

# Musicalizing death: The cosmopolitics of Kukama music videos in Peruvian Amazonia

Musicalizando la muerte: la cosmopolítica de los videos musicales kukama en la Amazonía peruana

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## ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the politics and aesthetics of Indigenous media in Peruvian Amazonia. It explores the way Kukama activists from the city of Nauta use media technologies to create novel forms of musicalizations of «dangerous others.» Specifically, I examine Radio Ucamara's music-video-making strategies to confront oil extraction. Building on debates around cosmopolitical approaches in anthropology, my main goal is to study the way Kukama media-makers create pop sounds to invoke other-than-human agents in the realm of environmental politics. I contribute to these debates by drawing on Jonathan Hill's concept of «musicalization.» I approach Kukama musicalizations by combining ethnographic fieldwork with the formal analysis of Indigenous pop songs. The main result of this research is that Radio Ucamara songs/videoclips are produced to musically incorporate cosmological subjectivities into political spaces. I conclude by arguing that Radio Ucamara's media aesthetics carry a generative power whereby Kukama activists can potentially transform political realities.

## KEYWORDS

Aesthetics, cosmopolitics, indigenous media, Kukama, music

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## RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza las dimensiones político-estéticas de los medios de comunicación indígenas en la Amazonía peruana. Explora cómo activistas kukama utilizan tecnologías mediáticas para crear nuevas formas de musicalización de la alteridad. Específicamente, examino los videos musicales creados por Radio Ucamara para confrontar la extracción de petróleo. Partiendo de los debates sobre cosmopolítica en antropología, mi objetivo principal es estudiar cómo los creadores kukama generan sonoridades para invocar agentes no-humanos en el ámbito de la lucha ambiental. Contribuyo a estos debates recurriendo al concepto de «musicalización» de Jonathan Hill. Abordo las musicalizaciones kukama articulando la investigación etnográfica con el análisis formal de canciones pop indígenas. Como resultado principal, sostengo que las canciones de Radio Ucamara se producen con el fin de incorporar subjetividades cosmológicas en los espacios políticos. Concluyo argumentando que la estética mediática de Radio Ucamara posee un poder generativo que puede incidir en sus realidades políticas.

## PALABRAS CLAVE

Estética, cosmopolítica, medios de comunicación indígenas, Kukama, música

## Introduction

One morning in June of 2017, I had the opportunity of joining a team of Kukama media-makers from the Peruvian town of Nauta in their field-trips to videorecord testimonies about recent oil spills affecting the region. Thanks to their generosity, I could learn about their work and hear first-hand accounts of the destructive power of oil. The Kukama media-makers were part of a radio station called «Ucamara.» This station operates in an oil-producing region of Peru (Loreto) that has been severely affected by numerous spills since the 1970s. While the radio crew was interested in collecting information about the disruption of river ecologies, economic practices, and people's bodies, they were also asking questions about the assault of petroleum on spiritual worlds. In their interviews with Nauta locals, cosmological topics were always elicited. In every single conversation I witnessed, there were mentions to «spirit mothers,» a supernatural figure common in Amazonian cosmologies and responsible for the vitality of socio-ecological assemblages in the region (see Fausto, 2008).

The existence of spirit «mothers» or «owners,» (sometimes embodied in supernatural snakes) was a contested but common topic of discussion in local discourses about oil pollution. In mediatizing cosmological agents, Radio Ucamarca activists were aiming to make threats to river's spiritual ecologies visible. This communicative style was clearly based on a reading of «nature» where other-than-human actors are considered agents in social life. Music videos became effective creations informed by this approach. One of them was based on a song about a demonic figure called «Maisangara,» an evil spirit embodied by oil companies. This, I argue, is yet another example of a cosmopolitical approach (a conflict between worlds) shaping Indigenous-State/corporate relations in South America (De la Cadena, 2010; Cepek, 2016).

This article analyzes the political and aesthetics dimensions of Indigenous musical media in Peruvian Amazonia. It examines the way Kukama media-makers are creating novel forms of musicalization of «others» (Hill, 2018a) through new technologies of communication. Radio Ucamarca pop songs and video performances shared in the digital space operate as aesthetic devices to confront state and corporate powers in the region. From this audiovisual corpus, I specifically explore music videos addressing the contamination of Amazonian rivers by oil extraction. Expanding on debates around cosmopolitical approaches in anthropology, I examine the way Kukama media-makers from Nauta use urban pop musicalities (e.g., hip-hop and rock music) to invoke cosmological agents. I contribute to these debates by drawing on Jonathan Hill's concept of «musicalization» (Hill, 1993, 1994, 2002, 2013, 2015, 2018a, 2018b) as an analytical framework to shed light on how Indigenous Amazonian aesthetics is building new forms of political power. Radio Ucamarca environmentalist songs and videoclips are produced to musically communicate with both allies (Amazonian and global activists) and enemies (state and corporations). Moreover, these forms of musical communication are based on a poetics of life and death where non-human subjectivities are usually entangled. I argue that the aesthetic dimensions of cosmopolitical discourses in Amazonia carry a generative power that allows Indigenous media activists to enter arenas of negotiation with powerful others and potentially transform political realities.

In analyzing Radio Ucamarca's environmentalist music videos, I engage with broader theoretical discussions around the politics of Indigenous cosmological discourses (Cepek, 2016; De la Cadena, 2010). Following Michael Cepek (2016), instead of departing from the assumed uniformity and certainty of abstract ontological premises, I draw on Kukama media to discuss the «pragmatic multiplicity» and multivocality around the presence

of non-human agents in politics. Amidst processes of mediatization, Indigenous cosmological worlds acquire new meanings, formal dimensions, and reach new audiences. Furthermore, music videos illustrate how Indigenous cosmological discourses can be embedded in urban culture (e.g., pop music) and national politics in Latin America (High and Oakley, 2020). For this article, I use data collected in 2017 during two months of ethnographic fieldwork in the cities of Nauta and Iquitos. Likewise, I use the data collected during one year of ethnographic digital research, conducted between 2020 and 2021 when the Covid-19 pandemic impeded my return to the field.<sup>1</sup>

Radio Ucamara music videos represent examples of how contemporary Indigenous pop musicalities are shaping the sonic fields of environmental politics. Echoing the way shamanic songs in Amazonia have been transferred from ritual spaces to politico-economic arenas (Hill, 1994, 2002), pop songs have become some of the new sonic modalities of Kukama political praxis. Pop music is now indexical of Amazonian youth culture and has the capacity to reach wider audiences. In these processes of musicalization of Indigenous political discourse, popular music aesthetics is now part of the repertoire used to counter neoliberalism in Amazonia. Just as music operates as a central element of shamanic ritual power in Amazonia (Hill, 1993), pop music is considered a tool for building secular power. Moreover, hip-hop and rock songs (image and sound traveling in the digital space) are considered effective forms of communication with multiple others (human and other-than-human). Radio Ucamara media-makers are thus providing unprecedented musical and poetic dimensions to Kukama cosmological discourses. By presenting anti-oil activism as a cosmopolitical struggle, Radio Ucamara is challenging modernist assumptions still prevalent in politics (De la Cadena, 2010). Yet, by indigenizing

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1 My engagement with Radio Ucamara began in 2016, when Kukama media-makers accepted my request to visit them to conduct my doctoral research about rubber-times historicity in Nauta. When my fieldwork research was interrupted due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they agreed on the continuity of my project by using digital resources.

This study complied with the established ethical guidelines for research involving human participants and was approved by the Human Subjects Committee of Southern Illinois University in Carbondale (USA) in 2016. The procedures were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the Declaration of Helsinki. All participants provided informed consent, either verbally or in writing, after receiving clear information about the study's objectives, the use of their data, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. The confidentiality of participants was ensured through the anonymization of their personal data and the coding of the interviews. The collected information was used exclusively for academic and publication purposes, respecting the privacy and integrity of the participants at all times. Furthermore, the study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles previously described in the reference document, including respect for autonomy, non-maleficence, and justice.

the modern fields of media technologies and pop music, this radio station is also challenging still prevailing primitivist images attached to Amazonian Indigenous peoples.

I analyze Radio Ucamarca music videos as a form of discourse. Following the intellectual tradition of studies of music and discourse in Latin America (Basso, 1985; Hill, 1993; Sherzer and Urban, 1986; Seeger, 1987), I examine the musicalization of Kukama eco-political conceptualizations not as an ethnomusicologist but as an anthropologist interested in the role of music in Indigenous politics. My analysis of Kukama music videos draws on discourse-centered (Sherzer and Urban, 1986) and music-centered approaches (Hill, 2018a, 2019).<sup>2</sup> I am interested in the interplay between musicality and lexicality in understanding Indigenous communicative practices. I treat Kukama music videos as semiotic units that encapsulate different political and poetic discourses conveyed through sound and vision. Following Hill (2018a), I pay attention to music, musicalized speech, and musical sounds in my analysis of Kukama environmentalist media. This is done not only by attending to formal elements in both verbal and instrumental music, but also the visual features of videoclips. My analysis of pop songs relies on the poetic forms and musicality of verbal artistry, such as rhymes, couplets, quoted speech, metaphors, and metonyms in combination with visual imagery. I focus on how these musical, lexical, and visual forms are tied to larger social, political, and cosmological contexts. These artistic and poetic features condensed in the music videos, I argue, are key aesthetic mechanisms in the construction of Indigenous political power.

### Radio Ucamarca

Radio Ucamarca 98.7 FM is an Indigenous radio station that belongs to the Roman Catholic Church in Peru. Located in the city of Nauta (Loreto region), the station is part of the Amazonian Social Promotion Institute (Instituto de Promoción Social Amazónica), the media division of the Apostolic Vicariate of Iquitos, a missionary jurisdiction in Northern Peruvian Amazonia. Radio Ucamarca was created on April 2, 1992, with the name «Radio La Voz de la Selva-Nauta» (The Voice of the Forest), operating as part of the media resources of the Nauta Parish. During its early years, this radio station was managed by priests who dedicated to the broadcasting of religious content alongside music and news coverage. After a

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2 A «music-centered approach» places music, musicalized speech, and musical sounds at the center of cultural analysis to understand key political mediations (Hill, 2018a). This is accomplished by paying attention to formal elements in both verbal and instrumental music (Hill, 2019).

period of crisis, the radio station ceased its activities in 2003 but reopened in 2006. By this time, and under the renovated leadership of two Augustinian priests, the station adopted a more activist drive. By focusing on Indigenous problems, the radio station started broadcasting a style of programming centered on Amazonian politics (Angulo, 2019; Calderón, 2020; Espinosa *et al.*, 2021; Ramírez Colombier, 2016). The station also changed its name to Radio Ucamara (Angulo, 2019), and, in 2009, the priests decided to give total creative control to Indigenous media-makers.<sup>3</sup> By then, Kukama media-makers expanded their creativity into the audiovisual realm (Calderón, 2020). Today, Radio Ucamara complements its work in the airwaves by having a strong presence in the digital space (Angulo, 2019; Pau, 2021; Ramírez Colombier, 2016).

**FIGURE 1.** Radio Ucamara building in Nauta (June 2017)

Note. Picture by Gabriel Torrealba.



Radio Ucamara creative work focuses on Indigenous politics (particularly memory, identity, and environmental politics). Using a frequency modulation method of broadcasting, Ucamara airwaves cover three provinces (Loreto, Requena, and Maynas) and seven districts in the Loreto region (Nauta, Parinari, Sapuea, Jenaro Herrera, Requena, San Juan, and Fernando Lores Tenazoa) (Cabel, 2022; Calderón, 2020; Espinosa *et al.*, 2021; Pau, 2021). But Radio Ucamara is more than a radio station. It transcends its presence in the airwaves by operating as a recording studio, a social

3 Currently, most Radio Ucamara media workers are of Kukama ethnicity. The station operates in a region where the Indigenous population (and audience) is predominantly Kukama, but with presence of Urarinas, Achuar, and Kichwa groups (Cabel, 2022; Calderón, 2020; Espinosa *et al.*, 2021; Pau, 2021).

facility in which multiple events take place, and by having a strong presence in the digital space (Angulo, 2019; Pau, 2021; Ramírez Colombier, 2016). Radio Ucamara has been producing radio shows, journalistic reports, documentaries, podcasts, songs, music videos, books, murals, photography, animations, digital maps, and more recently, audio soap operas. Ucamara members constantly participate in public events (both in person and virtually) where they engage in regional, national, and transnational political discussions. Lastly, Radio Ucamara does not operate in isolation but in an arena of rich collaborative dynamics. The station team works alongside multiple Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies that include, Indigenous political organizations, state institutions, universities, scholars, filmmakers, lawyers, journalists, artists, and especially NGOs. Among these partnerships, religious organizations linked to the Catholic church in Peru, play a special role.

### **Cosmopolitics and aesthetics**

Since the 1990s, anthropology and other social disciplines have felt the extensive influence of the intellectual movement known as the «ontological turn,» led by scholars such as Mario Blaser (2009, 2013), Phillipe Descola (Descola and Pálsson, 1996), Martin Holbraad (2007, 2012; Holbraad *et al.*, 2014), Bruno Latour (2004, 2012), Morten Axel Pedersen (2007, 2011), and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (1998, 2004, 2013, 2015). Drawing on ethnographies focused on Indigenous cosmologies and philosophies, ontological approaches question the classic Western separations between nature and culture and provide examples of more inclusive notions of humanity. The ideas of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro on perspectivism and Phillipe Descola on animism have inspired the emergence of numerous ontologically oriented ethnographies, particularly in Amazonia. Perspectivism's famous premise is that, in Indigenous Amazonian ontological systems, non-human entities possess human subjectivities. Animal, plants, spirits and other kinds of beings carry a human essence expressed in different corporalities that gives them a specific positionality in the world and therefore a distinctive perspective of it (Viveiros de Castro, 1998). Ontological approaches, thus, are based on the notion that different people live in different and conflictive realities or different worlds (Latour, 2004).

Building on these conceptual frameworks, some scholars have tried to make sense of the different contexts in which other-than-human agents take part in political dynamics. Such settings have been described as «cosmopolitical conflicts» (Adamson, 2012; De la Cadena, 2010; Latour, 2004; Stengers, 1997, 2005). Under this perspective, political conflicts are not simply based on «cultural differences» but on notions of «what exists» by

virtue of people inhabiting a «pluriverse» (De la Cadena, 2010; cf. High and Oakley, 2020).<sup>4</sup> For philosopher Bruno Latour (2004), the cosmos in cosmopolitics refers to a realm that is not exclusively human. Latour's definition advocates for analytically embracing all that there is in the universe, including «all the vast numbers of non-human entities making humans act» (Latour, 2004, p. 454). One of the most notorious cosmopolitical approaches comes from the work of Marisol de la Cadena (2010). De la Cadena has explained how in 21st century Latin America, Indigenous movements are increasingly invoking the presence of other-than-human beings into political practice and discourse. De la Cadena (2010) describes how Andean Indigenous peoples discursively bring cosmopolitical agents such as «earth beings» as non-human political actors with agency. For her, Indigenous cosmopolitics transcends the ontological separation between nature and culture that sustains modern Western politics and challenge classical notions of politics based on identity, class, race, or gender.

Ontological and cosmopolitical approaches (a non-homogenous theoretical field) have been the center of heated debates around their epistemic and political premises (Bessire and Bond, 2014; Graeber, 2015; Heywood, 2012; Keane, 2009; Ramos, 2012; Turner, 2009; Watson, 2011, 2013). Some of these debates have emerged around the recognition of cosmopolitical statements as the actual existence of multiple worlds, but also the extent to which Indigenous cosmologies are embedded in global and nation-state politics (Cepek, 2016; High and Oakley, 2020). Anthropologist Michael Cepek (2016) has been particularly critical of the ontologically oriented anthropologists' excessive focus on abstract propositions. He engages in this debate by showing ethnographic evidence of the multivocality, contentiousness, and uncertainty of cosmological ideas in Amazonia. Despite their epistemic-decolonizing efforts, Cepek accuses ontology anthropologists of downplaying the intellectual capacities of interlocutors in critically assessing cosmological statements (Cepek, 2016). More recently, Casey High and Elliot Oakley (2020) have suggested studying Indigenous ontologies and cosmologies by looking at the way this knowledge is embedded in national culture/politics/economies and non-Indigenous worlds in Latin America (High and Oakley, 2020, p. 237). These authors, although recognizing the crucial role of ontological discourses in Amazonian politics, warn about the impossibility of separating Indigenous philosophies and epistemologies from broader Latin

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4 The term cosmopolitics was coined by philosopher Isabelle Stengers in the 1990s (1997). In her definition, «cosmos refers to the unknown constituted by these multiple, divergent worlds and to the articulations of which they could eventually be capable» (Stengers, 2005, p. 995).

American ideas and the risks of assuming a cohesive consensus of cosmopolitical discourses among Indigenous communities (Cepek, 2016; High and Oakley, 2020).

In this article, I echo Cepek's argument that the idea of ethnographic research on Indigenous cosmopolitics is to grasp their «pragmatic multiplicity,» that is, their, social, affective, and epistemological complexity (Cepek, 2016). I also follow High and Oakley's suggestion of combining the study of Indigenous ontologies with approaches focused on national politics and Indigenous-state relations. I do so by paying attention to the way Indigenous cosmologies are expressed in emerging musicalities and aesthetic fields in Amazonia. I analyze the case of Indigenous pop music as an instrument for evoking other-than-human actors in the field of environmental struggle in Peru. I argue that pop songs and music videos represent novel forms of cosmopolitical aesthetics that merge Indigenous ontologies with the modern sounds of hip-hop and rock music. The way music and other forms of expressive culture are entangled with Indigenous cosmopolitics deserves more attention, since aesthetic mastery is becoming a key power-building tool in the highly asymmetrical dynamics in Amazonia.

### **Musicalizations in Amazonia**

In Lowland South America, music is a vital aspect of the social experience (Seeger, 2013; Hill and Chaumeil, 2011). Anthropologists, linguists, and ethnomusicologists have examined the significance of musical practices in Indigenous Amazonia since the late 1970s. The pioneering works of Rafael José de Menezes Bastos (1978), Ellen Basso (1985), Laura Graham (1986), Anthony Seeger (1979, 1987), and Jonathan Hill (1993) on the role of music, musical performances, and verbal art in ritual and shamanic practices, opened a prolific field of musical ethnographies that has grown in subsequent decades.<sup>5</sup> Since the 1990s, there has been an increasing interest in the production of musical sounds and the way they are embedded in Amazonian social worlds (Hill, 2018a). Although Indigenous musical forms tend to be particularly prevalent in ritual life (Seeger, 2013), native musical traditions are dynamic and creative processes in which musical sounds and voices extend to other sociocultural domains such as politics, economic practices, ecology, cosmologies, and history (Hill, 2018a).

Some of these active links between musical and non-musical practices have been analytically examined through Jonathan Hill's concept of

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5 For an overview of ethnomusicology in Amazonia see Menezes Bastos (2007) and Hill (2019).

musicalization (Hill, 1993, 1994, 2002, 2013, 2015, 2018a, 2018b). Hill defines the term «musicalization» as the «process of using non-verbal or semi-verbal patterns of sound to enact various kinds of social transformation: lifecycle transitions, shamanic journeys, exchanges between affines, revitalization movements, political-economic resistance, and so forth» (Hill, 2018a, p. 181; Hill, 2018b, p. 280). This concept has also been implemented to understand the management of alterity in Amazonia. Musical practices are central to mediate and make sense of the relations between humans and a variety of others (human, non-human, spiritual, Indigenous, or non-Indigenous) (Basso, 1985; Whitten and Whitten, 1988; Graham, 1986, 1995; Hill, 1993, 1994, 2009, 2011, 2018b; Camargo Piedade, 2013; Franchetto and Montagnani, 2012). Musicalizations are dynamic processes that rely on the production of musical sounds and speech to socialize, transform, or domesticate situations of power imbalance, particularly, with non-Indigenous peoples and institutions (Hill, 1994, p. 124; Hill, 2018a, pp. 185-186; Hill, 2018b, p. 279). Music in Amazonia, therefore, tends to be understood as an aesthetic resource that can turn violent relations into peaceful ones (Hill, 2013). Musical practices are central resources whereby Amazonian Indigenous peoples create new political spaces to negotiate with Latin American nation-states and global forces (Hill, 2018a).

The way ritual music and verbal art permeate political praxis and negotiations with nation-states has been of great interest for Amazonianists (Graham, 2002; Hill, 1994, 2002, 2018a; Menezes Bastos, 2007; Seeger, 2013; Uzendoski, 2020). Among Amazonian Indigenous peoples, music often moves from sacred spheres to political ones when facing the pressure of colonial interactions (Seeger, 2013). Music, thus, can encapsulate modes of politico-historical consciousness and reflect the way Indigenous peoples understand their place in history (Hill, 2018a). From 19th century millenarian movements (Wright and Hill, 1986; Hill, 2018a) to more contemporary interethnic conflict with non-Indigenous actors and institutions (Hill, 1994, 2002), the use of music has been an effective form of action in situations of identity-based discrimination. For example, the Wakuenai of the Rio Negro region, relied on ceremonial music and dances to fight exploitation from white/mestizo traders (Hill, 1994, 2002, 2018a). Similarly, while Xavante and the Kayapo of central Brazil instrumentalized singing and dancing in the resistance against the building of a hydroelectric dam on the Xingu River (Beckham, 1989; Graham, 2002; Menezes Bastos, 2012; Turner, 1992), the Suyá relied on ceremonial music to mobilize their struggle against Brazilian cattle ranchers (Seeger, 2010).

As Jonathan Hill (2020) and Anthony Seeger explain (2013), the persistence of musicality in the political strategies of many Amazonian

Indigenous peoples is more than expression of strategic essentialism. They represent genuine expressions of Indigenous identity (Hill, 2020) and cosmological approaches to politics (Seeger, 2013). Recently, anthropologists and ethnomusicologists have engaged in sonic ethnographies of the non-human worlds to highlight the significance of music in Indigenous Amazonian cosmologies (Hill and Castrillón, 2017; Brabec de Mori, 2013; Brabec de Mori and Seeger, 2013; Brabec de Mori *et al.*, 2015). Music has been particularly salient as a vehicle to communicate with spiritual realms and to effect change in the material world (Hill, 2013). Recently, anthropologists have been addressing how the purpose of performing music among Indigenous communities is not only to enter in contact with the sacred, spiritual, or mythic worlds of Amerindian cosmologies but to create political and symbolic spaces to avoid the disruption of those worlds (Alemán, 2011; Hill, 2018a, 2020; Uzendoski and Calapucha Tapuy, 2012). New generations are engaging in the musicality of «changing global soundscapes» (Hill, 2018a, p. 191): hip-hop and rock are now providing new avenues to urbanized Indigenous youth to reconnect with oral histories, mythic narratives, territorialities, cosmologies, languages, and identities (Hill, 2020).

### Radio Ucamarca's environmentalist media

Oil has had a major presence in Amazonia since the 1930s (Grados Bueno and Pacheco Riquelme, 2016; Orta-Martínez and Finer, 2010). The most intense period of oil exploitation in the Peruvian Amazon begun in the early 1970s, when companies such as Petroperú discovered large crude deposits in the Loreto Department (Ccoillo Sandoval, 2021; Orta-Martínez and Finer, 2010; Santos Granero and Barclay, 2000). Since then, oil became a threat to local biodiversity and the Indigenous communities in the region (Grados Bueno and Pacheco Riquelme, 2016). In Loreto, as in other oil-producing regions in Amazonia (Cepek, 2012; High, 2007), petroleum extraction produced radical transformations in the social and ecological conditions of local people. Oil spills have been an unescapable reality for the last 50 years. Between 2000 and 2019, the Peruvian Amazon has registered 474 oil spills that have caused multiple damages to the local population (Ccoillo Sandoval, 2021; Servindi, 2022).<sup>6</sup> This violent encounter with petroleum has stimulated the political organization of Indigenous communities across the region and fostered the emergence of

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<sup>6</sup> Kukama communities' experiences with oil contamination have been particularly devastating. One of the most emblematic socio-environmental events in recent history took place in June of 2014, with the spill of 2,358 barrels of petroleum in the Cuninico river, a tributary of the Marañón (López, 2017).

novel environmentalist subjectivities (Cepek, 2012, 2018). In this context, Indigenous media have become a fundamental tool to counter the narratives of corporate powers.

Socio-environmental struggle is a central aspect in Radio Ucumara media-making practices. The station's broadcasting coverage reaches the areas of the main oil extraction blocks in Loreto. Among their audiovisual creations, anti-oil content constitutes a central part of their activist work. Media has been used as an experimental method of struggle whereby Kukama activists make visible the contamination of rivers (see Cabel, 2022). As Andrea Cabel (2022) has already discussed, one of the main strategies of Radio Ucumara's media approach is to illuminate the cosmological worlds damaged by oil extraction. Apart from exposing the harm to environments and bodies, Kukama media-makers reveal oil companies' assault on the spiritual realm. This strategy translates into an audiovisual aesthetic that relies heavily on river cosmologies. The literature on the Kukama-Kukamiria communities shows how rivers are central spaces for the enactment of cosmological interactions (Cabel, 2022; Grados Bueno y Pacheco Riquelme, 2016; Okamoto and Leifsen, 2012; Rivas Ruiz, 2004). For many Nauta locals, water is a space inhabited by people and other-than-human actors. As some interlocutors used to tell me in Loreto, «there is a lot of people living underwater» (Fieldnotes, June 29, 2017). The Radio Ucumara team is mediatizing Kukama cosmologies to defy Western notion of rivers as spaces of «nature» and instead recognize them as spaces of humanity. Radio Ucumara's audiovisual creations are therefore driven by cosmopolitical premises. In the mediatization of environmental discourses, music plays a key role in creating spaces of communication with human and non-human others.

Kukama media-makers embody a new kind of political frontline specialized in media and musical sounds. Radio Ucumara produces MTV style videoclips, a visual artistic genre popularized in Western mass media since the 1960s with the expansion of television and rock and roll music (Korsgaard, 2017). Allowed by the internet and the new digital technologies of communication, all Radio Ucumara music videos are recorded in digital format and shared through video platforms such as YouTube or Vimeo. Radio Ucumara has been posting videos on their YouTube channel since July 26, 2013. Music videos have become semiotic units that include multiple discursive themes such as mytho-histories, Indigenous cosmologies, territorialities, linguistic ideologies, and identitarian concerns. The preferred genre of music used in the songs is their own version of Western popular music, including sub-genres like hip-hop, pop, reggaeton, and rock. So far Radio Ucumara media-makers have produced and released

four music videos entirely dedicated to socio-environmental issues. Those videos, made between 2015 and 2017 are: 1) «Parana» (Radio Ucamarca, 2015); 2) «Yuwara» (Radio Ucamarca, 2016a); 3) «Maisangara» (Radio Ucamarca, 2016b); and 4) «Madre Rio, Madre Tierra» (Radio Ucamarca, 2017).

Here, I dissect the music videos by analytically looking at the interplay of their semantic, poetic, musical, performative, and visual dimensions. The proposed analysis of Radio Ucamarca songs relies on capturing the poetic forms and musicality of verbal artistry (mainly singing and rapping) such as rhymes, couplets, quoted speech, metaphors, and metonyms in combination with visual imagery (Amazonian landscapes and performative expression). I focus on how these musical, lexical, and visual forms are embedded in larger social, political, historical, and cosmological contexts. My analysis follows Dell Hymes' (2003) verse-analysis method to transcribe songs according to lines and verses defined by rhyming patterns, repetition, pauses, and thematic content. This style of analysis helps to bring the artistry of the songs into the textual transcription (see Uzendoski and Calapucha, 2012). Inspired by Dell Hymes (2003), I deconstruct Radio Ucamarca songs in lines, verses, and choruses. Repetition is a general formal feature in Radio Ucamarca songs. In all the songs analyzed, choruses repeat three times throughout their structure (a common pattern in Western pop music). But the main poetic resource developed in Radio Ucamarca songwriting is a rhyme pattern based on couplets, this is, pairs of consecutive lines that rhyme. Couplets are a common lyrical resource in popular music and a frequent rhyme pattern for hip-hop artists. In most of the environmental songs, couplets are the dominant rhyme pattern (sometimes combined with mono-rhymes and triplets). This is particularly noticeable in the songs that incorporate rapping as the main form of verbal art.<sup>7</sup>

### **Musicalizing Death: The Poetics of Oil**

One of the main semiotic processes taking place in Radio Ucamarca songwriting and videomaking is the musicalization of the realms of life and death. This is a conceptual duality analogue to the dichotomy of water and oil, material substances represented as antagonistic symbolic forces. Such duality informs the main political and ontological principle in Radio Ucamarca's environmentalist approach: to offer an alternative to anthropocentric interpretations of «nature». The songs/music videos convey the aesthetic, sensorial, social, and spiritual dimensions of rivers

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7 In this paper, rhyming patterns are transcribed by assigning letters to lines. Lines that rhyme in a verse are marked with the same letters. In the case of couplets, for example, they follow the pattern AABBCDD.

absent from the capitalist gaze. Through musical, visual, and poetic devices, the aquatic forces of the rivers (especially river species) are foregrounded in Kukama musical media to highlight the value of the life threatened by extractivism and commodity production. Thus, the communicative strategy of Radio Ucamara music videos relies on the poetic intervention of other-than-human agents. Although singing about life and vitality is a central dimension of Radio Ucamara videomaking, in this article I focus specifically on the images of oil and death involved in the musicalization of environmental struggle in Nauta.

In Radio Ucamara music video-making, petroleum and its significance as a substance of death is a major lyrical and visual topic. One of the main characteristics of environmental music videos is that oil pollution and oil companies are only mentioned in poetic ways. Oil's lyrical presence in the environmentalist songs takes place mostly in the form of metaphors and metonyms. Yet, at the same time, oil becomes explicit and factual in the visual aesthetics of the music videos by virtue of the incorporation of oil spills footage. In the videos, this substance is shown as a flow of dark liquid invading the rivers and killing fish. Footage of the oil spills comes from Radio Ucamara's own journalistic work, which has been creatively repositioned in music videos. Images of polluted water, dead fish covered in oil, and sick children are aesthetically intertwined with the musical sounds of the environmentalist songs. The images of oil spills, coupled with anti-extractivist musical discourse, have the purpose of making visible events of socio-ecological violence not covered by Peruvian mainstream media.

This interplay between media aesthetics and political action in Radio Ucamara video-making became clear during my fieldwork. In my conversations with local hip-hop artists, they talked about the anger they felt after watching the oil spills footage and the damage caused to Kukama riverine communities. Reflecting on the importance of making oil destruction visible, they told me how Radio Ucamara's journalistic footage became a creative source for songwriting. Oil spills footage was useful not only to visually complement musicalized discourses, but also to stimulate lyrical and musical production, thus creating aesthetic feedback between sounds and images. «Parana» («river» in Kukama language) was the first Radio Ucamara music video focused on denouncing the pollution of Amazonian rivers. Released on May 25, 2015 (Radio Ucamara, 2015), the central purpose of this videoclip was to create environmental awareness and seek support to preserve the rivers from development projects. The song was written from the perspective of Kukama children, with lyrics expressing the beauty and the value of the river as a space of vitality and playful

joy. Kukama children sing about their love for the river and its ongoing destruction.

In Kukama music videos, the musicalization of oil is highlighted through verbal artistry. Vocal forms such as singing, rapping, reciting, spoken speech, and voiceovers play a big role in this political mission. In the «Parana» videoclip, musicalized speech about oil pollution is expressed through metaphors such as «black clouds» or «gloomy rivers» and metonymic forms such as «black stains.» In the context of the Loreto region, the overwhelming presence of oil pollution makes these poetic references self-evident. Yet, although in the «Parana» song oil is always referred to in poetic language, there is a moment in which non-musical speech is used as an aesthetic resource to make oil pollution explicit. The «Parana» song includes three different forms of speech in a single musical unit (singing, rapping, and speaking) that fall in the musicality-lexicality spectrum. These language forms are used to portray, in a poetic continuum, the abrasive presence of oil in Amazonian socio-ecosystems. While singing and rapping rely on metaphorical language, spoken speech offers explicit mentions of oil. Right before the final chorus repetition (the «bridge» in the song structure), there is a fragment where we can hear the voice of a child explaining how he could not eat fish due to its strong smell of petroleum. Radio Ucamara media-makers used this real-life testimony as voiceover to illustrate how oil threatens the health and food security of local communities. Although this spoken part has no poetic elaboration, it evokes a powerful sensorial image that captures the disruptive power of oil:

<p>Yo cuando he comido la lisa, el pescado estaba puro petróleo. No le podía comer. El olor de petróleo estaba fuerte [efecto de delay en la voz cuando dice «fuerte»]</p>	<p>When I ate the lisa (a fish), the fish was full of oil. I could not eat it. The smell of oil was very strong [delay effect in the voice when he says «strong»].</p>
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In the subsequent music videos, musical references to oil become darker. The musicalization of extractivist violence became stronger in videoclips like «Yuwara» and «Maisangara.» In 2016, Radio Ucamara released the «Yuwara» («manatee» in Kukama language) videoclip (Radio Ucamara, 2016a). The song is explicitly about the Marañón River. While the title refers to the species of Amazonian manatee (*Trichechus inunguis*), the chorus, which comes from a song learned from Kukama elders, refers to its disappearance due to predatory activities. «Yuwara» is a hip-hop song built around aggressive lyrics against oil companies and the Peruvian

state. Local hip-hop artists and media-makers play with themes of decay, loss, dispossession, death, and extinction, alongside hope and agency. «Yuwara,» as a visual, poetic, and musical space, expresses Radio Ucamara concerns on a dystopic future and conveys a direct critique to Western notions of progress. Just as Indigenous musical performances become forms of making history (producing new conceptualizations of the past and the future) (Seeger, 1991), Radio Ucamara videoclips encapsulate ways of making the future amidst oil dystopian landscapes.

In «Yuwara,» the musical dynamics present in the song structure encapsulate the poetics of life and death unfolded in Radio Ucamara songwriting. «Yuwara» has two clearly distinguishable parts. In the first one, the two initial verses express the love locals feel for the Marañón river and the city of Nauta. The rest of the song (four verses in total) shifts towards a darker political aesthetics. Musically speaking, when those fourth verses start (right after the second chorus) there is a significant change in both the melody driving the song and the sound of the beat. The sound of the electronic snare changes from soft to thicker and louder, which makes the song closer to the aesthetics of urban hip-hop. Likewise, while in the first part of the song (both in the chorus and the first verses) the melody is based on a chord progression of three notes (C-Am-F) that gives the song an uplifting feeling, the second part of the song changes the chord progression to C-G-F (with a different set of arrangements). This provides a darker tone corresponding to the violent imagery of the lyrics.

«Yuwara» is an anti-dystopic hip-hop song. The poetic references to pollution, oil companies, and death are fully developed in the second part of it. In «Yuwara,» political discourses are delivered through rapped verses. Oil is always referred metaphorically with images such as obscurity, poison, selfishness, darkness, darkened waters, and paradise-hell analogies. Likewise, oil companies are mentioned only through pronouns and metaphors. Dangerous alterity is referred to as «them,» «monsters,» or through the concept of selfishness. Yet, when some lines become more aggressive, lyrics tend to be less poetic. Lines about the killings of activists and local inhabitants, the loss of fish, drinking water, and agricultural practices are plainly expressed through rapping. The song even reaches critical tones to Western grand-narratives such as the notions of progress when anti-capitalist and anti-extractivist statements are expressed. This poetics of environmental destruction starts to develop in the third verse of «Yuwara,» when references to dystopic futures and images of loss are intertwined with metaphors of oil as «poison» and accusations against oil companies:

*Yuwara. Third verse*

A El futuro oscuro aterra y el presente no me va	A The dark future is terrifying, and I do not like the present
A Sonrisas y sueños. Todos los peces ¿dónde están?	A Smiles and dreams. All the fish, where are they?
A Veneno corre por las aguas, esto me hace sentir mal	A Poison runs in the water; this makes me feel bad
A No pondré sonrisas pintadas que fingen felicidad	A I won't fake smiles that simulate happiness
A Lo de ellos es mentira, solo esta es la verdad	A They are full of lies, only this is the truth
A En el río están las voces que debemos escuchar	A In the river are the voices we must listen to
A Mil canciones aquí dentro, mil historias que contar	A A thousand songs in here, a thousand stories to tell
A Los ríos son nuestras vidas y los vamos a cuidar	A The rivers are our lives, and we are going to take care of them

A salient aspect of the anti-oil poetics in this verse is the reference to the «voices of the river.» This is a strong cosmological image in which the rivers are represented as spaces inhabited by other-than-human subjectivities. In the fifth verse, an iteration of the life-death duality is expressed through heaven-hell metaphors. A dystopic present is portrayed through explicit mentions to the destruction of local ecological conditions, such as loss of soil, clean water, and fish.

*Yuwara. Fifth verse*

A Recuerdo el suelo donde mi abuelo cosechaba	A I remember the soil where my grandfather used to harvest
A Ahora no cosecha porque está contaminada	A Now he cannot harvest because it is contaminated
A El agua limpia que tomaba, en la actualidad, no sirve para nada	A The clean water he used to drink today is useless
B Los peces poco a poco van muriendo	B Fish are slowly dying
B Yo sé por qué están desapareciendo	B I know why they are disappearing
B Mi paraíso se está convirtiendo en un infierno	B My paradise is turning into hell
B Flora y fauna están desapareciendo	B Flora and fauna are disappearing
C Alzo mi voz, es mi manifestación	C I raise my voice; it is my own expression
C Porque amo y respeto a mi río Marañón	C Because I love and respect my Marañón river

Co-occurring with the rapped verses, there is a significant performative level in the «Yuwara» video. The three rappers' body and facial expressions change according to the tone of the song, adding another aesthetic and emotional layer to the political content of the song. This performance shows a body language (hands moving, pounding, or crisscrossing) common in the hip-hop genre that is used to enrich the delivery of musical messages. Likewise, when the lyrics acquire a radically anti-extractivist tone, so do the visuals. Footage of destroyed nature (dead fish and petroleum overflowing out from broken pipelines) are sequentially combined with the rapper's performance. The oil spill footage is used as a visual transition to the darkest part of the song. Images of children crying and arid soils become part of the corpus of death aesthetics usually embodied in images of oil spills and dead fish. Sometimes the performers sing and rap in these dry landscapes to highlight the dystopic elements of the videoclip. These visuals coming from Radio Ucamara journalistic reportages, when incorporated in the music videos, shift from empirical evidence of socio-ecological damage to aesthetic creation and, thus, a tool for discursive amplification.

Lastly, «Maisangara» is the song and videoclip that best represents Radio Ucamara audiovisual aesthetics of death. Released almost simultaneously with the «Yuwara» videoclip, «Maisangara» is another song and music video made as a local response to oil spills. The title of the song refers to a demonic figure in Kukama cosmology that Radio Ucamara media-makers and some Nauta locals identify as the spiritual force behind state and corporate powers. The song surpasses the aggressive tone of the «Yuwara» videoclip both lyrically and musically. Unlike the previous videos, driven by hip-hop musicality, «Maisangara» is a rock song powered by heavy guitar sounds. The central theme of the song is the presence of death in the rivers due to extractive activities. The song revolves around devil imagery, but it is also an anti-dystopic musical device. Some fragments of the lyrics are written as a direct message of defiance to the Maisangara spirit. By musically confronting the presence of Maisangara, embodied by the oil industry, the song becomes a statement of Indigenous agency and empowerment. Like in other ethnographic contexts (Gordillo, 2002; Nash, 1979; Taussig, 1980), this music video encapsulates Kukama historical and political consciousness by mediatizing Maisangara as a symbol of colonial and neo-colonial experience.

The figure of the Maisangara spirit, identified with the White/Mestizo predatory alterity, is poetically connected to the recent history and current realities of violence and dispossession in Amazonia. In Nauta, Radio Ucamara media-makers explained to me that Maisangara is a demonic

figure (sometimes seen as the equivalent of the Christian devil) belonging to a spiritual hierarchy of evil forces inhabiting the world. Maisangara is usually identified with powerful alterities: the White/Mestizo society, the Peruvian state, oil companies, or the Amazonian hydro-highway project (Marta Andrade, Nauta. June 22, 2017). This obscure imagery is clearly expressed in the chorus of the song: «You are the death in our rivers. Maisangara!» In both my preliminary fieldwork and online research, references to the figure Maisangara emerged several times in conversations and social media activity. The identification of this demonic figure with colonial predatory forces sometimes emerged in online spaces. For example, on May 26, 2022, one of the local hip-hop artists referred to the Maisangara as the main force behind the violence unleashed during the Rubber Boom (1870-1930). On Facebook, he posted a video of a rubber tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*) framed with this text:

Almost a little over [100] years ago, due to the great world demand for this latex product obtained from the shiringa tree, an unfortunate dark age was unleashed in the Amazon; leaving wounds that still hurt in the memory of the Amazonian peoples. Due to the ambition of foreign businessmen, «the Maisangara» or demon that brings misery and chaos, devastated entire towns and people, enslaving them and reducing them to the point of extinction [Facebook post May 26, 2022].

In these depictions, Maisangara is identified as a master spiritual force behind historical predatory processes such as the rubber boom or contemporary oil extraction. Maisangara is a cosmopolitical trope ingrained in local historical consciousness, often used as a framework for understanding the colonial experience. In Nauta, this cosmological figure has been conceptually reworked through Indigenous media aesthetics. The Radio Ucamara team has developed a process of musicalization of the Maisangara figure (the ultimate deadly other) through rock music and audiovisual productions as a mechanism to cope with its destructive power. This identification of the Maisangara spirit as the «White men», the Peruvian state, and private companies is made textually explicit in the YouTube video description of the «Maisangara» song:

MAISANGARA, in the Kukama language means «Evil Spirit,» the one who steals your soul. Over the years, the «Maisangara» took on another connotation. The «Maisangara» became the white man or the one who destroys everything, who steals your face (your identity), who destroys the rivers, who kills, poisons, and brings suffering to our people in the Amazonia. To that «Maisangara» we say NO MORE Maisangara!! The young people of the lower Marañón River

say ENOUGH! to the abuses of the companies, of the Peruvian State, which means death for the rivers and for the people (Radio Ucamarca, 2016b).

Musically, *Maisangara* is a hard rock song. Its sound is driven by distorted heavy guitar riffs, guitar solos, and the classic drumming instrumentality of rock music. It starts with a quiet acoustic guitar intro and a poem recited by one of the performers. Then the song explodes into heavy rock music and keeps that tone throughout all its duration. The song relies on a polyrhythmic approach: the verses are fast, and the choruses are slow. While the verses use a four-chord progression (G-D-C-D) the chorus uses two chords (F# and B). The chorus slows down the tempo of the song to reach a heavier and gloomy effect, which sonically echoes the dark imagery of the lyrics. Although the lyrical content is mostly delivered through sung speech and screamed vocals, at the end of the song, one of the singers performs a few rapped verses.

As in the previous music videos, in «*Maisangara*,» oil is never explicitly mentioned. Oil as a deadly substance is mobilized in the lyrical content of the song through metaphors and metonyms. In «*Maisangara*» the songwriters refer to oil pollution through sensorial images like «bitter flavors» in the water, the river's «changing colors,» or as a «deadly black stain.» As we have seen, the «*Maisangara*» chorus deals with experiences of environmental destruction and dispossession by portraying the *Maisangara* as the embodiment of death itself. Through this song, the Kukama artists develop a poetic form of agency in which they directly defy *Maisangara*'s power by taking control over their own history. For example, in the second verse of the song, the performers use monorhymes to confront oil companies:

*Maisangara. Second verse.*

A Mis raíces, mi vida y mis sueños aquí están	A My roots, my life, and my dreams are here
A El sabor amargo de los ríos vamos a cambiar	A We are going to change the bitter taste of the rivers
A La lupuna, el papatúa de la selva no caerá	A The Lupuna, <sup>8</sup> the Papatua of the forest won't fall
A Voy a escribir mi historia, <i>Maisangara</i> ya no más	A I will write my own story, <i>Maisangara</i> no more

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8 A species of tree (*Ceiba pentandra*) with mythical connotations.

Anti-dystopic imagery persists throughout the *Maisangara* song. In the fifth verse, there is fragment where the lyrics are rapped through two sets of couplets over heavy guitar sounds. In these couplets, images of dead trees and fish are expressed in metonymic forms, whereby oil is portrayed as a deadly substance:

*Maisangara. Fifth verse*

A	No me quedaré tranquilo, esto me enoja	A	I won't stay quiet, this angers me
A	Que los árboles estén quedándose sin hojas	A	The trees are losing their leaves
B	Yo quiero ver mis peces nadar	B	I want to see my fish swimming
B	No quiero ver mi río con esa mancha negra mortal	B	I don't want to see the river with that deadly black stain

Visually speaking, same as in the «Yuwara» video, Radio Ucamara video-makers use both river landscapes and footage of oil spills in the visual aesthetics of the «*Maisangara*» videoclip. This sequence of visuals occurs in juxtaposition with the performance of the Kukama artists usually singing next to water bodies. The visuals of environmental destruction are also enriched with images of children being affected by the toxicity of oil extractivism. Blackened rivers, oil companies' ships, and machinery operating in the rivers, become illustrations of the poetics of death verbalized in the song. In line with the dark imagery and heavy sounds of the «*Maisangara*» video, the performers also draw on body expressions and micro-dramatizations. Facial gestures deliver an emotionality of aggressiveness and anger that mixes with the dancing that occurs when singing the song. The performers, for example, adopt dead body postures laying on the floor while singing, adding another aesthetic layer to the musicalization of death that takes place in the videoclip. Radio Ucamara media-makers understand these strategies of mediatization and musicalization as cosmopolitical tools. By conceptualizing state and corporate powers as materializations of demonic spiritual forces, music videos take Amazonian environmental politics beyond the limits of a struggle for economic resources and make it part of a cosmological conflict. In such battlefields, music persists as one of the main devices for building power.

### **Final remarks: cosmopolitical aesthetics**

Cosmopolitical conflicts are aesthetic experiences as much as they are political. Radio Ucamara anti-oil music videos are an excellent example of this interplay between politics and expressive culture found in Kukama cosmological discourses. Jonathan Hill's concepts of «musicalization» and «musicalizing the other» (Hill, 1993, 1994, 2002, 2013, 2015, 2018a, 2018b)

helps us to conceptually frame how musical sounds travelling in the digital space are re-shaping Indigenous cosmopolitical discourses in Amazonia. While the scholarship on musicalizations in Lowland South America has emphasized the use of ritual music in the interaction with the White-Mestizo society, Radio Ucamara videoclips illustrate how the aesthetics of media and pop musicalities are now part of the artistic arsenal instrumentalized in Indigenous Amazonian politics. Echoing the power of shamanic musicality, pop music (rock, reggeton, pop, and especially hip-hop) is now employed as a mechanism to confront corporate and state agents responsible for socio-environmental predation. These musical genres, in combination with visual and performative features, are conceived as transformative forces that have helped Kukama activists to amplify their voices to wider audiences. Radio Ucamara videoclips are semiotic units that encapsulate aesthetic and political meanings with the capacity of opening new spaces of negotiation with powerful others. The music videos combine musical sounds, images, and dance, capable of building an audiovisual poetics of environmentalism highly effective in positioning Indigenous voices in national and global arenas.

Radio Ucamara process of mediatization and musicalization of cosmopolitical discourses are also providing novel dimensions and spaces of action in the field of environmental politics. Radio Ucamara music videos shed light on the «pragmatic multiplicity» (Cepek, 2016) of Indigenous ontological discourses and the way video artistry is repositioning Indigenous ontologies in new symbolic arenas. Regardless of the multivocality and contentiousness of local ontological premises, Kukama media musicalizations can amplify cosmopolitical conceptualizations that make visible the multiple worlds and subjectivities embedded in oil extraction. Musical sounds become formal elements that incorporate other-than-human voices in the critique against capitalist notions of «nature.» When non-human agents, such as spirits like the Maisangara, are evoked in songs circulating in the digital space, they have the capacity to reach national and global imaginings and potentially challenge modernist notions of «environment.» Electronic beats, metaphors, rapping, singing, and rhyming patterns make ontological discourses more appealing than spoken speech, for both global audiences and the new Kukama generations. Confronting the idea of the incommensurability of Indigenous ontological worlds, I argue that Radio Ucamara aesthetic strategies are a good example of the entwinement of Amazonian Indigenous cosmologies and national politics/cultures in Latin America (see High and Oakley, 2020). Indigenous Pop music is a contemporary instance of the way Amazonian ontological premises, although different from Western cosmologies, can be embedded

in different semantic and practical fields beyond realms of «radical alterity.» Indigenous ontologies are also expressions of alternative modernities (see Halbmayer, 2018).

The symbolic content encapsulated in Radio Ucamara videoclips is expressed in multiple poetic, musical, performative, and visual forms that amplify its political message. Such aesthetic resources are some of the main tools Kukama media-makers have used to establish a set of communicative spaces, both with internal and external political agents jeopardizing the existence of many local Indigenous communities. This communicative process is based on a highly creative operation of musicalization in which songs are dialogically written as open-ended conversation with powerful others, whether potential allies or enemies. Expanding on a previously non-existent or limited space of mediation, the musical defiance to the Maisangara evil spirit, for example, must be understood as a dialogue with oil powers. Likewise, the musical call for support represents a way of establishing alliances with political actors sharing the same ecopolitical cause. These musical mediations, encapsulated in Radio Ucamara pop songs, are tied to a poetics of death in which oil's destructive power is made visible in a context where pollution is silenced. Thanks to the electronic beats, the melodies, the rapped couplets, or the oil spill visuals, those messages gained strength in the realm of Indigenous-state relations in Peru. Beauty, again, becomes a pathway for building political power.

### **Contribución de autoría**

Gabriel Torrealba Alfonzo cumplió con todas las fases CRediT.

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### **Declaración del uso de IA**

En el desarrollo del manuscrito no se utilizó inteligencia artificial generativa (IA-G) en ningún caso.

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