaining humans", the Waorani learned from the tapir how to grow manioc. Only after having these manioc "seeds"[215], the Waorani fled from *Wengongui*, the Waorani also left behind the tapir, and started living *durani bai* (like the ancestors)[216] .

The Waorani who "become Christian" see their Christianity as a way to navigate post-contact dangers. For the Waorani, the 'Other' who seems to have mastered the art of living in peace without *tiname* is mainly a Christian *kowori,* as opposed to other *kowori* such as the oil workers who tend to drink. Clarita, my host in Epepare, called me to her hammock to look at some pictures on a tablet that she borrowed from her brother. There was a picture of several young Waorani standing by a river, some others in the river. Clarita explained that it was a Christian baptism. At least 30 people in the picture were about to get baptized in the river. While contemplating this picture Clarita lamented 'but Luis has drunk again', Luis is her brother who was baptized. Clarita talks about baptism as if the main purpose of it were to stop drinking. Thus, I asked, 'do you mean that the Christian people do not drink?' She responded 'no, they transform their

[215] Some version say that they stole the seeds from the tapir (Zurita 2017).
[216] This is a brief adaptation that one of my Waorani collaborators made of her understanding of God, she based her account on the myths that she recalled from her grandfathers. For a detailed analysis of the myth of origin see Rival (2002:53) and Zurita (2014) who develops a description of the Waorani temporal categories, in which times before *'the durani'* are linked with the myth of the Tapir.

lives'. I understand that such transformation is not that of the "soul" in the Christian sense but a subjective "adjustment" achieved through the incorporation of Christian features such as the "Christian speech", daily listening to Christian songs, and even –in few cases– by directly touching the Bible.

Finally, this new wave of evangelization also relies on cultural products that are appealing for the Waorani, from playful games to music. The music contains lyrics such as: 'King Jesus Christ is my *vencedor* (winner), your victory is my victory […] a battle cry!'. Young Christians in Epepare listen to these songs more often than Ecuadorian popular music or reggaeton. They call it "Christian music" and the enthusiastic pop ballad rhythm seems to be particularly targeted to young people. An in-depth research on Waorani music preferences and Waorani traditional songs is pending.

Conclusion.

The Waorani might have preferred me to write less about the Missionaries' "speech", and more about the harmful oil company's *"manipulación"* (dirty tricks) that are a form of *babe tere* (telling lies) therefore *wiwa keka* (wrong or harmful doing). But to my eyes and ears, both speeches, and that of the State, were equally deaf towards the Waorani own speech. The style of this thesis includes several long quotes of Waorani speech, which seems to me the best way of resonating with the Waorani speech while sharing my own, and somehow keeping their egalitarian style of polyphonic speeches. I have described the importance the Waorani place on *speech* not only for acknowledging other's humanity but also as an act of caring. Waorani regard for *speech* in the encounter milieu is also part of several "equivocal compatibilities" (Pina-Cabral 2010), as happened with President Moreno's "dialogue" and with Missionaries' speech. These "equivocal compatibilities" are often also present in relations with allies, with whom several Waorani share similar aims, as in the case of environmentalist activists.

I have described *strong speech* uttered in front of State and oil company representatives as a form of Wao diplomacy that faces ongoing adjustments. The ambiguities and changes in the State are responded to with Waorani strategies that tend towards a ritualization of the encounter with powerful others, which includes singing, strong speech, but also written papers. Waorani strategies described in this chapter are also expressions of how they navigate a contact-related "weakness" (chapter 2). Waorani have abandoned spear killing but they have not submitted their *Wao bai* (Wao way) to that of the encroaching society. Instead, *strong speech* reinforces Waorani

values in front of outsiders. *Strong speech* is primarily an adult and elderly form of speech, and young people who listen to adults' strong speeches are reminded of Waorani courageous identity. In the next chapter, I explore a form of communication, through social media, which is more in the hands of young people.

CHAPTER 6: DEATH AND PAIN OVER FACEBOOK

> I live well, I live well, I remember my daughter who died, Carola. Only because of her I remember. Sometimes when I drink liquor, I get drunk, I remember, and I get angry. She was the only daughter that I loved. Wherever I was going, she cooked in the house, when coming back from the forest she fed me. […] Now there is nobody like this daughter who died, there is no one, it was only her.
> Sometimes when I do not remember I live well, sometimes I dream of my daughter and then I get angry. I want to live well, only because of her I live with anger. Living on, I live well. (Buca, Waorani elderly man)

This intimate account of Buca's yearning for his daughter, who died during an epidemic of Hepatitis B in Yoweno, 6 or 7 years ago, was not directed to me but to Juana, my research assistant. When visiting Buca's house, it was Juana who started the conversation, and it was she who conducted the interview while I recorded it. She explained to Buca that I was interested in understanding how the Waorani are living, what it means *living well*, and he answered in this intimate way. Buca's response shows that an exploration of *living well* does not always generate responses linked to cheerful emotions such as happiness, or references to peace; very often, as I have shown during this thesis, Waorani people living along oil roads have chosen to talk about challenges for their *living well*. I have referred to what the Waorani call *problemas* (problems) in Spanish, many of them related to liquor-related violence (chapter 2) and unequal distribution of resources coming from oil extraction (chapter 4); other situations that are noted as not conducive to *living well* are different forms of pollution and encroachment (chapter 3 and 5). Death of close kin should be considered as a major disruptor of *living well*, which in Buca's account is described almost as a chronic situation because strategies for forgetting dead kin have failed, and the period of mourning has not yet been overcome.

This chapter presents the death of close kin as a challenge for the maintenance of *living well*; for the continuity of the good life among the living it is necessary to take distance from death and the memory of dead kin. As Allard and Taylor (2016) note, scholars of lowland South America describe a broad range of funerary practices, but what seems to be broadly shared is the need to erase the mental image of the deceased as kin, and turn them into 'generic dead' (Allard and Taylor 2016:61; see also Taylor 1993). As Rival (1996b:91) has noted, the Waorani do recall their dead kin in their genealogies and in the case of some remarkable people details of their lives are recalled in Waorani story telling, but this seems to be the case when the distance and differentiation between the living and the dead as an Other has already been achieved (see also High 2018: 68-69). Contemporary Waorani mourning practices are somehow

puzzling; by this I mean that while the Waorani used to keep physical distance from burial places, and a possible encounter with the spirit of the deceased is regarded as dangerous, nowadays Waorani people from Yoweno have a burial (cemetery) in the village centre, by the side and in front of people's houses. Furthermore, in recent years young Waorani people have proactively posted on Facebook news about recent deaths, which include images of funerals and corpses, and images of dead kin when alive. I will be unable to offer a definitive understanding of this new digital approach towards mourning, which requires future research, but the aim of this chapter is to open the discussion of how Waorani people, living in sedentary villages along oil roads, are contemporarily coping with the death of close kin in order to maintain their *living well*, and what happens when they do not manage to establish a distance from the dead.

Death and collective wellbeing.

Death is a social as much as a biological process (Bloch and Parry 1982:4; Hertz 1960:77). In Amazonia, where societies are bodily made, and the body is socially constructed (Seeger, DaMatta, and Viveiros de Castro 1979), personhood is also undone through the transformation of the body into a corpse (Conklin 2001a; Vilaça 2000), when the deceased becomes "Other" (see Rival 2002: 59-60). The ways to achieve this "undone" of kinship and personhood varies (Allard and Taylor 2016); however, emphasis is placed on taking distance from or "forgetting" dead as former kin, which might be achieved by making a physical distance, for example, abandoning the house where the deceased lived and was buried (Taylor 1993), or witnessing the process of decomposition of the body (Shepard 2002:209). There are a few cases in which relics and bones from the dead are kept and used in rituals (Chaumeil 2007), but normally the individual identity of the deceased is not sustained; moreover, these rituals tend to emphasise predatory features and alterity, rather than convivial values or continuity with the dead as kin (Allard and Taylor 2016:64).

While the dead are generally considered to become Other, considerations about whether this other is harmful to the living also vary; for example, Shepard (2002) notes that the among Matsigenka in Peru, the spirits of dead kin are considered to be harmful, but instead of fully taking distance from the corpse, it is left by the side of the roots of big trees in the forest, so they are able to witness the process of decay. The decomposition of the flesh also means that the dead's potential for harming the living is

reduced. As part of the mourning process the Matsigenka do avoid living in the house where the deceased had dwelled; they either change houses to a different place within the same village, or in more sedentary settlements they may go back to their home, but only after traveling to other villages for some time. In contrast, Conklin's (2001a) detailed analysis of Wari' endocannibalism shows that eliminating the corpse was not done based on fear of the spirit of dead Wari', but instead it was an act of compassion towards the deceased close kin – relatives of the mourners used to eat the flesh of the corpse. Among the Waorani, High (2018:68-69) offers an ethnographic account about Waorani funerary rituals, and he describes Waorani attempts to 'differentiate or unmake relations with the dead' (High 2018:68), which is achieved by different means, including speaking in tongues or in foreign languages:

> [S]peaking in tongues and making jokes in this context was part of an effort to exclude the deceased from the affective relations of sociality to which they can no longer contribute safely. A person who grieves alone or too openly risks succumbing to the deceased relative's desire for ongoing interaction with the living and ultimately may cause them to adopt the perspective of the dead. Attempts to forget or distance the dead from the living are temporary, as stories about how deceased kin were killed in the past are central to Waorani oral histories, but only once the dead are safely separated from the sociality of the living. (High 2018:68)

I fully agree with High's observation that Waorani attempts to forget the dead are temporary, and once the separation with the living has been achieved, the dead are recalled in oral narratives; more recently they are recalled through photographies and videos, as discussed in a forthcoming section. I did not conduct systematic research regarding traditional burial practices among the Waorani, but the ethnographic data that I gathered resonates with what has been already described by Rival (1996b:91) and Zurita (2014:152), who suggest that before the contact Waorani had no funerary rituals; when close kin died the body was left in the place where they died, or in some cases placed in a natural hole. Zurita notes that these holes were covered with wood and sticks (Zurita 2014:152); the intention was to allow a fast process of decomposition as if the body was part of the forest processes of growth and decay (ibid:152). Emphasis was placed on abandoning the place of death in order to avoid a predatory attack from the soul of the dead, who was believed to have the potential for becoming a predatory Other, especially a jaguar. People returned to inhabit these abandoned places after one generation (ibid:151). Burial practices have changed with Christian influence, meaning that nowadays the Waorani bury the dead in places near the villages in old gardens or near landmarks related to the deceased, and she notes that the burial place is sealed with cement (ibid:351). I particularly agree with Zurita's (2014) remarks regarding the

Waorani focus on corpse decomposition and its integration with 'ecological dynamics' (ibid:352); in a study of the relation between death and life regeneration across cultures, Bloch and Parry (1982) note that 'what would seem to be revitalised in funerary practices is that resource which is culturally conceived to be most essential to the reproduction of the social order' (ibid:7). In the Waorani case what is regenerated is a generic vitality in the forest, which will eventually contribute to the growth of future generations in the form of 'natural abundance' (see Rival 2002, Zurita 2014).

In addition to the general approach to funerary practices condensed in Zurita's work, there are some more specific cases that Rival (2002) has discussed in detail, for example: when a close kin was found dying after a spear killing, they would bury them alive and put an end to the otherwise slow agony (ibid:59)[217]. Alvarez (2010:80) in a study of contemporary Waorani burial practices records a practice of leaving the corpse inside the house where the person dwelled, with some of their possessions and a manioc pot. The house was burned, and the place abandoned. Alvarez (2010:89-94) describes several types of contemporary burials. Regarding mourning practices, there are few detailed descriptions. Alvarez (2010:95) records that some Waorani would chant while narrating details of how the person has died; she also provides an ethnographic account of a funeral in which people alternate between sorrow and laughter (ibid:97). Although some women would cry in the presence of their close kin dead, there is no ritual wailing as registered, for example, among the Warao (Allard 2018; Briggs 1993), and there is no prolonged mourning.

An important aspect of the Waorani relationship towards death is their position as victims. High (2015b) has analysed narratives of past violence and deaths, in which the Waorani highlight their position as victims whose kin have been preyed upon by Others. While Waorani cultural heroes are recalled as fearless warriors, several narratives of the past emphasise the death of Waorani warriors as victims, almost omitting details of their agency in past killings (2015b:37-38). In my own fieldwork, while recording a life history of one of the Yoweno leaders, it was striking to note that he omitted one of the most notable events for his village, the 2003 killing of isolated people; instead, he recalled the death of his kin at the hands of the same isolated people, which was perceived to be the reason for the revenge. Thus most of the references to

[217] My informants also recall a few cases in which, as Rival (2002) has described, a warrior was 'buried with one of his children [who in turns dies by suffocation]' (ibid:60).

past killings that I was able to record[218] are accounts of Waorani dying as victims killed by outsiders, or by other Waorani who have become dangerous "Others".

As elsewhere in Amazonia, the Waorani place emphasis on forgetting recent death, but they are also open to providing detailed accounts of the events related to the death of their kin, once they have already taken distance from the dead as an individual. The following account illuminates this point:

> In CCG, by the Tiputini, in the [seismic prospection] paths we worked. The first time that I worked for the seismic [prospection], my brother from the second mom was 5 years old, and there he was eaten by the boa, he was having a bath and washing in the river. Similar to the Napo river, so is the Curaray river. Downriver it has more water. He was washing and was eaten. We were on holiday and they call us. We went there but my brother of the second mother[219] did not appear, we were searching from the bottom up every day, we searched night and day. The river was high, two days of pouring rain, heavy rain.
> The boa had taken [his brother] upwards, and good luck that he was vomited. He came downwards with an inflated belly, he came eaten, the arms were eaten by the fish, only bones remained. […] He came with an inflated belly. But the fish had eaten him, piranha already ate the whole body. Then, we said, the drill company have just entered around Huamono, by air, entered by air, worked on an oil well. My father said: here your brother has died, here is not good anymore for living, boa will eat us, let's go to Yoweno. The land of grandfather Ima. Then, we came trekking. (Gonka, middle aged man)

Gonka's account (in Spanish) about the death of his brother a few decades ago was presented by him as an introductory explanation of why his father decided to move to Yoweno. While the decision to move was generated by a recent death, the destination of the move had a link with another dead kinsperson: Ima, Gonka's grandfather. Yoweno land is acknowledged in people's accounts as the land where Ima lived, but also the land where Ima was killed. By the time when Babe, Gonka's father, claimed back Yoweno land, this territory was occupied by an oil company and colonizers. After that, Babe dedicated his life to defending this frontier. In Gonka's account the richness of details that he provides while remembering death stands out; he describes social and landscape features; he notes characteristics of the corpse and the outcomes of death. This escatological description of a dead corpse is somehow a proof that Gonka's brother is indeed, dead, that is, not anymore with the living people, that distance has taken

[218] Narváez (2018) argues that he was able to collect a detailed account of recent killings in which warriorhood was praised, in such a way that being a warrior become a prestigious role; it is not clear what are the logics in which these Waorani men preferred to praise the warriorhood ethos over the victimhood perspective. Perhaps this could be understood from High's (2015b) suggestion that narratives of victimhood and warriorhood coexist among the Waorani. Elderly narratives of past killings tend to emphasise victimhood, whereas young Waorani also praise warriorhood; the latter is understood by considering young people's awareness of the effects that the image of warriorhood has in intercultural contexts, but it is also understood in the light of a post-contact 'masculinity crisis' among young Waorani, which High (2010b) analyses in detail.

[219] He insists on pointing out that he was the brother of the 'second mother' because this woman, the second mother, is a Kichwa woman who was never fully integrated into the Waorani kinship.

place. By recalling the corpse, Gonka is acknowledging the dead as so, without evoking his personhood as kin. This contrasts sharply with Buca's account of his daughter Carola, described at the beginning of this chapter, in which he said 'sometimes I dream of my daughter and then I get angry. I want to live well, only because of her I live with anger'. Buca is evoking Carola's personhood in a painful way while dreaming, he has not taken distance from the her. This is so in part because her death from hepatitis B was considered to be due to a shamanic attack, that has not been avenged.

When a newborn died in a host family, the young parents avoided talking about it as much as they could. It was posted on Facebook by the president of the village, but not by the parents of the dead child. Thus, the fresh memory of death is avoided to the extent to which it is painful, but it is recalled to the extent to which it is a collective concern. The young parents did not see any harm in posting on Facebook the news of their loss, but they were more concerned with taking distance from their house, which they saw as related to their misfortune. They abandoned the house where their child died for at least two weeks, and on coming back they changed some features of the house.

In the case of this young couple, they have just recently managed to build a house with wood planks and corrugated iron roof, materials that are not easily accessible for young couples, so they were not inclined to fully abandon their house. Instead they moved to a nearby house with some close kin, visiting their own house only for changing clothes. After a few weeks, and because of the arrival of some close family who demanded to be hosted at their house, they came back to the house where the child died. Then the father decided to change some architectural features, moving wood planks here and there, but the most striking feature was the decision to paint a cross on the front door and other parts of the house:

Picture 6.1 Epepare house.

When I asked why he painted the cross, he explained to me that 'in Moises's times they used blood to identify those who disobeyed, the painted blood was for death not to pass through. I painted the cross, it means that I am a disciple'. While this explanation is informed by Christian ideas that have been embraced by many people in Epepare, the point of the cross for a Waorani perspective was that of "protecting" the house. I would not be able here to provide an analysis of Waorani new conceptualization of images[220], but for the purpose of this chapter this account shows that death is regarded as a disruption of living well, which may carry further misfortune. Since in a sedentary village it is more difficult to take physical distance from the place of misfortune, Waorani people have developed new ways to draw distance from the past, which in these cases is expressed in micro changes in the house design.

[220] This was not the only case in which a Waorani referred to an image as having protective qualities. Another Waorani from the same village asked me to paint a jaguar over the wall of his house. He belongs to a household with whom I had few demand-sharing relations, until he asked: 'do you know painting? I need you to paint a *meñe* (jaguar) in my home', which I did. He, Bai, did not provide a clear reason for this request. Afterwards, while painting Bai's house, two research assistants agreed in saying that it was for protecting the oldest person in the village, Bai´s father, Pego. This perception of protection was also posted on Facebook with an image of our process of painting the jaguar and the following text: 'Pego, warrior leader has requested Andrea to draw and paint a meñe, Pego at this age wants protection at his home' (Juan Enomenga, Facebook post October 2017).
Aguilar (2016), on a study focused on how the Waorani have been portrayed in pictures from outsiders, notes that a Waorani leader prefered to "perform" Waorani features herself in a photography Studio. He suggests a connection between the power that the Waorani attribute to objects and their consideration of pictures as objects, which offers a potential for further studies in this area.

In Yoweno village, I witnessed another difficulty involved in taking distance from death in sedentary settlements. People from Yoweno have decided to create a cemetery at the core of the village, in front of a cluster of new cement houses. Alvarez (2010) has noted that the Waorani are changing their funeral practices after contact. One of the features that Alvarez points out is the creation of cemeteries, but according to her account, these are located far from people's houses. The proximity with the burial place in Yoweno means new challenges for the living, which for me are still puzzling. In 2018, a child, one of the youngest in my host family, fell sick with an unknown disease. When the doctors from Yoweno's health post were not able to offer an immediate diagnosis, the family decided to take the child to several shamans, most of them Kichwas. One of the most trusted shamans pointed out that dead people were walking at the ground level of the house during the night. The parents were advised to avoid exposing the child to these overnight visitors. I asked if dead people were walking only in our house and why? The family said: 'it is because we live near the cemetery, they are walking all over Yoweno'[221]. In a different way from Buca's account at the beginning of this chapter, my host family seem to have overcome the painful memories of having lost their kin, and now the "walking dead"[222]; however, as the Yoweno case shows, the lack of physical distance from death is still problematic.

Social outcomes of death.

Rival (2002: 59-60) notes that death has effects on kinship relationships. First, the one who dies becomes "Other". Second, the pain and sadness of bereavement can manifest themselves as homicidal rage[223], particularly among men; then, men become temporarily "Other" to those who remain alive, while retaining 'their kinship connection with the missing loved one'(Rival 2002: 59). If the man does not overcome rage, and he does not return to the equilibrium where good and harmonious living is possible, he might become one of the Waorani solitary killers, recalled in antiheroes accounts (2002:57). Third, even if anger and sorrow after the death of close kin have

[221] For the Waorani dead people are believed to continue their lives after death, doing the same activities that they used to do when they were alive (Alvarez 2010), but there is no agreement about the place of the afterlife; some say it is near the sky, and some others that it is in another part of the Waorani territory (Rival 1996b).

[222] The nature of these dead people is unclear, they are not Waorani anymore, they are devoid of a body, but the fact that they "walk" shows an almost tangible presence, that I was unable to understand.

[223] In both villages, I have heard young peaceful men expressing that if their kin die, they will focus their revenge against the oil company.

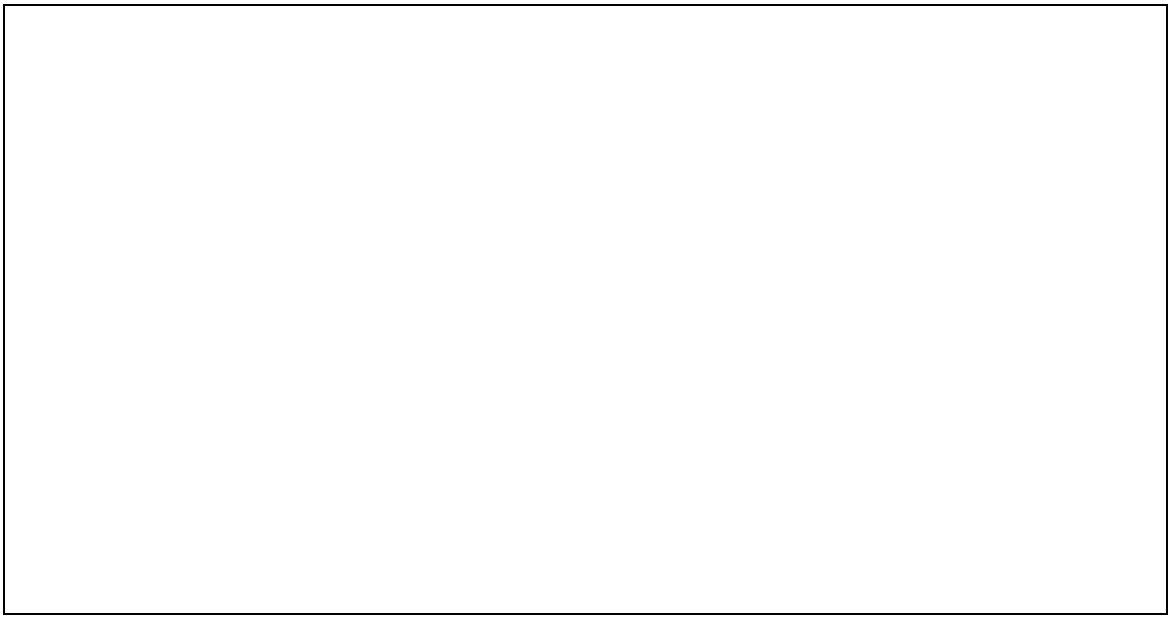
been temporarily overcome, and convivial life has been re-established, it is still possible that disruptive anger is evoked by the memory of dead kin in the future; particularly when there is an unsolved situation regarding the death, it can turn into warfare. As High (2015b:104-105) notes, death that has not been avenged is recalled by the kin of the deceased even a decade later. In my own fieldwork, I have heard similar claims for revenge particularly from widows, but they have not turned into warfare. However, I have seen people's efforts to "eliminate" in other ways the cause of death, such as expelling a Kichwa person – married to a Waorani woman – after a child died in the village, claiming that the Kichwa man was a sorcerer. Rival (2002:56) notes that there were cases in which death was thought to be "voluntary", for example, elderly people who were left to die; those cases would not trigger the homicidal rage.

Homicidal rage (Rival 2002, 2005) was conducive to the elimination of the cause of death, and was not developed in the logic of predation to re-establish the vitality that has been lost with the death of close kin, as is done elsewhere in Amazonia (see Fausto 2012b). As noted in chapter 2 and 5, the Waorani do not share the idea that vitality is a limited resource, that requires being predated upon for their social reproduction. Eliminating the cause of death is, on the one hand, the way in which men deal with the mourning process, but on the other hand, it somehow ensures that there will be no more predatory attacks on the living – if the total elimination of the cause of death is achieved. However, a more general strategy to deal with the mourning process was taking distance from the dead, by burning the house where they lived, and moving away, in a similar way to the Nahua (Feather 2009) and the Achuar (Taylor 1993). Among the Wari' people, who until establishing peaceful relations with outsiders practiced exo and endocannibalism (see Conklin 2001a), the latter is described as an act of compassion towards the kin of the dead, because by eating the flesh –which was only eaten by those who were not close kin of the dead– they helped the kin of the dead to see the corpse as no longer a person, but as a corpse (without soul, agency or subjectivity). This was an act of compassion towards the mourners, so that they were helped to forget the dead kin (Conklin 2001a). In the next section, rather than focusing on the harmful social effects of death, I will explore a new practice of collective mourning over Facebook, which while affirming a shared feeling of compassion is also a statement of kinship among the living; in other words, those who mourn together over Facebook – like those who do so offline – are kin, even when living in distant places,

and this acknowledgement of kinship is conducive to the continuity of peace in Waorani land.

Domestication of "the virtual".

'Yato, share Internet'[224]. This was a daily demand for sharing in Epepare, a village that has no public access to internet, but private providers are available. When they addressed me by my Waorani name, they normally spoke in *Wao terero*, except when they thought I might not understand them or when asking for my cell phone connection. They preferred to say that in Spanish: *'comparte Internet'* (share Internet). Waorani who are bilingual navigate from *Wao terero* to Spanish depending on the context, a movement that is also seen in their use of Facebook.



Picture 6.2 Sharing over Facebook.

While I have no statistics concerning the use of *Wao terero* versus Spanish, there are few occasions when they post in *Wao terero*. Moreover, young Waorani friends often "chat" in Spanish with people with whom, face to face, they would talk in *Wao terero*. Regarding this "virtual" preferred use of Spanish, I suggest three possible correlated interpretations: first, as pointed out by several Waorani, they have learned to write in

[224] Yato was one of the two names given to me by my host family on this village. These names were primarily used by members of this host family when demanding sharing, and whenever they wanted to acknowledge that they cared about me.

Spanish, finding it difficult to write in *Wao terero*[225]; second, they see the "virtual world" as a non-Waorani sphere that they are "virtually" populating, so they use non-Waorani language, which will explain why they open Facebook profiles for new-born Waorani, and how many Waorani maintain more than one profile[226]; third, languages provide a sense of belonging, which would explain why they deliberately write in *Wao terero* to *kowori* people who are "becoming Waorani"[227]. Some Waorani leaders promote the use of *Wao terero* in private and public virtual interactions. Waorani people prefer to use *Wao terero* among themselves in public posts when addressing the whole Waorani people; here they intentionally exclude *kowori* from their conversations. This is a version of what in recent studies of social media has been called *scalable sociality* (Miller et al. 2016). Miller (2016: 3-9) suggests that people tend to choose different social media platforms in which "scales" of sociality changes, from some small and closed groups to others open to wider audiences. Waorani's choice of language could be considered as a case of *scalable sociability* within the same platform. I will first present an overall view of the use of social media in relation to death among the Waorani, but my intention here is to understand how this scalable sociability is understood in Amazonian terms – from the realm of consanguinity to alterity (see Viveiros de Castro 2001). Waorani use of social media suggests that over these platforms, *kowori*'s predatory power has either been neutralized or is not evident, constituting a "good" place for pictures of dead people who are also Others, without that being harmful for the living. In turn, the shared compassion showed by distant kin has positive effects on the collective *living well*.

The spread of social media platforms[228] during the last two decades is a growing field of research in anthropology[229]. My own ethnographic work is not so much focused on the platform that the Waorani choose, but on how the content and the form in which it circulates is meaningful for them. Miller et al. (2016) have noted, in a series of social media ethnographies around the world, that once a platform 'becomes populated by local content then cultural alignment follows as a consequence'(ibid:15). Studies of social media and other online platforms that have emerged in recent years (e.g., Belton

[225] In spoken interactions they prefer to speak *Wao terero* among the Waorani, incorporating a few Spanish expressions that are untranslatable to their language: such as *'problema'* (problem, trouble).
[226] Most Waorani have various profiles because they have lost their passwords, but some others intentionally maintain more than one profile.
[227] Like myself.
[228] I use the notion of social media rather than social network following Miller's (2016:9) suggestion that the former is used colloquially for referring to platforms such as Facebook.
[229] For a review of anthropological studies on this topic see Miller et al. (2016); for a review of anthropological studies on digital media see Coleman (2010) and Horst and Miller (2013).

2010; Castleton 2018; Duarte 2017; De Salvador and Martínez 2015) show a consistent interest by indigenous people in populating these online worlds. Ferreira's (2016) study of Brazilian blogs suggests that indigenous people and organizations use these Western technologies with a sense of authorship, creating meaningful indigenous discourses. In my own ethnography this indigenous appropriation of digital technology as a medium for circulating indigenous discourse is also present, but what seems to be more relevant is the extended socialization that social media allows. There are many Waorani who rarely "post" or express a discourse over Facebook, but they still use the platform for chatting or seeing pictures of their virtual friends, including both Waorani and *kowori* people. There are some cases, particularly of Waorani leaders who also use the platform for political purposes, resonating with what Pereira (2013) has noted in a study of indigenous cyberactivism in Brazil, where indigenous people and organizations 'act and re-elaborate discussions about themselves as users and producers of the informational content'(2013:1866).

Virtanen's (2015) study of the use of social media among indigenous people in Brazil, in Southwestern Amazonia, provides a comprehensive analysis of why social media, and particularly Facebook, has become so popular among indigenous people. Virtanen notes that social media is a reliable option for long distance communication, because even people who do not own a mobile phone often find access to computers in small towns (ibid:354); I would add that Facebook as a platform that is already populated by indigenous people is more friendly than for example an email. My Waorani friends who have an email and a Facebook page are more likely to proactively consult the latter and choose it even for circulating written documents. Virtanen's (2015) study also resonates with the Waorani case in relation to the motivations for using Facebook as a means to maintain relationships with relatives as much as with non-indigenous people.

The reason why I have been able to conduct ethnographic research about public posts and direct messages over Facebook is that I have received Facebook requests from at least 300 Waorani profiles since 2014, and "checking Facebook" in the villages is a collective activity. Even when people are free to look for a private space if they want to be on their own, checking Facebook is an activity that is frequently done "together". While sitting in the *cancha* (court), watching a football match, people spent many hours on Facebook "together", unless they required a private chat, for example, for romantic purposes. The point here is that inbox chat was not considered a *de facto* private

activity[230]. In this collective logic the Waorani often demanded to watch all the pictures or videos on my personal devices, and to know to whom I was sending a message, or even what I was writing or watching.

People in Yoweno have access to internet at the public school and the health post, so there is no need for demand-sharing of Internet, but there is a demand-sharing of devices. In Epepare, it was evident that Internet has been integrated into the networks of sharing, as a valuable, because people do not have equal access to Internet. When someone manages to own a cell phone with internet, there is an intense demand for sharing. There is also a generalized acknowledgement of the sharer's rights over the device.

Death and pain over Facebook.

> Babe que murió, no muere todavía, película está conversando como vivo.
>
> Babe who died, does not die yet, on the film he is talking as he were alive.
>
> Bai, Waorani man.

Bai spontaneously pointed out in a conversation that in a visit to el Coca city, he had seen a film where Babe, who died years ago, was alive. I was unable to fully understand what pictures or videos mean for Waorani people, but Bai's comment was rather cheerful. He saw no danger in seeing the video of a dead Waorani, and this could also be extended to images in general. In 2017-2018, all the deaths in Waorani territory that my host families were concerned with were shared over Facebook. Some of them were only informed by messages, others were posted with images. The most shocking deaths, such as a young man killed by another young Waorani, were heavily posted. In this case, they did not post images of the corpse, but of the family with the coffin, pictures of other Waorani traveling to the burial, and pictures of the deceased when he was alive. The sharing of death-related images is not normally done by close relatives, but by other relatives in the village, or elsewhere. Some of them are shared with expressions of suffering, some express compassion to the relatives[231], and some others make demands for revenge. Particularly among men, images of tragic deaths have

[230] This emphasis on the group rather than the individual offers a contrast to theories about social media as related to the rise in individual virtual-based networks and a decline in group interactions (see Rainie and Wellman 2012).

[231] This is done by direct references to the family suffering, but it is also done by expressing that dead kin might be in a 'better place', or using the Ecuadorian way *'decanse en paz'* (rest in peace). This expressions are mainly borrowed from the Christian discourse, but are not at odds with the Waorani understanding of afterlife as a place of abundance (see Alvarez 2010).

evoked responses such as 'the guilty must pay', 'we must defend our territory'. After the death of an elderly leader, in a post written in *Wao terero*, therefore directed to the Waorani, a man made the case for considering the Waorani national leaders as responsible for letting the woman die.

When a very influential person dies, normally elderly courageous people, one can read comments such as 'all the Waorani suffering', which reinforces a shared identity out of death. As High (2015b) argues, the Waorani generate kinship not only through the quotidian sharing of substances, they also create it through shared experiences. The significance of Waorani use of social media to process death, and in turn to ensure the continuity of *living well*, lies perhaps in this reinforcement of a shared victimhood. However, news of death is also shared to create awareness of possible outcomes, such as the spirit of the deceased becoming a predator. Ethnographers have noted that people become jaguars after death and that a jaguar might attack the dead's kin (Alvarez 2010). People recall such metamorphosis particularly in the case of powerful people. A Waorani friend explained that 'when someone dies due to shamanism, an animal "spirit" is released from the body of the deceased, it could be a boa, serpent, turtle or a bat'. Most of the deaths that are not caused by spears are considered to have a shamanic cause. People talk about these after death events, to reinforce the awareness of the shamanic powers that predate them. This could be compared with other kinds of sharing which are common among the Waorani. As considered in chapter 2, it is usual for Waorani, when experiencing pain or ailments, to spontaneously share the news about their suffering and to give detailed accounts of the treatment taken to alleviate the ailment. These are shared with relatives visiting or even passing on the road; this spread of news about ailments and death might also be a more "ancestral" strategy against "risk" developed by these hunter-gatherers who survived the colonial "risk society" (Conklin 2015:64; Nugent 2015)

In offline life, it is common to hear the Waorani interpreting landscape features or events in the Waorani territory as signs of imminent death. For example, the lack of game animals, in places where good hunters would normally hunt, was interpreted by one of the hunters as 'someone is about to die' in the Waorani land. For him, that was the reason why the animals do not appear. It is almost as if the time of death is incompatible with the time of abundance[232]. Apart from those external signs of

[232] Other death-related signs recorded during fieldwork were: bad weather, such as an unexpected change of weather from sunny to storms; a sudden rise in a person's speech 'speaking strong, like he is going to die'; the sight of dead birds by the river shore without a clear reason; a certain colour around the moon; a

oncoming deaths, people recall premonitory dreams before the death of their kin. Shamans also have visions that anticipate deadly events. Thus, when a death happens, there are many details to be recalled, which makes people talk intensely about death, although, as explained before, the direct kin initially avoid mention of the dead, when the memory is still painful.

When interpreting these death-related signs in offline life, Waorani consider that death may happen in any part of Waorani land, not necessarily of close kin. The death of a Wao produces a direct emotional effect among the close kin, but simultaneously it is also a collective concern for the Waorani as an ethnic group. Therefore, for them it is important to know about any loss or death that might be happening in any far distant Waorani village, and Facebook is an effective way to communicate it. As suggested in the introduction of this thesis, the Waorani are only recently building a shared ethnic identity; before peaceful contact they were divided between four main territorial groups, some of whom had alliances, but others were considered to be *warani* (others). During recent decades of peaceful contact they have created new alliances, and it is not uncommon to hear a Wao referring to relatives living anywhere in the whole Waorani territory. It follows that they are now more interested in what happens in distant villages. Facebook, for those who have access to it, is replacing the post-contact radio communication system that is still working in many villages.

This is not to say that all the Waorani are constantly connected to Facebook sharing news about diseases and death; young people are often connected, and their Facebook is populated with less gloomy content – such as jokes, football, food and expressions of love. More importantly, there are well-known "specialists" of sharing news in each part of the territory. These specialists are the equivalent to a Waorani journalist – I heard one of them identifying himself as such. Pereira's (2013) study of cyberactivism in Brazil suggests that skills for generating meaningful content in digital media are seen as a new form of prestige among indigenous people (ibid:1873). Among the Waorani, the emerging role of journalist is highly appreciated as a form of social influence beyond the village. With Waorani social media specialists the number of "friends in common" over the platform are around 150, while each of them has around 1000 Facebook friends. This constant of roughly 150 friends in common shows a stable group of Waorani users of this platform.

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peach palm season with reduced growth of peach palm fruits. This "listing" of death-related signs does not pretend to catalogue all such signs, but to exemplify the richness of Waorani symbolic elaborations regarding death.

People who search for news over Facebook identify those specialist profiles as sources to consult. This was made obvious to me when news of a distant death arrived in Epepare. Someone sent a private message, and soon everybody in the village was commenting on it. Hours later, my host family insisted on searching over Facebook for pictures of this death. They instructed me to look at a specific profile, because that specific person 'must be sharing the news'. I did as they said and effectively found the picture of a coffin, a burial, and the family surrounding the burial. The use of photography among the Waorani can be seen in the most varied circumstances, for example, Cabodevilla's (2013) work offers an analysis of a recent killing of isolated people, which was documented – through photography and video – by Waorani people who took part in the confrontation. Alvarez (2010:97) records a Waorani funeral in which close kin of the deceased demanded that a picture be taken. Alvarez does not provide further details about what was done with the picture or about its meaning. In Venezuelan Amazonia, Allard (2018) records a similar petition among the Warao, which as he notes is certainly puzzling in the light of the widespread Amazonian regard for forgetting the dead. Allard suggests that the picture is a device for recalling the dead not in the realm of conviviality, but as a dead person; in other words it is the confirmation of death, rather than a continuity with the deceased. I have not been able to find an explanation for the Waorani pictures of death, but a preliminary interpretation resonates with that of Allard, in the sense that these pictures are not meant to keep the memory of the dead person as kin, but to recall that the person is dead.

Conclusion.

While a study of "living" well is not the place for death –some topics such as after-life cosmologies are absent in this chapter– the purpose of this chapter was to recognize death as a major disruptor of *living well* among those who remain alive. In this light, I have noted that across Amazonia a way of coping with the bereavement of dead kin is to develop mechanisms for forgetting the dead as kin (Taylor 1993), while acknowledging their death – for example, by transforming the body into a corpse and witnessing relatives eating its flesh (Conklin 2001a). When this "taking distance" from the death has been achieved, the mourning process is overcome, and the continuity of life is possible; when people, as in the case of Buca, fail to forget, anger remains, and I have already discussed in chapter 2 how harmful anger is for people's *living well.*

This chapter has also suggested that Waorani use of social media for posting pictures of dead kin might be seen initially as a contradictory act, or at least not conducive to forgetting the dead. However, the Waorani new digital way of coping with death is developed through the logics of the maintenance of *living well*. People who comment on death-related posts are acknowledging a relationship with the mourners, by becoming mourners themselves; then, among those who have mourned together, peace is to be expected (cf. Allard 2018).

I have also suggested that Facebook is populated by the Waorani in a logic of *scalable sociability* (Miller 2016). It means that the Waorani choose how to populate this platform, they open up the *scale* to several Others when posting, for example, news in Spanish; they reduce the *scale* when posting in *Wao terero*. The smaller *scale* of interactions over Facebook includes several expressions of virtual intimacy, which I have not been able to address in this thesis; for example, some jokes and expressions of love are online manifestations of ordinary conviviality, which are rooted in the offline Waorani ways to access this technology, such as sharing Internet, and consulting Facebook "together". In addition, Waorani self-representation, sometimes in 'sweat-selfie' frames and some filters that make them appear as East Asian people – High (2010b) has noted the appeal to young Waorani of martial art films – makes us wonder how much there is still to be understood about Waorani aesthetics, and how broad is the meaning of *waemo* (beautiful, good) in the online life.

Finally, this chapter is an example showing that the ways of coping with disruptive events so as to maintain people's *living well* are not static; and the logics that inform the offline *living well* are extended to the online space, with some differences. In the latter, from a Waorani perspective, the Other's potential predatory features seem to be somehow neutralized or are at least far from reaching the Waorani living in the forest. Perhaps this is why many Waorani are rather proactive in sending friend requests over Facebook to people they do not know. During this year of writing up of this thesis, I decided to reduce my use of social media so as to avoid engaging in online chats; since I stopped accepting friend requests from unknown profiles, my account has accumulated 109 friend requests from profiles that are clearly from Waorani people – because of the names and friends in common – but I do not know them in person. So there is certainly a potential for further understanding of the online word as a space where the Waorani engage with Others as much as among themselves.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has offered an analysis of the Waorani notion of *living well,* while building on the Amazonian analytical approach that Viveiros the Castro (1996:189) has called the 'moral economy of intimacy'. I have suggested that the 'good life' (Overing 1999; Overing and Passes 2000; Santos-Granero 2015a; among others) relies not only on good conviviality. Therefore, alongside a convivial dimension of living well, this thesis has explored an ecological (chapter 3) and a generative (chapters 2 and 4) dimension.

The processual approach to the crafting of Amazonian personhood (Conklin and Morgan 1996; Rival 2005; Seeger, DaMatta, and Viveiros de Castro 1979), informs Waorani preference for food from the forest, as well as smells and sounds from certain beings that populate the forest milieu. I have suggested that Waorani living along oil roads refer to the sensorial experience of the forest as conducive to *living well*, which they contrast with the noise and smell from the road. The sensorial approach suggests that Waorani relational bodies are not made only through convivial relationships, but their disposition towards good conviviality is affected by relationships with their environment.

The Waorani ethnographic material also offers a different view to the dualism between *eudaimonic* (virtue-based) and *hedonic* (sensuous) studies of wellbeing and happiness. Waorani collective happiness (*anka totamonipa*) is very often indistinguishable from the commitment to virtue-based life in the form of *piyenekete* (doing or practising peace). Moreover, expressions of "subjective" short-term happiness such as 'having fun' –whether in the form of laughter or football playing– are closely linked with the maintenance of Waorani good conviviality, and both are related to the maintenance of health. I have used the notion of vitality (see chapter 2) to describe Waorani appreciation of strength and life-force. While the discussion of vitality initially started with an exploration of metaphysical aspects such as the soul, the emphasis was placed on vitality as substance. This substance has no value in itself, but people appreciate its value when it is expressed in action. In other words, the value of vitality is in the capacity for action, whether it is expressed through growth, collective dance, laughter, signing, hunting, cooking, playing football or *strong speech*. This is also why vitality is intentionally shared in ritual practices – e.g., sweat sharing – after the vitality has been bodily expressed in the form of sweat, which means that a generative activity has taken place. This in turn, does not mean that the Waorani have

an appreciation of "hard" and collective work as has been noted among some Amazonian horticultural societies; Waorani work ethic considers resting and enjoyment as essential parts of generative processes.

Waorani people partake in the forest life-force by trekking, sensing and feeding themselves from the forest; but they acknowledge that this vitality is also threatened by disruptive forces. Apart from the contemporary depletion of the forest along oil roads, some of my Waorani collaborators affirm that sorcerer attacks, the quintessential form of predation over life-force, are sometimes directed towards the forest from which the Waorani feed themselves, which would be expressed in a sudden depletion of animals in a patch of forest or a river with no fish. When a person experiences a prolonged lack of strength, such as during a disease, this is also understood to be caused by predatory shamanic attacks. More research needs to be done to fully understand the relationship between the life-force of the forest as a socio-biological milieu and the life-force of the humans who dwell on it. I do believe that the approach to the study of the senses is an open door to understand this relation for peoples' *living well*. This approach is also a device to consider the extent of ecological and social damage that extractive activities cause. No far from the Waorani land, Krøijer (2019, in press) suggests that Siekopai people perceive patches of the forest affected by oil extraction and palm oil plantantions as "empty places", places with no life, and lacking the diversity of ontological and ecological relations that the forest milieu allows.

While Amazonian studies of conviviality have placed emphasis on mutual care and moral aesthetics (Overing and Passes 2000), I have shown that in villages located along oil roads, people understand their bodies in a process of changing which includes the incorporation of outsider's features. Therefore, conviviality is encompassed within a delicate management of relationships with alterity. Amazonian studies focused on relationships with alterity have emphasised symbolic exchange (e.g, shamanism, cannibalism, hunting, war, funerary rites); these kind of liminal process of exchange with alterity are thought to be a constitutive part of Amazonian sociality, and are closely linked with predatory relations where men have a key role. I have shown how among the Waorani, women are the ones who often chant before an encounter, for example with the State, and within that encounter women often develop what I call *strong speech* (chapter 5). Likewise, women more often than men develop the creative work of handicrafts that are exchanged with outsider's money or goods (chapter 4). Waorani have a strong interest in outsiders' knowledge, skills, and goods acquired in relations

that cannot be understood through the ontological duality of prey and predator; instead their increased relationality outside the forest operates through friendships for attracting external resources to the village.

This research has also offered a methodological contribution to the study of *living well*, by using different participatory methods. The variations between the conceptualization of *living well* during interviews and within the intuitive activity of painting t-shirts allowed me to present a "bigger" picture of what it means to live well for the Waorani. Chapter 3 described how complaints about noise and smell along the road expressed in daily life were better understood when developing a participatory method of recording treks in the forest. The sensorial language used by my collaborators in this participatory method was key to developing the analysis of Waorani sensorial ecology as related to *living well.* This understanding of the Waorani emphasis on senses when evaluating their ecological milieu came only late during my fieldwork, and therefore there is still a potential for further research, particularly in relation to plants.

The Waorani notion of *living well* has not been previously studied with in-depth ethnographic material from villages along oil roads. Some of the ethnographic contributions of this thesis are precisely related with reflections that Waorani people have developed while living along oil roads. A main example of this is Kengowento's reflection about hot and cold (chapter 2 and 3); the former connected with the road, anger, sickness and strong liquor; the latter, related to peace, a mobile lifestyle in the forest, and the consumption of sweet manioc beverage. The contrast that Waorani draw between the deep forest and the road is thought to be shared by some animals; for both, the Waorani argue that the road is not the ideal place for living peacefully and full of vitality, although some young people assert that their bodies are "getting used" to road.

This thesis has woven together different Waorani voices, from young to elderly, to illustrate what they value in their lives, how they experience and conceptualise their beautiful life and how that is seen in the light of their contemporary dealings with an encroaching society. I have attempted to make sense of how Waorani ubiquitous smiles and laughter (chapter 4) coexist with their *strong speech* directed mainly to outsiders along oil roads (chapter 5). Waorani *living well* is associated with the former, encompassing peace and collective happiness; whereas anger, also part of life, when expressed in the form of *strong speech* seems to be a form of channelling their vitality for defending their people while reasserting the Waorani point of view, a sort of

managed anger, a device for navigating relationships with "difficult" outsiders. Uncontrolled anger is considered harmful (chapter 2); particularly when prolonged, it brings disease and war, both spheres of life that are part of a cosmological duality (life/death) but opposite to *living well*. Chapter 6 offers a brief analysis of death, arguably the most challenging event for the kinship group; this is why across Amazonia, when close kin die, people have developed a variety of mechanisms to "forget" the mental image of the deceased (see Allard and Taylor 2016). Nevertheless, the Waorani are posting images of dead people and funerals over Facebook; while I have tried – perhaps unsuccessfully – to make sense of this digital approach to death, the digital realm of life is still to be understood.

I have finished the writing of this thesis while still receiving care and advice from my Waorani friends and collaborators over Facebook. They often start an online conversation by asking '*ebano kebi'* (how are you, or how are you doing), similar to how they start a chat in offline life; they often finish the online chat by saying '*waa kiwimi'*,'*waa kewe'* or '*waa quewe'* all different spellings and conjugations for expressing 'live well'. Despite this empirical confirmation of the online "nurturing" (Grotti 2007) of social relations, I have not been able to fully address it in this thesis. However, the ways in which Waorani people post images and news of diseases and death (chapter 6), are powerful "images" of what the incorporation of these outsiders' features means for them, and how they put their own way of being, the Waorani way, at the front of their engagements with outsiders' goods and technology.

The analysis of *living well* that I have presented, as expressed in chapter 1, is "blurred at its edges"; interpretations of what it means vary from person to person; however, I have highlighted the most salient aspects of this notion. The differences noted between Yoweno and Epepare in terms of equal distribution of resources, cohesiveness, and what Juana calls 'communication' among people but also with the forest, are perhaps linked with the villages' historical challenges –Yoweno as a heated frontier– and decisions –Epepare people fleeing from Yoweno to ensure a more peaceful life. However, it is precisely in Yoweno that I learned the importance of laughter for alleviating internal tensions. The creativity, wittiness and strength with which the Waorani "create" their *living well* – as Namo says– along the roads, might not be enough to ensure their *living well* for long if the "deceitful" oil company –as the Waorani call it – and the Ecuadorian State keep ignoring the Waorani speech (chapter

5), while populating Waorani land with noise and encroaching their *waemo ome* (beautiful forest).

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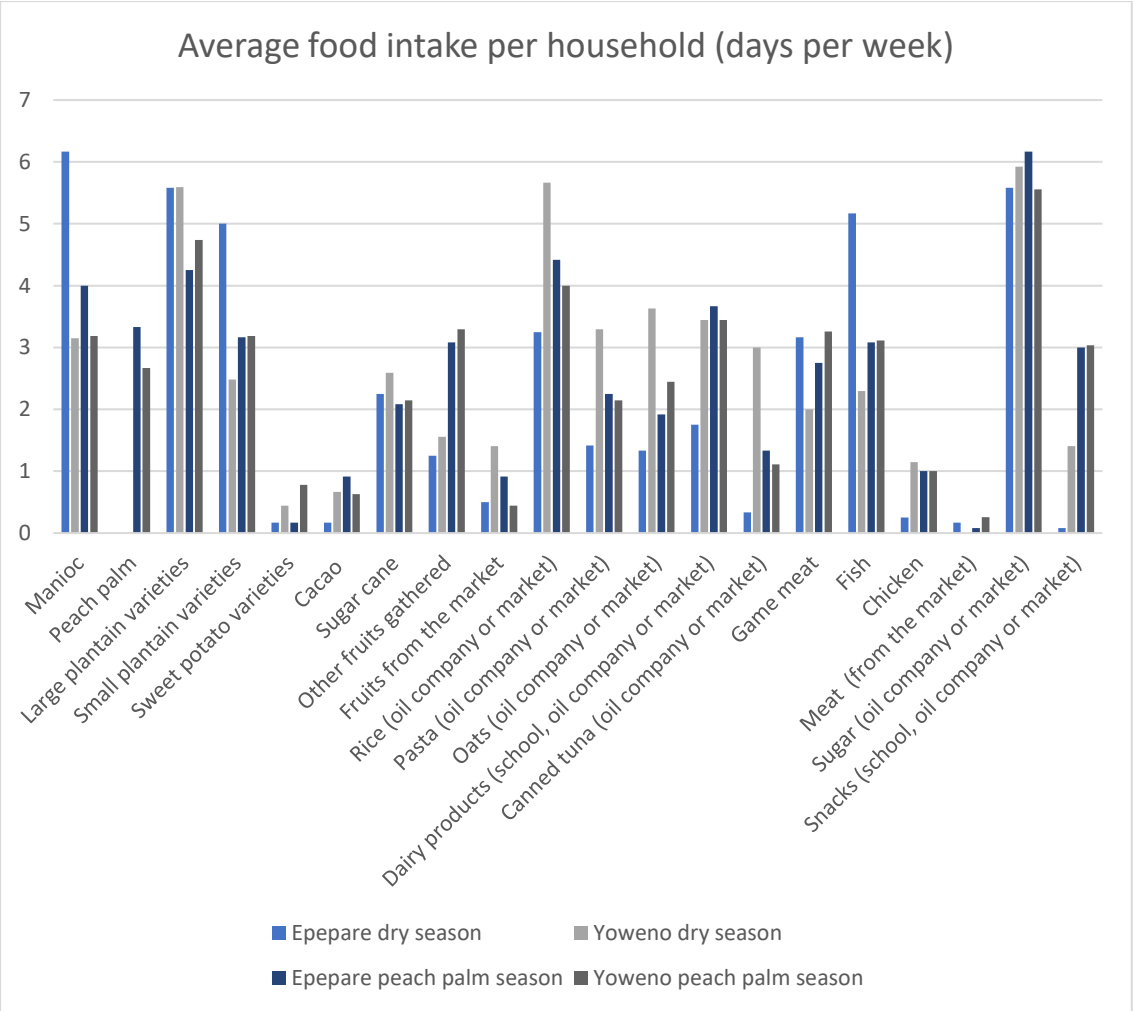
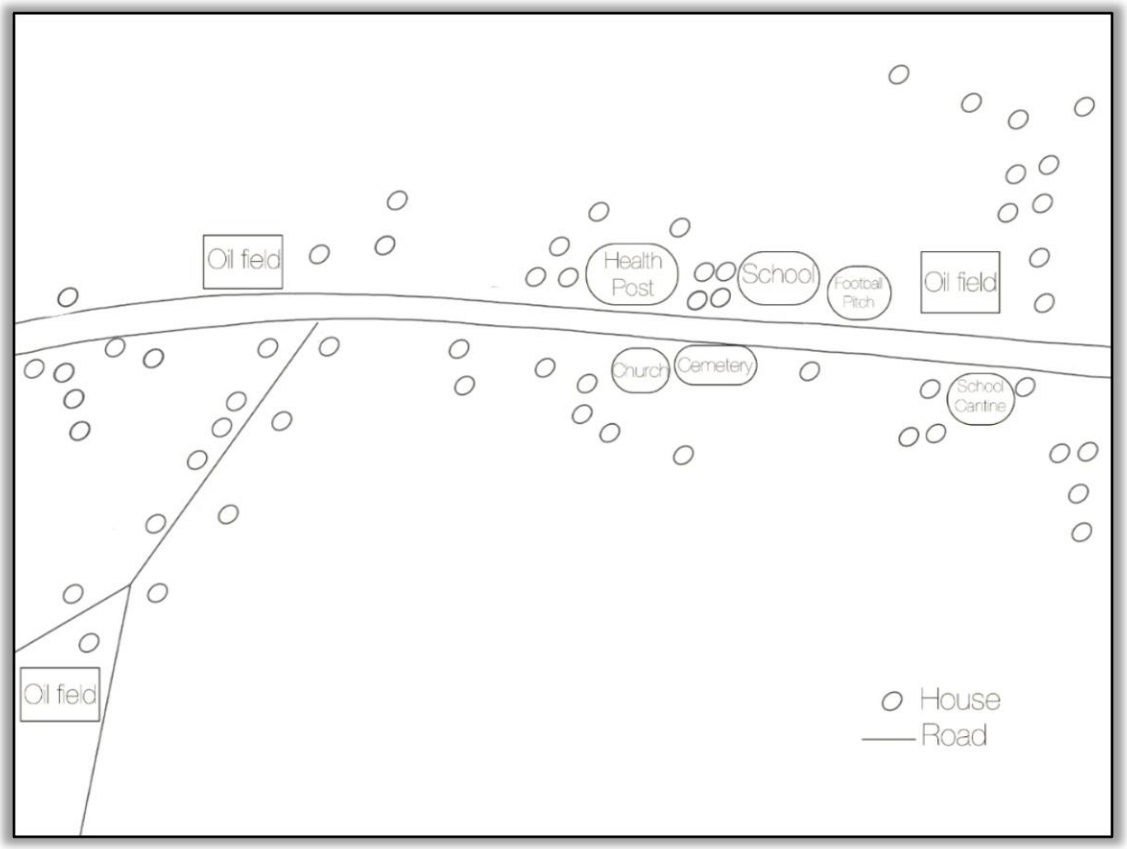
Appendices

Appendix 1: Food Frequency survey *



* This survey of the weekly dietary intake was conducted in half of the households in each village. First, during August-September 2017, which is a dry season with abundance of fish and second, in February-March 2018, when peach palm season started in both villages. Peach palm season in Epepare coincided with several men working in a nearby town on temporary jobs, which correlates with an increase in access to food from the market. Yoweno consumption of food from the market is related to their access to resources from the oil company, which declined during the peach palm season. In addition, Epepare is currently dealing with a plant disease that affects their plantain and reduced plantain consumption. The data on gathered fruits includes those coming from trees within the village, along the road, which are abundant in Yoweno.

Appendix 2: Village household distribution Yoweno.



Appendix 3: Village household distribution Epepare.