

# ***Gestión: ambivalence and temporalities of kinship and politics in Mocoa (Putumayo, Colombia)***

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## **Abstract:**

Located in the Amazon-Andean foothills, Mocoa is the administrative and bureaucratic center of Putumayo. In this place, indigenous leaders capture resources for communitarian activities through engagements within a diverse institutional landscape. Such interactions between indigenous leaders and multiple institutional others are locally known as *gestión*. In this article, I focus on the ways in which *gestión* connects political leadership practices with intimate worlds of kin and kith relations. Following *gestión* in the lives of two Inga women who lead local indigenous communities, I argue that *gestión* entails the making of an ambivalent kinship with institutional and political agents, which in turn brings material benefits as well as mistrustful relationships of intimacy. Yet, in everyday life, *gestión* is not only a matter of kinship and politics, but also of time. Leaders need time to do *gestión* in a highly institutionalized city. By focusing on the relation between *gestión*, kinship and time, I conclude by pointing to the incorporation of institutional temporalities of *gestión* as a self-making process in which leaders became state-like actors.

**Keywords:** Mocoa, *gestión*, kinship, politics, mistrust, temporalities.

## Introduction

*Gestión* is a category constitutive of community local leadership in Mocoa, in the Putumayo region of Colombia's Western Amazon. In this city, *gestión* is a word of daily use that refers to practices performed by indigenous and nonindigenous leaders to obtain resources needed for communitarian activities, as money or food, by means of interactions with local, regional and international actors of institutional and bureaucratic fields: state agencies, transnational NGOs, politicians and indigenous political organizations. Furthermore, *gestión* is also a category that travels from local political dynamics to intimate worlds of kin and kith relationships among Inga indigenous people, an ethnic group native of Putumayo.

This was clear to me during the Christmas celebration at the house of my Inga host and friend, Maria.<sup>1</sup> That night, Maria's brother made several jokes targeted at the *gobernadores* of Inga *resguardos* that were present at the party.<sup>2</sup> His comments, urging them to "make *gestión* to get more beer" for the guests, mocked leaders' most usual performances and caused a generalized laughter. After, he added: "Every time a *gobernador* gives one peso, he takes five. Am I right?" His concluding remark related to how leaders' friends and relatives are usually described as privileged recipients of goods captured on behalf of a whole community –e.g. *resguardos*–, and hence leaders tend to be seen as thieves who benefit themselves or their relatives with collective resources. Drawing on this ethnographic detail, I shall explore the traveling capacity of *gestión* to connect kinship and politics.

Mocoa's institutional-scape encompasses funds, interests and headquarters of main state institutions, development NGOs and social inclusion corporations. Indeed, while Mocoa is the seat of regional government and administration, Putumayo is a site of convergence of development and social assistance agents (see Ramírez, 2010, 2015). Indigenous leaders of this city deal with such

variety of actors when they do *gestión*, and therefore *gestión* is an expression of a wide phenomenon. According to recent ethnographies of indigenous political leadership in Amazonian societies of South America, a main feature of contemporary indigenous leaders is getting involved in a growing network of interactions with state agencies, transnational corporations and nongovernmental organizations, since these relations constitute a path to search and secure benefits for indigenous communities (Del Cairo, 2010; Virtanen, 2017).

Indigenous leaders' relations with multiple others –that are seen to hold valuable resources for securing indigenous livelihoods– have been analyzed as a consequence of leaders' incorporation of abilities to navigate bureaucratic and institutional settings, such as writing official documents, adapting to life in urban environments or knowing and applying legislations on indigenous rights (Allard & Walker, 2016; Veber & Virtanen, 2017). However, I propose to shift the attention from this outcomes oriented analysis to define *gestión* not as a competence targeted to resources, but as a process of relatedness. I argue that *gestión* is an analytical category useful to explore not only how indigenous leaders seek and get resources for collective activities in Mocoa –or elsewhere–, but also how they generate and actualize kinship and kinship-like bonds.

*Gestión* articulates kinship with politics. These articulations have been mainly related to the capacities of kinship practices to create bonds and, thus, groups who act politically in the world (Lazar, 2018). Examples of such perspective are several ethnographies of grassroots clientelism in Latin America. According to these works, the cultivation of kinship and friendship is habitual between politicians, political brokers and voters in everyday clientelist operations (see Auyero, 2001; Lazar, 2004). This approach contributes to my exploration of *gestión*, but it is not sufficient. *Gestión* has a shadow. It is constantly surrounded by rumors of theft and hoarding that describe political leaders as persons who steal or give significant amounts of collective resources to

their relatives. This shadow is an ambivalent nexus of kinship and politics, since it transforms *gestión* into a mistrust that links family affairs with leaders' role.

In this article, I address *gestión* through an ethnographic account of the lives of Rosa and Maria, two indigenous leaders and Inga women.<sup>3</sup> Rosa is 44 years old, and Maria, 37 years old. They were born in the Resguardo Inga Condagua, an indigenous Inga community located in Mocoa's northern rural zone, next to the Caquetá River –one of the longest rivers in the Colombian Western Amazon and the natural frontier between the departments of Cauca and Putumayo–. Also, Rosa and Maria are experienced leaders. They had been leaders of *Iuiai Wasi*,<sup>4</sup> a handicraft association composed by eighteen women and two men of Condagua. Maria led Condagua's artisans five years in a row until 2011, while Rosa is *Iuiai Wasi*'s president and legal representative since 2012. Additionally, Maria led the Resguardo Inga Condagua in 2019 and has been a beneficiary leader of Familias en Acción, Colombia's major conditional cash transfers program.<sup>5</sup>

To develop my argument, I explore Maria's and Rosa's *gestión* in four different settings. I first present an ethnographic vignette of Maria's *gestión* as head of the Resguardo Inga Condagua to contend that *gestión* is about kinning with institutional and political actors by means of vehicles and practices of relatedness. I then show the ambivalent side of *gestión* through an ethnographic vignette on the shadow of Rosa's leadership in *Iuiai Wasi*. After these vignettes, I reflect on the relation between *gestión*, kinship and time. Here I show how Rosa's relation with a main agency of crafts manufacture and commercialization entails a kinship temporality. Moreover, I look into Maria's *gestión* as beneficiary leader of Familias en Acción not only to follow entanglements of kinship and time, but also to focus on her status as state-like actor in her neighborhood. In light of this, I conclude that Rosa and Maria transformed *gestión* into a capital to be community leaders and even state-like agents in a city where indigenous and poor are mainly targets of interventions.

## **Mocoa's institutional-scape**

There are several types of indigenous leaders in Mocoa. A significant portion of them are leaders of *cabildos* and *resguardos*. In Mocoa's rural and urban sectors live 10,057 indigenous persons enrolled in 10 *resguardos* and 16 *cabildos* of 7 different ethnic groups (PDT, 2020). *Resguardos* and *cabildos* are legally recognized organizations with *gobernadores* who represent an indigenous community, yet *cabildos* –unlike *resguardos*– lack a territory of their own.<sup>6</sup> In Mocoa, most of these organizations –6 *resguardos* and 9 *cabildos*– are populated by Inga people, something that is not surprising since this indigenous community has a numerous and long-standing presence in Southwestern Colombia, especially in the departments of Nariño, Putumayo, Cauca and Caquetá (Sichra, 2009). Besides *gobernadores*, indigenous political leadership in Mocoa includes urban community local leaders and legal representatives of indigenous commercial associations.

*Gestión* is a word common in everyday practices of indigenous leaders because it contains their experiences of living and working within a highly institutionalized city and a region of abundant interventions. The complexity of Mocoa's institutional-scape is partially configured by processes related to the long-term armed conflict in Colombia's Western Amazon. Mocoa received 20,520 displaced persons during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century due to political violence and conflict between state security forces, guerrillas and paramilitaries in Putumayo (Sánchez, 2012). Today, 25,101 victims of armed conflict dwell in Mocoa's rural and urban zones. Since in Mocoa dwell 48,422 persons, victims of war are more than half of the city's current population (PDT, 2020). Thus victims' assistance is a major source of social programs in this place. For example, Familias en Acción, one of these programs, delivers health and education subsidies to 7,400 displaced and poor families.

For decades, Putumayo has been a coca-growing region where coca cultivation and exportation of coca paste to international markets are both a source for financing illegal armed groups and a means of subsistence for rural dwellers and farming families. Between the 1990s and the 2000s, coca paste became Putumayo's major exportation and the region registered 40% of the nation's illicit coca crop (Tate, 2015; Lyons, 2015). Since this time, Putumayo is a center of militarized eradication and coca-substitution programs implemented with multilateral funds derived of U.S.-Colombia antidrug policy, Plan Colombia, which conflates wars on drugs and counterinsurgency. As Ramírez (2010) argued, war on drugs involves a development agenda that consists mostly of productive projects offered in exchange of coca eradication to campesinos and indigenous people who dwell in coca cultivation areas. This social policy has also been present in Mocoa's rural zone through Familias Guardabosques, a coca-substitution program that operated throughout Colombia –including Western Colombian Amazon– between 2003 and 2010 (DNP, 2012).

Besides indigenous *resguardos* and *cabildos*, social inclusion agencies and development NGOs, Mocoa's institutional-scape includes principal state offices, such as Putumayo's governor office and the municipal city hall. Also, there are post-disaster programs with international funding for psychosocial assistance, resettlement and urban reconstruction derived of the avalanche of 2017, an emergency that attracted worldwide attention due to the hundreds of dead and images of major areas of the city smashed and covered by mud and rocks. Thus indigenous leaders are dwellers of a complex institutional-scape, and they need to move across Mocoa and maneuver a mesh of state and nonstate actors when they do *gestión*. This is part of Maria's and Rosa's expertise. They are accustomed to spend whole days going from one institution to another in search of resources or to attend meetings and capacity building workshops.

## **Maria's first *gestión* for the *Carnaval***

On the last day of 2018, at Maria's house gathered several kin and friends to celebrate the new coming year. Since early morning, Maria, some of her relatives and I started to cook for the night: we were going to have *maitu kusado*, a specialty of Inga food in Putumayo. In Condagua, Maria learned that *maitu kusado*, fish grilled wrapped in *sirindango* leaves,<sup>7</sup> is usually offered to special guests as an act of hospitality. Precisely, a major guest was expected in Maria's house that evening: Juan, the head of OPIAC (*Organización Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonia Colombia*), a regional indigenous political organization with power and prestige in Colombia's southwest. Around 8 p.m., a big white car appeared in the narrow streets of Palermo Sur, the social housing neighborhood where Maria had lived since 2005. Juan arrived with his wife.

Maria, dressed in jeans, a yellow blouse and heels, went out, rushing, to get her special guests. Meanwhile, the rest of us stayed observing in the living room. Welcoming and placing them inside in the best plastic sits next to the plastic table specially set for the occasion, Juan and his wife rapidly started to eat their *maitus* surrounded by Maria's kin and friends. They spoke mainly to Jairo, Maria's partner at that time. Jairo and Juan, close friends from politics, knew each other since 2015, when Jairo was *gobernador* of the Resguardo Inga Mocoa and Juan was already OPIAC's director. Maria did not talk, but she did not lose track of her guests' words and movements.

"Maria is the new coming *gobernadora* of Condagua", said Jairo solemnly to Juan after finishing their meal. Juan stood up congratulating her effusively and looking at her replied: "If you need something for the *Carnaval* [one of the most important annual rituals of Inga people], just tell me. But don't tell other *gobernadores*, because I can't give to everybody". After these short sentences, Maria thanked Juan for his support and walked Juan and his wife to their car. Coming

back inside her house, Maria said to us: “This is how alliances are made: with a *maitu*”. That night Maria –not yet official *gobernadora*– made her first *gestión*. Indeed, months later, Juan gave a big amount of money to support Maria in the organization of the Condagua’s *Carnaval*, which took place in March.

### **Outlining a framework for *gestión***

The *Carnaval* is one of the main Inga festivities in the ritual calendar. Among Inga communities of the Upper and Middle Putumayo regions, political indigenous leaders or *gobernadores* are traditionally elected in December and the *Carnaval* is celebrated at the beginning of the next year, few days before the Lent (Pinzón, Suárez & Garay, 2004). Hence, the *Carnaval* is the first major occasion for communities to proof the worth of their newly elected leaders. The same holds true for the Resguardo Inga Condagua, and Maria knew it. As she said to me: “the *Carnaval* defines if people are going to follow me or not. It shows whether a *gobernador* is useful”. And rightly so, the forthcoming *Carnaval* became the opportunity for Condagua’s community to asses Maria’s role as *gobernadora*.

According to Maria, food is the main criterion for a *carnaval* to be considered successful: it must be “abundant and enough to all”. In Condagua, where the *Carnaval* usually lasts three days, Maria expected 200 persons –including natives of Condagua and visitors of neighboring Inga communities–. This large number of people made her responsible for securing an equal amount of food. To fulfill this task, she sped up her *gestión* early in December, as soon as she was elected. She looked for people in powerful positions, like Juan, and tried by means of relatives to get more resources through local indigenous and nonindigenous politicians. Moreover, Maria formally asked for economic help and food supplies through written documents or *oficios* addressed to local state agencies, nonprofit organizations and shops in Mocoa.

Several authors have described the ability of incorporating resources into communities as a key feature of contemporary indigenous political leadership like in the Amazon (Del Cairo, 2010; Veber & Virtanen, 2017). Certainly, in studies about interactions between Amazonian societies and a variety of others –states, NGOs, activists and researchers–, leader’s role has been conceptualized as a competence to relate with multiple actors that are seen to hold valuable resources for securing indigenous livelihoods (Allard & Walker, 2016; Cepek, 2018; Murtagh, 2016). In this approach, leaders’ relations with state and nongovernmental agencies are an outcome of their skills to apply legislations on indigenous rights and engage in bureaucratic processes. It is a view that equates indigenous leadership with abilities targeted to resources.

This same resource oriented analysis has been used to study *gestión* in Putumayo. Chaves & Hoyos (2011) argue that indigenous leaders in this context developed a particular capacity to flow within local bureaucracies with the purpose of not losing access to public resources derived from multicultural reforms of the nineties. The 1991 Colombian Constitution established a policy of economic transfers to *resguardos*. This law changed in the early 2000s and procedures to receive money became technically demanding.<sup>8</sup> To confront obstacles generated by new legal conditions, leaders adopted a *bureaucratic competence*. They acquired the know-how to take part in state networks and fields. Although Chaves & Hoyos (2011) highlight that indigenous leaders in Mocoa often overlook institutional rules through personal bonds with local bureaucrats and politicians to achieve project funds and contracts, these authors do not take into account how those personal bonds are made.

Other ethnographies focusing on citizenship and leadership in poor urban settings demonstrate that a significant dimension of leaders’ actions is how they obtain communitarian access to public and private resources through relations with state and state-like actors not limited to legal and

rational frames of government (Anand, 2011; Anand & Rademacher, 2011). Following these works, I propose to address *gestión* not as a competence targeted to resources, but as a process of relatedness. *Gestión*, I shall argue, is a useful analytic category to explore not only how leaders seek and obtain necessary resources for collective activities in Mocoa –or elsewhere–, but also how they generate and actualize other resources as kinship relations as alternative channels, equally important in securing means to survival.

Maria's first *gestión* involved an affective and intimate experience of sociality with a local institutional actor, the head of a significant indigenous political organization. Inviting him to her place, sharing food and becoming proximate via a *maitu*, Juan became related to her, her kinfolk and neighbors. Through these practices, she was able to secure crucial resources for the *Carnaval*, an event which in turn propelled or hinder her own leadership. Hers was an act articulating kinship and politics. In this convergence, making kin and kith bonds via commensality meshed intimacy and resources as part of a political matrix, in which targeting governance institutions was only one part of the strategy to strengthen leadership inside indigenous communities.

From the perspective of classic kinship studies, sharing food in a house –either with unrelated persons or blood relatives– is nothing more than a mundane household experience. Until the 1970s, kinship was mainly conceived as a system of rules that provided order and continuity in societies that were viewed as deprived of modern Western state (Carsten, 2004). This classic narrative included the distinction between *jural* and *domestic* domains of kinship proposed by Fortes (1969). The first refers to genealogical principles that determine the status, role, rights, and duties of persons within a kinship-based society. The second encompasses everyday relations and behaviors of parents and children in a private sphere. For many decades anthropology scholars were interested most on the jural, not the domestic (Overing, Fortis & Margiotti, 2015).

Nevertheless, the domestic is currently addressed as a key domain to understand how kin bonds are made in public and private spheres, gathering intimate experiences with major economic and political processes (see, for example, Leinaweaver, 2007). Here lies a conception of kinship as an accumulation of practices and interactions of everyday life that constitutes enduring relationships –not limited to genealogical ties– in which persons invest time, resources, and emotions (Carsten, 2013; Miller, 2007). This processual, performance-centered and affective perspective of kinship is what Carsten (2000, 2010) calls *relatedness*. From such view, a house is a critical place where kinship is constructed and performed through daily experiences of sharing food, residence, objects, resources, or memories (Carsten & Hugh-Jones, 1995; Carsten, 2004; Thomas, 2010). House, I would add, is also a critical place for politics.

The making of *gestión* involves calculative self-interest. According to a dominant strand of Western thought, such element is corrosive to intimate social relationships, mostly when is associated with economic operations and money, because it opposes to pure forms of altruism and generosity (Cole, 2009; Ferguson, 2014; Zelizer, 2005). But several ethnographies have demonstrated that relations commonly described as affective and voluntary, like friendship, are deeply dependent on exchanges of material goods shaped by personal interests and instrumental rationalities (e.g. Guichard, 2014; Killick & Desai, 2010; Lebner, 2012; Mains, 2013).

Drawing from these ideas, *gestión* is about resources that are productive of relationality. And Juan's statement in support of Maria is an example of this. In fact, his decision to give her and not to others who might be in her same position, is a stand regarding resource distribution driven by the making and actualizing a bond with Maria. Indeed, she was not like any other *gobernadoras*. Thus, the money that he gave her was a constituent part of their intimacy, just as the *maitu* shared in Maria's house.

These kinning practices with state-like agents and institutions are at odds with the conception of kinship and state as mutually exclusive domains. Classic political anthropology conceived kin relations as the governmental system of so-called traditional stateless societies, which signified a disconnection between state and kinship as ways of regulating social life in the West and the rest (see Fortes, 1969; Radcliffe-Brown, 1952). In contrast with the notion of kinship made of large groups of descendants, modern Western societies were considered as the context where the nuclear family emerged, relegating familiar issues to private spheres separated of politics and economics (McKinnon & Cannell, 2013; Thelen & Alber, 2018).

Since the 1970s, gender studies, Foucault-inspired analysis, and investigations of citizenship and national identity blurred the boundary between state and kinship (Douzina-Bakalaki, 2019). But most of these works emphasize “how political processes influence transformations in kinship and not how changes in kinship practices and imaginaries trigger political change” (Thelen & Alber, 2018, p. 16). In light of this, various authors have proposed diverse approaches to analyze both the flow from kinship to politics –using such distinction not to reinstate divisions of social reality, but to described it– and their coproduction (e.g. Thelen, Veters & Benda-Beckmann, 2018). In this scenario, one way consists in tracking and scrutinizing concepts capable of linking kin relations with state and state-like actors and fields. *Gestión* does this.

*Gestión* allows networks with agents of governance institutions through practices and vehicles of relationality and intimacy, like commensality and resources, which in turn bring material and political gains. This is what Lazar (2018) calls *kinship anthropology of politics*. It is an analytical strategy that emphasizes how collective subjects or political groups come into being by means of kinning practices. However, neither kinship nor *gestión* are unambiguous. Kinship is about both attachment and disengagement. And *gestión* in Condagua refers not only to bonding and getting

resources, but also to theft and mistrust. In what follows I shall explore this side of *gestión*, in which there is an ambivalent articulation of kinship and politics.

### **Rosa's *gestión* and the rumor about her family**



*Iuiái Wasi's kiosks in Condagua. Photo by the author.*

This photo shows us a space that few years before was a muddy brushwood. Today, it has several kiosks, a kitchen, a bathroom and a soccer field. The new built infrastructure involved the hard work of *Iuiái Wasi* members and their families, who participated both as designers and workforce, but mainly of Rosa's *gestión*. The building stands at the entrance of the Resguardo Inga Condagua, close to the road that connects Mocoa with Pitalito —a main city of the department of Huila. At the end of 2015, when I met Rosa, she was already the head of this handcraft associa-

tion and led many fund raising activities for the construction of the first kiosk. Since 2017, Rosa also managed to secure funding from international agencies, like the Global Environment Facility, to build the other two kiosks that appear in the photo, which nowadays function as a touristic center where visitors have a cultural experience of traditional Inga food and handicrafts.

The touristic center started with the making of the handicraft store. Its construction meant hard work in removing the mud that surrounded the kiosks: the idea was that visitors could step down from their vehicles without needing rubber boots. Until recently, artisans of *Iuiai Wasi* referred to the place where the kiosks are as *chuquia*, a Spanish word of the southwestern Colombian region that describes a muddy and smelly land. The picture above was taken when the mud was already removed. But that achievement involved several months of *gestión* from Rosa's side. In 2017, she personally asked Ospina, Mocoa's non-indigenous mayor, to borrow the association a bulldozer for removing out the *chuquia*.

Rosa and Ospina knew each other since very young, as his family used to live in Mocoa's rural zone, close to Condagua, hiring Rosa's parents to look after their plot and harvest, maintaining their house and cleaning the access paths. Later, Ospina's family sold their land to the Resguardo Inga Condagua. Although Ospina and Rosa did not see each other during a long time, they reencountered when Ospina entered to politics and Rosa was already head of the handicraft association. Indeed, Rosa helped him to obtain votes in Condagua for the local elections of 2015, and he, in return, supported economically a festival that Rosa organized that year to collect funds for the construction of the first kiosk.

Nowadays, Rosa considers Ospina as a friend. "I know his private number, where he lives, and sometimes I chat with him through WhatsApp", she told me when she referred to her relationship

with the mayor. Based on that closeness, Rosa trusted that her request for bulldozer would be fulfilled. Ospina approved it as she expected and so she shared the good news with all *Iuiai Wasi* members, phrasing it as a success in her *gestión*. However, months passed and the promised bulldozer was never delivered. Rosa's tries to contact Ospina on the phone where unsuccessful. She also tried to catch him at his office, and could not find him either.

Desperate after being put down in front of all the members of the association, once Rosa confronted Ospina at a public audience where the mayor listened to leaders from neighborhoods, business sectors and communitarian organizations. In front of a big crowd, Rosa told publicly Ospina that he let her down and fell to fulfill his promise. Ospina had no other choice but to recognize his mistake and again reassured Rosa the bulldozer would come to Condagua in no time. Ospina sent machines, but they were not the machines Rosa and Condagua's community were expecting.

The delay made rumors about Rosa spread all over Condagua, reaching some neighbors and kin in Mocoa. As Maria explained to me, "Ospina did not keep his promise because Rosa asks him too many personal favors", which included in Maria's own terms, mainly money for her family. Thus, Rosa had no chance to put pressure on Ospina for the bulldozer, as she was benefitting from economic gifts that were for her parents and siblings. "Rosa and her family are like beggars", Maria added.

### ***Gestión's shadow and kinship ambivalence***

In Condagua, leaders are usually portrayed not only as capable of introducing resources into the groups they lead, but also prone to keep a major part of these material goods for them and their close kin. People of the *resguardo* often complain and make jokes about such ambivalent features

with comments like “When a *gobernador* gives us one thousand pesos, he has previously taken five thousand”. This is what I shall call the *shadow of gestión*. In other words, *gestión* is permanently accompanied by rumors of theft and hoarding that describe political leaders –both women and men– as persons who have access to resources, because they got them through *gestión*, and stole or give a significant amount of them to their families, so the community receives less than it should.

The shadow of *gestión* is a kinship-extended dimension of leaders’ lives. Both Rosa and her relatives were seen as beggars, as they would pursue family benefits over communal ones. Again Maria, referring this time about Sandra, Rosa’s niece, mentioned the *gestión* on the Virgen Del Carmen day, a minor catholic festivity in Condagua. On 2018, Sandra was one of the organizers together with Maria and had to secure food for the participants and arrange the musicians. Maria offered her help, as she considered herself more experience than Sandra in *gestión*, but she insisted on working alone. “Do you think she is after personal favors?”, I asked Maria, since she thought of Sandra’s regret as suspicious, “maybe, she is like that”, she answered, hinting at her double standards.

Rosa’s rumor effectively extended untrustworthiness from Rosa to her kin. Sandra was as unreliable as her aunt. Like Rosa, it was possible that Sandra’s *gestión* had sought money for her own family instead than caring fully for the Virgen Del Carmen festivity. This shared mistrust among kinsfolk can be considered as an example of *mutuality of being*. For Sahlin (2013), this notion means that relatives are “persons who belong to one another, who are parts of one another, who are co-present in each other, whose lives are joined and interdependent” (p. 21). Mutuality implies that “where being is mutual, there experience is more than individual” (Sahlin, 2013, p. 2). In Condagua, mistrust related to *gestión* is mutual because it is diffused among kin.

At first sight, it appears problematic the conjunction of mutuality of being and mistrust to analyze the shadow of *gestión*. In contrast to mistrust, which is often treated as a social acid that sunders human relations (Carey, 2017), mutuality of being is about intimate bonding. Indeed, mutuality of being is based on a dominant Western notion of relatedness that equates shared experience and similarity with the most intimate, kind and reliable social bonds (Stasch, 2009). Sahlins (2008) endorses Aristotle's definition of kinship as "the same entity in different subjects" (p. 45) to posit relatives as transpersonal unities of experience. Besides, Aristotle argued that true friends and kin "enjoy one another's goodwill, trust, and affection" (Beer & Gardner, 2015, p. 426). For Sahlins, this is manifested through the "diffuse enduring solidarity" kinsmen are enjoined to have for one another (2013, p. 24). Therefore, a mutual being entails reciprocal solidarity and trust.

However, kinship is ambivalent. Although a long tradition of anthropological studies conceive amity and the like as principles of kin economic relation and moral orientation toward each other (Fortes, 1969; Schneider, 1980; Sahlins, 1968, 2008, 2013), several scholars have contended that difference, hierarchy, exclusion and violence are also part of what kinship is, does and enables (Brightman, 2013; Carsten, 2013; Lambek, 2011; Peletz, 2001; Stasch, 2009; Van Vleet, 2002). Following this stand of thought, I shall argue that mistrust associated with *gestión* is constitutive of Rosa and Maria's ambivalent relatedness. Such mistrust should not be seen as social failure or absence of sociality, but as a mutual relationship of being.

*Gestión* has been the bonding vehicle between Rosa and Maria. For several years, they have worked together to raise funding for *Iuiai Wasi's* communitarian projects and activities. For example, when Rosa was doing *gestión* for the construction of the touristic center's kiosks, Maria helped her to obtain five hundred thousand Colombian pesos and twenty kilos of cement with two candidates that she knew in Colombia's 2018 legislative election. These politicians support-

ed Rosa and Maria's *gestión* to get votes from *Iuiái Wasi*'s members in exchange. Moreover, since Maria had previous experience leading *Iuiái Wasi* and she lived in the urban area of Mocoa, Rosa used to rely on her to replace her at crafts fairs, or run bureaucratic errands, or attend meetings with actors of institutions located in Mocoa's administrative and business center.

Although Rosa and Maria have supported each other through *gestión*, *gestión* is also the source of the mistrust they are enjoined to have for one another. Just as Maria did it, Rosa told me about Maria's unreliability by means of a rumor. One morning, Rosa mentioned how she felt overworked. As *Iuiái Wasi*'s leader, she was responsible not only for *gestión*, but also for manufacturing handicrafts and attending most craft fairs. One solution for Rosa's fatigue was to delegate an artisan exclusively dedicated to assist at craft fairs and be attentive to potential clients. "Maria is ideal for this job, since she knows how to sell and do accounting, but she is unreliable", Rosa said and she explained why. When Maria was leader of Condagua's artisans group, the artisans convened at her home for a meeting. One of Rosa's uncles arrived first and saw some handicrafts, which Maria reported as lost after a craft fair, exposed in Maria's place for sale.

In those days, Condagua's artisans obtained funds to manufacture handicrafts and participate in craft fairs through Maria's interactions with Acción Social and Artesanías de Colombia.<sup>9</sup> Instead of caring for the whole Condagua's artisans at the fair, she kept some of the handicrafts, as if she would not have been keen on offering them, or if she wanted to steal them and sale them as hers in her own house. Acts described as self-interested and biased toward kin are common features of Rosa's and Maria's positions on each other untrustworthiness. Both are unreliable because they keep communitarian resources for themselves or their families. Within this scenario, mistrust relates to *gestión* as mutuality of being not only because it is diffused among kinsfolk –like Ma-

ria's mistrust of Rosa showed—, but also since it is mutually shared between Rosa and Maria. They mistrust one another.

Recent ethnographic works have evidenced multiple ways in which mistrust constitutes practices and relations of its own. For example, Candea & da Col (2012) showed that in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern ethnography, hospitality rules has been conceived as mechanisms to integrate and domesticate strangers, since their radical otherness makes difficult to trust them (e.g. Pitt-Rivers, 1968, 2012; Herzfeld, 1987). And Utekhin (2018) treated everyday interactions of inhabitants of communal apartments in soviet and post-soviet Russia as a mutual surveillance based on mistrust. Certainly, these works establish that mistrust is relational rather than opposed to engagement. It is “a way of perceiving and relating to people, institutions and things” (Mühlfried, 2018, p. 16).

In this case, mistrust shapes a particular mode of relatedness: kinship. As Carey (2017) puts it, “familiarity is insufficient ground for trust” (p. 8). Contrary to the widespread links between familiarity and reliability, Carey's ethnographic work in Moroccan High Atlas, argues, like me, that close friends and kin are also untrustworthy. In Rosa and Maria's relation, mistrust emerges and extends through *gestión* and kinship. It is diffused and shared among kin, as well as practiced when relatives do *gestión*. The shadow of *gestión* also complements the *kinship anthropology of politics* proposed by Lazar (2018). Lazar's approach emphasizes how kinning produces collective subjects who act politically in the world. This lens helps to analyze *gestión*, but not its shadow. In fact, bonding and mistrust are both integral parts of the politics of getting resources. *Gestión* is an ambivalent articulation of kinship and politics, and Lazar's view disregards such articulations.

### **Temporalities of *gestión* and kinship**

*Gestión* has to do with time. In Maria's *gestión* for the *Carnaval*, time is critical. As discussed above, *Carnaval* takes place in Condagua annually at the beginning of the year, few days before

the Lent, and the elected indigenous leader is responsible for getting resources to realize this festivity. In fact, *gestión* for the *Carnaval* was a primary purpose of Maria's first months of leadership. Additionally, people of the *resguardo* often highlight *Carnaval* success or failure to remember if a leader was either a giver or a thief. In Rosa's *gestión*, time was against her. After she made public that Mocoa's former mayor agreed on sending a bulldozer to remove the mud that surrounded *Iuiai Wasi's* kiosks, several months passed and such machine never appeared. Although Rosa put a lot of time and effort looking for Ospina to fulfill his promise, Ospina's delay and default were turned in Condagua into rumors against Rosa and her kin.

"Leaders need time to deal with institutions", Rosa said to me one day. Certainly, dealing with state and state-like institutions entails particular temporalities that have shaped Rosa's and Maria's experiences of the relation between *gestión* and time. Here, I understand *temporalities* as social experiences of time (Lazar, 2014; Munn, 1992). For example, since Rosa and Maria participated in *Familias Guardabosques* program in 2005, projects became their standard mode of relating to regional and national institutions to do *gestión*. Most often, these projects are developed through capacity building workshops organized in stages, and this constitutes, in Maria's words, "a long and tiring process". It takes months of weekly meetings with institutional actors, and it is tiring because training sessions elaborate repeatedly on topics like accountability and customer service.

As leaders, Rosa and Maria adopted the temporality of projects to get resources that are usually delivered by institutions when projects are either advanced or finished, like funds and materials for communitarian activities. This means that they developed vital skills to do *gestión* through their participation in projects workshops, even if their topics were tiringly repetitive. For example, in capacity building sessions, Rosa and Maria learned teamwork skills to keep together the

artisans association, technological skills to seek calls for projects in websites, and leadership skills to lose fear of public speaking with institutional actors and *Iuiai Wasi's* clients of Colombia's largest and commercial cities. Therefore, Rosa and Maria experienced projects temporality and transformed it into a capital (Davidov, 2016). Due to adopting and managing themselves according to specific institutional timelines, they have done *gestión* for many years. *Gestión* also constitutes a time line of Rosa's and Maria's lives. Let me address this idea in the next section through a flashback.

### **Rosa's and Maria's lives before and after *gestión***

Maria and Rosa grew in different set ups that made their lives different. Maria's indigenous mother and non-indigenous father-in-law worked many years as farm keepers in different places of Colombian southwest. The constant family travels made Maria stayed apart from her indigenous roots and family until she turned 8 years old and went back to Condagua to live with her mother, siblings and indigenous grandparents. On the contrary, Rosa stayed in Condagua, was raised by indigenous parents, spoke Inga on a daily basis, following native ways of living and obeying strict rules given by her father. For example, Rosa was never allowed to go out to Mocoa without her dad.

After spending short time living with her grandparents, Maria left Condagua and moved to Puerto Asís, a major commercial city of Putumayo, where she worked as a waiter in a restaurant. Years later, she returned to Mocoa with a little girl, her first daughter, and shared a house with her mother, a new father-in-law, and siblings of different ages in a poor neighborhood mostly populated by indigenous people. Back then, Maria used to work cleaning offices and houses or cooking in restaurants of Mocoa's urban zone. Rosa could not finish higher education since her father forbidden her to attend school. Instead, she worked in her family land and learned how to

earn money as a daily laborer in other farms of Condagua. Rosa never got married, lives on her own and has no children; on the contrary, Maria married twice and has two daughters.

In 2005, *Familias Guardabosques*, a government funded social program, arrived to Condagua. This program offered six hundred thousand Colombian pesos every two months to each participant and training through productive projects of poultry farming, fish farming, agriculture, stock-breeding, and craftwork. All members of the Resguardo Inga Condagua were able to participate in one or more projects; in exchange, they had to commit to eradicate manually the illegal coca crops growing in their fields. Putumayo was an epicenter of cocaine economy and armed conflict, and is still the case. The government' social policy was focused on coca leaf eradication and military control of the rebels, which included the promotion of different legal ways of earning money that could replace the income related to cocaine production and commercialization (Chaves & Hoyos, 2011).

Rosa and Maria enrolled a craftwork project. For a year, they were part of a 78 persons group who attended workshops for handicrafts manufacture and commercialization led by designers of Artesanías de Colombia. Rosa considered the craftwork project as "ideal" because she was earning money for applying skills and knowledges acquired since her childhood, when Rosa's parents taught her how to make Inga crafts –like seed necklaces or natural fiber bags–. Maria didn't have any previous relation with handicrafts, but she founded her vocation as an artisan through the craftwork project. Also, money derived of this project allowed her to provide for her family.

*Familias Guardabosques* revealed to Condagua's artisans that relations with institutions through projects and capacity building workshops were useful to obtain craft tools and materials; funds to participate in fairs; and technical knowledge on design, finance or costumer service. In fact, this

program was funded by Acción Social, a state institution that provided materials and training for handicraft manufacture and commercialization, as well as money to cover food and transportation expenses to the local craft fair to which artisans assisted. After *Guardabosques*, relating with institutional actors and obtaining resources from them became a leaders' job in the artisans group.

Maria led Condagua's artisans since the end of *Guardabosques* craftwork project until 2011, when the group became a legally founded association called *Iuiai Wasi*. Rosa took the lead in 2012 as *Iuiai Wasi's* president and legal representative, and she still is the leader. For five years in a row, Maria engaged with institutional actors, looked for spaces and opportunities to sell handicrafts and traveled to many regional and national craft fairs as representative of Condagua's artisans. Like Maria, Rosa had to develop ties with governance institutions to put *Iuiai Wasi* on the map of organizations capable of supporting artisans' activities. As leaders, Maria and Rosa incorporated *gestión* into their lives. They got used to represent the artisans group in multiple places and kinning with some state and state-like agents and institutions.

### **A kinship temporality of *gestión***

In some cases, the relation between *gestión* and time could be considered not as a capital, but as a kinship temporality. Like *gestión*, kinship has temporalities. As Carsten (2013) affirmed, kinship is made of processes of thickening and thinning of relatedness. Little by little, it accumulates or dissolves over time through every day experiences, as well as ritual and non-ritual moments. This perspective offers the possibility of exploring both kinship and *gestión* accumulations and dissolutions. Precisely, one of Rosa's most important *gestión* is a process of kinning or thickening of relatedness with Artesanías de Colombia. As *Iuiai Wasi's* leader, Rosa built a strong and stable relationship with this institutional actor, and she used to conceive such bonding in kinship terms: "Artesanías de Colombia is like *Iuiai Wasi's* father".

Rosa described Artesanías de Colombia as *Iuiai Wasi's* father because this institution provided a long-standing help for *Iuiai Wasi's* development. Thanks to this relation, *Iuiai Wasi* participated in several small business strengthening programs aimed at Colombian ethnic groups who perform traditional craft. Such programs, created by Artesanías de Colombia and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, allowed Rosa not only to represent Condagua's artisans in regional and national fairs, but also to assist business meetings and roundtables where she met customers who frequently bought handicrafts to *Iuiai Wasi*. Besides technical training and funding, Artesanías de Colombia also tracked *Iuiai Wasi's* progress calling Rosa on a regular basis. "They keep an eye on us. We are what we are because of its support", Rosa mentioned to me.

Rosa's relation with Artesanías de Colombia got thickness thanks to her work alongside this this institution. Rosa had two paid jobs with Artesanías de Colombia. In 2016, this institution hired a crew of Condagua's renowned artisans –including Rosa– to dictate each of them six workshops on different types of crafts to their own indigenous community. In 2017, during a meeting convened in Condagua by a former *gobernador*, a representative of Artesanías de Colombia informed to all the community that this institution was interested in hiring a communitarian technician. Among several candidates, Rosa was elected because she fulfilled the requisites better than others: been artisan, speak Inga fluently and have experience on communitarian work. Rosa worked half year coordinating and recording all capacity building sessions and workshops done by Artesanías de Colombia with *Iuiai Wasi's* members and ten artisan's apprentices of Condagua. These works involved frequent encounters and calls between Rosa and regional coordinators, commercial consultants, designers and functionaries of Artesanías de Colombia and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism. Because of Rosa's interactions with multiple institutional actors and her efficient work, she received a special recognition from Artesanías de Colombia.

This was clearly evidenced in Expoartesanías, the largest fair of craft and cultural products organized annually by Artesanías de Colombia in Bogotá. At the inauguration ceremony of the 2017 fairs' edition, Rosa's work as *Iuiái Wasi's* leader was publicly recognized. In the presence of a large audience among which there was the Minister of Commerce and the country president's wife, she was invited to give a speech about *Iuiái Wasi's* working experience with Artesanías de Colombia. For her, such laudatory recognition was both unexpected and meaningful. It raised her gratitude toward Artesanías de Colombia. It made stronger her bonding with this institution.

### ***Gestión* beyond ethnic communities**

Rosa's relation with Artesanías de Colombia is a clear example of *gestión* as a bonding vehicle with nonindigenous institutional actors. In Maria's life, this side of *gestión* has been possible especially because of her leadership in Palermo Sur, the neighborhood where she has lived over the last fifteen years. Palermo Sur was built in 2005 in the periphery of Mocoa's southern urban zone, a hilly sector of the city with several unplanned indigenous settlements. Like Maria, most original residents of Palermo Sur bought their houses with government subsidies aimed at people displaced by armed conflict in Putumayo. As a low-income neighborhood populated by victims, state institutions and NGOs have offered dwellers of Palermo Sur many social programs. Maria was a communitarian leader in some of these programs. In fact, since 2016, she leads beneficiary families of Familias en Acción, Colombia's main conditional cash transfer program against poverty.

Familias en Acción is a public policy based on kinship ideologies. As other CCTs, this program conceives poor families and mothers as responsible for poverty. According to this view, poverty is transmitted through generations among poor families: as a result of parents' lack of economic resources, children suffer health and education deficits that narrow their chances to have better

living conditions than their parents. Hence, conditions for payments in Familias en Acción aim to improve children's health and education, arguing that in the future this will be helpful for them to achieve formal jobs and break the poverty cycle (Ibarrarán *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, mothers are preferred recipients of subsidies in Familias en Acción and beyond. Many Latin American governments see moms as more suited to manage family economy than dads, since there is an extended notion of mothers as naturally inclined to sacrifice themselves for their children. It is likely that mothers do necessary expenses to improve their children's living conditions (Eger & Damo, 2014).

In Familias en Acción, mothers are main actors not only because they are expected to use money according to policy goals. The organizational structure of this program also includes mothers who work as community local leaders. Leader moms are beneficiaries who perform an in-between role in functionaries' interactions with specific beneficiary communities. For example, as leader mom of eighty beneficiary families of Palermo Sur, Maria's job consists in collecting and delivering in the program office records of mothers' compliance or failure with conditions for cash transfers, organizing playful and pedagogical activities with beneficiaries, and informing them of payment dates and process. Maria does not get payment for this job, other than the symbolic recognition from other mothers and local bureaucrats involved in the program. Like other leader mothers of Mocoa and beyond, Maria is a volunteer, yet this program compensates her by opening up spaces where she sells handicrafts during public events of local state agencies.

Kinship is integral to Familias en Acción policy both ideologically and in practice. Maria lives this articulation of kinship and politics through her *gestión* as leader mother of Palermo Sur. For her, such *gestión* involves caring for her beneficiary moms –to whom she refers as *mamitas*– and their families. Instead of exclusively informing *mamitas* via WhatsApp or Facebook of program

activities, news and payment dates, she visits them in their houses to find out what they need and how they are, talking personally with them about their lives and intending to develop confidence ties. With this information in mind, Maria decides which topics are relevant to treat in periodic pedagogical activities where beneficiaries gather and attend capacity building workshops. In fact, she is in charge of the logistics of these activities, which implies getting food, drinks and chairs, as well as communicating *mamitas'* interests and needs to professionals who lead the workshops. "I like to bring useful topics for moms, like babies care or adolescent problems", said Maria.

Due to Maria's commitment to improve the living conditions of *mamitas'* families in Palermo Sur, a group of beneficiary moms gifted Maria a new set of dishes. Maria thanked the gift, but she expected more than material exchanges, an active enrollment in program activities on behalf of *mamitas*. "Visiting moms and dealing with Familias en Acción office and functionaries takes time. I'm spending my family time, so I demand *mamitas'* time as well", Maria affirmed. If a beneficiary mom misses more than three activities, Maria takes this mom out of her list of beneficiaries. This is a serious penalty. In Mocoa, *mamitas'* records of assistance to meetings and their children's documents of school attendance and checkups must be signed by leader mothers. Thus, without a leader able to sign such evidence of compliance with conditions for transfers, *mamitas* may lose an opportune delivery of Familias en Acción subsidies.

Maria's leadership in Familias en Acción reinforces the idea of *gestión* as an articulation of kinship and politics with critical temporalities. Meanwhile it helps to unfold new aspects of this argument. Before, I described how Maria's *gestión* implies practices of relatedness with moms of Palermo Sur: Maria commits to beneficiary families well-being and she expects that *mamitas* spend time on program activities. This is a relationship of care and obligations that oftentimes is lived through kinship idioms. For example, there is a practice known as *adoption* among leaders,

beneficiaries and functionaries of Familias en Acción in Mocoa. Leaders adopt beneficiary moms who don't belong to any group of beneficiaries by incorporating them into their groups. Maria has adopted *mamitas*. For her, adopting is more than adding data of a new beneficiary to her list of *mamitas*. It is relating with a new beneficiary as she relates with the other beneficiary mothers.

Here, the political side of *gestión* is more complex than getting multifold resources from state and state-like agencies for communitarian activities. As leader mom of Familias en Acción, Maria occupies a middle zone: she is both a beneficiary who waits for periodic subsidies and a state-like actor who supports program operations. If we focus only on the first of these two faces, we could consider Maria as a *patient of the state*. According to Auyero (2012), poor people seeking state social services in Buenos Aires became disempowered patients of the state since they incorporate state domination, which consists in making them wait in welfare offices. But waiting is a texture of Maria's *gestión*. While *mamitas* wait for subsidies, she works as an intermediary, supporting Familias en Acción operations and beneficiaries of Palermo Sur. Her *gestión* is an active waiting.

In Familias en Acción, distribution of state social resources is influenced by Maria's actions. Records collected, signed and delivered by Maria in Familias en Acción office demonstrate if Palermo Sur beneficiaries fulfill conditions for subsidies. In this sense, Maria connects citizens with a specific state agency; thus she is also responsible for the provision of social services. She is not a local functionary of Familias en Acción, but her agency as leader mother has a degree of statehood. Maria is a state-like actor (Thelen, Vetter & Benda-Beckmann, 2018).

## **Conclusion**

As I showed, *gestión* implies encounters with bureaucracy. Due to a popular Weberian depiction of bureaucracy as a modern way of government based on files and office workers hierarchically

organized, we may assume that getting resources from institutions of governance always requires paperwork and iterated visits to places such as state offices (Mathur, 2017; Weber, 1978). In fact, several ethnographies scrutinize welfare offices as sites where bureaucrats and citizens meet in Latin American and Euro-American contexts (e.g. Auyero, 2012; Dubois, 2017; Zacka, 2017). Yet Maria's and Rosa's experiences as leaders demonstrate that political dynamics of *gestión* are also practiced and lived within intimate and affective worlds of kinship and kinship-like relations. They made *gestión* within their houses and territories, relating with politicians, state agencies and bureaucrats through kinning practices as well as kinship and friendship idioms. Therefore, their bureaucratic encounters entailed articulations of kinship and politics.

As it is contended by recent studies on the role of affect in bureaucracies, conflicting and intense feelings, emotions and embodied responses are implicated in everyday interactions with objects, agents and traces of statecraft (Laszczkowski & Reeves, 2017; Navaro-Yashin, 2012). Likewise, *gestión* shows affective dimensions and socialities of indigenous political leadership in Mocoa. In Maria's and Rosa's relation, *gestión* has been both a bonding vehicle and a reason to mistrust one another. Also, Rosa's and Maria's *gestión* showed how a variety of affects shaped their relations and encounters with state actors. For example, Rosa's long-lasting relationship with Artesanías de Colombia and Maria's incipient bond with OPIAC's director were conceived by these women as experiences of amity and gratitude; whereas Rosa's unsuccessful *gestión* to obtain a bulldozer brought suspicion and a breakdown of Rosa and Ospina's friendship.

I have argued that *gestión* is an ambivalent articulation of kinship and politics, since it consists in both experiences of relatedness and mutually shared mistrust. Here is worth mentioning that such ambivalence is helpful to reconsider stereotyped views of indigenous leadership in the Amazon. According to classic ethnographies, Amazonian indigenous leaders don't use means of physical

coercion to impose their will on others and their leadership rest on the ability to fulfill collective needs, following an egalitarian political ethos based on autonomy and equality (see, e.g. Clastres, 1978; Lévi-Strauss, 1988). Yet nowadays leaders' mastering of bureaucratic techniques to access projects and funds is not always related to a commitment with egalitarian relations and collective well-being (Buitron, 2020).<sup>10</sup> The shadow of *gestión* is an example of this. In Condagua's daily social and political life, that shadow produces a continuous rumoring about leaders, since they are considered as persons committed to benefit their inner circles of friends and relatives.

I have also asserted that *gestión*, like kinship, is made of temporalities. Dealing with institutional and political actors of Mocoa involved temporalities that shaped Maria's and Rosa's experiences as leaders. Indeed, as I showed, *gestión* constitutes a timeline of Rosa's and Maria's lives. Since it appeared in the lives of these Inga women, they adopted and converted institutional times into a capital to be community local leaders for many years. In this sense, *gestión* raised a self-making process in which Rosa and Maria learned how to engage administrative and bureaucratic worlds of state and state-like agents. Although they have been recipients of state benefits and targets of intervention, via *gestión* they became more than disempowered patients of the state. They became political actors capable of connecting communities with institutions as well as securing resources through interactions with politicians, bureaucrats and NGOs.

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#### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> All personal names in this article are pseudonyms.

<sup>2</sup> In Colombia, *resguardos* are territories where indigenous communities have collective property rights to own and dwell in these lands following their traditional lifestyle and an autonomous government headed by political leaders called *gobernadores* (Decree 2164 of 1995).

<sup>3</sup> Since 2014, I have been conducting fieldwork intermittently in Mocoa's urban and rural zones, mostly in Condagua, where Rosa lives, and Palermo Sur, the neighborhood where Maria lives. Since 2017 I started an investigation on the roles of these women as leaders. From September to October 2017, in July 2018 and from December 2018 to January 2019, I followed and assisted Rosa's and Maria's *gestión*. In Rosa's case, this implied participating assiduously in *Iuiai Wasi's* activities to fulfill projects obtained through Rosa's relations with institutional actors. In Maria's case, I actively engaged with her first months of *gestión* as *gobernadora* of the Resguardo Inga Condagua. Besides, I lived in Rosa's and Maria's houses, cohabiting with them within their familiar worlds.

<sup>4</sup> In the Inga language, *Iuiai Wasi* means house of thinking.

<sup>5</sup> In Latin America and the Caribbean, conditional cash transfers programs (CCTs) are policies in which governments deliver to poor families periodic health and education subsidies subject to the compliance of conditions usually related to school attendance and checkups of underage children (De Sardan & Piccoli, 2018). This common mechanism has been replied in Colombia since 2001, when Familias en Acción was created and presented by Colombia's government as an antipoverty program. Here, beneficiary families are displaced by armed conflict; legally registered members of ethnic communities; or poor according to their socioeconomic ranking in Sisbén (*Sistema de Identificación de Potenciales Beneficiarios de Programas Sociales*), Colombia's national system of focalization for social protection.

<sup>6</sup> In Putumayo, the formation of landless *cabildos* has to do not only with displacement of indigenous families from their native territories due to armed conflict, but also with a *reindianization* process in which mestizo peasants and individuals who no longer identified themselves as indigenous recomposed their identities and formed *cabildos* to access benefits and rights for indigenous people derived of the 1991 Colombian Constitution, like subsidized health and education or exemption from military service for males (see Chaves & Zambrano, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> *Sirindango* is a plant native of Putumayo. In Condagua, this plant has multiple uses. *Sirindango* big leaves are used to both wrap food and cook. Also, skin of *sirindango* fruits is useful to dye handicrafts and seeds of such fruits are raw material for necklaces, bracelets and earrings.

<sup>8</sup> The 1991 Colombian Constitution brought state structural reforms and implementation of multicultural policies that included *resguardos* political autonomy. This means that *resguardos* became autonomous administrative territories, like departments, and started to receive state cash transfers to develop health and education projects. As Chaves & Hoyos (2011) pointed out, *gobernadores* of indigenous *resguardos* received and managed such monies without major administrative requirements until 2003, when Law 715 established a new set of technical procedures to access and planning the management of cash transfers.

<sup>9</sup> Acción Social was a Colombian public institution responsible for channeling national and international funds to realize social programs in populations affected by poverty or violence. In 2011, Law 1448 –better known as the Victims and Land Restitution Law– transformed Acción Social into Prosperidad Social, an administrative department in charge of reconciliation, victim compensation, and socioeconomic inclusion politics and programs. Artesanías de Colombia is an influential corporation ascribed to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Colombia. In the next sections I will discuss the importance of these institutions in Rosa's and Maria's lives.

<sup>10</sup> As Buitron (2020) shows, among the Shuar of Amazonian Ecuador, leaders transform their productive skills to capture state resources for community development into political control and economic advantage over their followers. In contractual deals with the Ecuadorian state, leaders' representation of the community enables them to monopolize resources and control the labour of other villagers.

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