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Université de Montréal

Constituting « Community » At the Onset of the Pascua Lama Mining Project

par
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Mémoire présenté à la Faculté des études supérieures en vue de l'obtention du grade
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Ce mémoire intitulé :

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RÉSUMÉ

Mots clés : Anthropologie politique ; Industrie minière ; Communauté ; Société civile ; Ressources naturelles ; Eau ; Paysans ; Peuples indigènes ; Chili ; Canada

Le point de départ de ce mémoire est le problème ethnographique suivant : comment une communauté se représente-elle face à la présence imminente d'un projet minier. À travers une étude de cas du projet minier Pascua Lama, l'auteur démontre que le processus de représentation relie des individus et groupes qui travaillent aux sphères locale, nationale, et internationale, et que chacun de ces niveaux est imbriqué à une réalité transnationale qui met au défi l'hégémonie verticale de l'État. La société civile, les acteurs locaux, l'état, l'entreprise minière s'engagent dans une lutte symbolique sur la définition de la communauté, ce qui prend la forme d'un « lieu » géographique rempli de ressources naturelles, d'un endroit culturel et historique occupé par des peuples indigènes, et un centre de production agricole des petits paysans. Ce mémoire est basé sur une ethnographie dans le cadre des « Tables Rondes nationales sur la responsabilité sociale des entreprises et les industries extractives canadiennes dans les pays en développement » au Canada, ainsi que des entrevues et une ethnographie avec des peuples de la vallée de Huasco dans la troisième région (Atacama) du Chili, des citoyens de la ville de Vallenar (province de Huasco), le personnel de l'entreprise minière Barrick Gold, des politiciens, religieux et militantes locaux, et une organisation non-gouvernementale environnementale.

SUMMARY

Key words : Political anthropology ; Mining industry ; Community ; Civil Society ; Natural resources ; Water ; Peasants ; Indigenous Peoples ; Chile ; Canada

The point of departure of this research is the ethnographic problem of how a community represents itself once faced with the incoming presence of a major mining project in its vicinity. By focusing on the case of the Pascua Lama gold mining project, the author demonstrates how this process of representation connects actors on local, national and international levels of society, giving each of these levels a transnational character, and thus challenges the vertical hegemony of the state. Civil society, local actors, the state, and the mining company engage with each other in a symbol struggle over the definition of the local community, which takes the shape of a geographical resource-endowed "locality," a cultural and historical place occupied by indigenous peoples and a place of small peasant-irrigators. The thesis is based on research within the "National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Canadian Extractive Sector in Developing Countries" in Canada, and with the people of the Huasco Valley in Chile's third region (Atacama), citizens of the city of Vallenar in the Huasco province, personnel of the mining company Barrick Gold, local politicians, religious and local activists, and an environmental non-governmental organization.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

This is the list of acronyms and abbreviations that will be used throughout the text.

CNCA	Canadian Network for Corporate Accountability
CODELCO	<i>Corporación Nacional del Cobre, Chile</i> (National Corporation of Copper, Chile)
CONADI	<i>Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena</i> (National Corporation for Indigenous Development - Chile)
CONAMA	<i>Comisión Nacional de Medio Ambiente</i> (National Commission for the Environment)
CORDURA	The former Chile-based association of North American mining companies.
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)
DGA	<i>Dirección General de Agua</i> (General Water Directorship)
ENGO	Environmental NGO
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
IFC	International Finance Corporation
JVRH	<i>Junta de Vigilancia de Río Huasco</i> (The Huasco River Monitoring Group)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OLCA	<i>Observatorio Latinoamericano de Conflictos Ambientales</i> (Latin American Environmental Conflicts Observatory)
PDAC	Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada
SEGRPRES	Minister of the General Secretariat of the Presidency (Chile)

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Christina Campisi

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Ethnographic Problem

The following is an ethnography of the construction of resistance and the formation of “community” among actors faced with the necessity of representing their interests in socio-cultural, political, legal, and economic terms, at the onset of the Pascua Lama gold mining project. While the boundaries and roles of the mining company and related government agencies were already in place before preparations for the project began, the “local community” connected with the project was only summoned into being due to the project’s potential presence. The local communities’ positions vis-à-vis the project has shifted over time, and become diversified as community groups and associations have formed in conjunction with different outside groups and as new criteria for membership into these groups have led to particular patterns of inclusion and exclusion. For many individuals in the area around the mine, increasing their own opportunities for membership beyond the restrictions imposed at the local or national level requires creating forms of expressions that reverberate outside of the borders of the “local” and into the global arena. Thus, during the years leading to the start of the project, many people living in the project’s vicinity have conjoined with groups from around the world. Over this time, the physical spaces of their community have intermingled with the imaginations of many others, turning the “local” sphere into a distinctly trans-national site of cultural production.

Situated along the Andean Cordillera in Chile’s Atacama region and the province of San Juan in Argentina, the area around the mine and its inhabitants are very much on the margins of the hegemonic process of globalization within which their lives have become intertwined. The local peoples’ struggles of resistance may well be characterized by what Gavin Smith describes as the “offstage rumblings” of significant threats to power (2002:222). Yet these voices of dissent are real enough to have drawn into its own fields of cultural production those actors leading the very hegemonic processes of economic globalization they call into question. This “local” space has become the vehicle of distinctly trans-national imaginations, contestations and counter-strategies that have engaged interested actors in the national sphere in Chile, and in the larger global sphere. And both the state and multinational corporations react to the symbolic and imaginative work of civil society and the local communities in their efforts of resistance. These trans-national cultural

interactions take place at the local, national and global level, bringing together images of abounding glaciers with discourses on climate change, voluntary standards with calls for legally-binding corporate social responsibility, free trade agreements with international mining ombudsmen, and privatized water “shares” with religious metaphors of water as a sign of universal life.

In many ways, “water” has become the link and the vehicle of the resistance to the Pascua Lama project, and of the mining companies’ own symbolic activities. Water is a very precious resource in the arid and semi-arid northern region of Chile where national and international mining companies consume 35 percent of available water supplies, the same region where the Pascua Lama project is located (Sancha In Clark 2006:97). Thus it has also been an appropriate vehicle of inventing a particular “locality” in connection with distinctly trans-national processes. Indeed, water has served as a deeply imagination-inspiring element in the efforts of those resisting against the project. It is at once a source of economic livelihood, spiritual renewal, scientific contestation, and an issue that links people in multiple spheres of society, and across national borders. Water serves at once as a formative aspect in the construction of community, and to demonstrate the community’s legitimacy as a political subject. Local communities challenge policies of distribution and management of water at the local level, as well as broader neo-liberal policies of control of resources, consequences for achieving livelihoods.

Water is an important symbol; it has been used in binding groups of people, it has been the instrument of the formation of communities through trans-national processes that are underway in local, national, and global spheres of society. Water is a symbol through which the local community has articulated their interests in politically intelligible terms, and linked their dissent with broader social forces and national questions. The mining corporations’ destruction of glaciers in their exploratory work, which feed watersheds and supply water to local communities, took center stage in discourses of dissent and the glaciers became an important symbol in linking local struggles with national concerns over water preservation and the future of the mining industry. The mining company’s own discourses on climate change, which they raise as the real reason for melting glaciers, shows that they have become deeply engaged with the imaginative work of the resistance against the project.

The “communities” that have formed at the local level have mostly done so in connection with the opportunities for political representation and the exercise of voice

offered by "civil society" groups operating at the national and global level. Thus civil society takes an active role in the construction of the "community" and the forms it takes. This process is contingent, dynamic and always subject to change according to circumstances, and thus, the distinct shape that the community takes as a result cannot be determined prior to their engagements with groups on the outside. Beyond water, other symbols and forms of meaning have generated formations of community and new criteria for membership in groups, including indigenist and kinship-based groups, as well as local mythology and history. These groups have formed not only in order to represent their economic interests that are tied to the land and opposition to the mine, but also in attempt to be included in the very process of modernization set into action by the coming presence of the mine. In order that civil society may render its attempts legitimate to effect change in national and international law and policy, "civil society" is impelled to represent this "local community," even when its interests and wishes are intermingled with new economic opportunities that render clear opposition impossible. The moral and political agency they develop is intrinsically connected with these actors' capacities to speak in the name of the "community". Without this, their claims for upheaval in the current system are doomed to being called into question by mining companies. In the interactions of civil society with companies and the state, the definition itself of the local community is at the crux of the debate. Not only do companies challenge the claims to knowledge of NGOs in regard to the wishes of the community, they have also become involved in the very process of political articulation of local community interests and hopes for the future. The multiple channels offered to local people to render their claims explicit has created new groups and new forms of memberships, and positioning of one self by joining a group and expressing one's stance becomes a social requirement, and in some cases, an economic necessity.

"Civil society" depends upon the formation of a "community" as a localized political subject in order to be able speak in the community's name, and in turn, to create difference with the discourses and strategies of multinational mining firms. Even more, to counteract the universalizing abstract principles and voluntary protocols that make up corporate discourses on social and environmental responsibility requires concrete and "local" groups to be at all effective. At the global level, the existence of "community" as a political subject is a critical foundation upon which the moral crux of the arguments of civil society resides. As a political subject, the "community" has developed alongside the construction of a "civil society" focused on Canadian mining multinationals in the

Canadian political sphere. This raises interesting challenges for civil society in its efforts to claim a place as a legitimate group of actors on the Canadian political scene. For these efforts are connected with the possibilities of representing the local community, which is itself engaged in a complex process of articulation and positioning that often lessens its cohesiveness. The trans-national character of the positionings of actors in each sphere is bound up with the activities of actors in other spheres.

1.2 Pertinence of this Research

This topic of study was chosen in part because of the rapidly expanding interest in overseas Canadian mining firms on the part of Canadian civil society in the past few years. This interest culminated, in a certain sense, in the National Roundtables on mining held by the Canadian government in 2006, and also nourished by this very platform for expressions of dissent and recommendations for change. Canadian civil society's interest in the overseas activities of Canadian mining multinationals is timely, pertinent, and has been long in the making. Since the 1970s when the United States ended the gold standard, gold mining has become a lucrative industry. Shortly afterwards, in the 1980s and 1990s, Canadian companies took advantage of rising gold prices in Canada and overseas, and hundred of new exploration firms were founded (Tsing 2000:122). Canada has hitherto become the "hub" for mining activities worldwide, and Toronto has become the world's financial capital for mining. Almost 40 percent of global equity financing for mining companies is raised in Canada and over two thirds of the world's mining companies are listed on stock exchanges in Canada, mostly in the Toronto Stock Exchange, or TSE (Natural Resources 2007:1). Mining is important to Canada both as an element of the nation's historical founding imagination and in sheer economic terms (Tsing 2000:122). In 2006, the industry contributed \$40 billion to Canada's GDP. Canadian civil society actors have aptly become leaders in the global effort to ameliorate the social and environmental consequences of these firms that often operate among peasant and indigenous peoples, among people with little or no resources to reclaim their rights when their land is destroyed or taken away and their water contaminated. Mining Watch Canada began its pioneering work ten years ago, and in the past few years, numerous other non-governmental organizations have taken up the task.

Within the theme of Canadian mining multinational overseas I chose to focus on the Pascua Lama project because this project has become symbolic of what the Canadian mining industry is describing as the development of an entirely new Andean mining region. A 2002 headline in *The Northern Miner*, Canada's mining industry magazine – "Barrick to open the Andean gold district" – that described the company's plans for the Pascua Lama project indicates the new orientation of Canada's mining industry (Robertson 2002:1). Indeed, since major discoveries over the past ten years of gold and silver in the frontier region along the Andes between Chile and Argentina, also including Bolivia and Perú, hundreds of new exploration and extractive companies have surged onto the region. This rapid expansion of mining projects in this area was facilitated by the 2004 Argentine-Chilean Binational Mining Treaty, initiated by Barrick itself, with the leadership of Barrick's South American representative, José Antonio Urrutia, a Washington-trained environmental lawyer who formerly worked for the Chilean government in the drafting of the nation's first environmental legislation.

Civil society actors in Chile have charged that the treaty will not only forgo precious natural resources with little or no compensation, but it will usher in excessive exploitation of water in an agricultural region already mired by drought, poverty, and bring very few permanent jobs to local people, and ultimately leave the region with severe environmental consequences due to the use of cyanide (Alcayaga 2004). The treaty also creates a sort of "virtual country" between Argentina and Chile, which forgoes all regular judicial and legislative forms of governance are forgone to the mining company, which will have full freedom of movement of goods and people from one state to the next (ibid 2004:8). Each of these contexts, in Chile, Argentina and Canada, and their interrelationships, have created very rich sites and spaces of inquiry that have allowed me to investigate how civil society and community actors work to carve out a place for their own voices within the transnational institutional structures at hand.

1.3 Thesis Outline

This research project seeks to contribute to these efforts by adopting a politically engaged approach that examines the interactions between the many actors situated at different levels of power and in different spheres of society, instead of focusing on one single association involved in this struggle. This approach may shed new understanding on

the ways in which links are formed across trans-national cultural fields and the challenges of so doing.

I seek to explain how the “community” takes on new shapes and transforms itself in its effort to represent its interests to relevant actors, and how this is bound up with trans-national processes that involve “civil society” groups, the mining company and state agencies. I describe these processes from a perspective that considers the conjuncture between the social formations, symbolic constructions and economic realities that shape these processes. The first chapter consists in a theoretical discussion of each of the three analytical levels that form this research project, the local, national and global levels, and their relationships with trans-national practices. This follows with a chapter on methodology, in which I trace my ethnographic trajectory, explaining how it has played a significant role in the definition of my subjects and fields of analysis. I have found that the definition of one’s subject is a crucial part of developing a politically engaged approach to anthropology.

The third chapter traces changes in the formation of community at the local level in the vicinity of the mining project, and how these changes are shaped by local peoples’ desire for inclusion in the social and economic processes underway, through multiple repertoires of meaning that offer forms of inclusion to different groups of people. The fourth chapter examines the interactions between the state and civil society at the national level in Chile, as social and symbolic processes of a trans-national character. In the final chapter, I focus upon the global level as it manifests itself in the “National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Canadian Extractive Sector in Developing Countries.” This forum of discussion brought together industry, government, civil society actors, and local leaders from mining communities around the world, including actors involved and interested in the Pascua Lama project at all levels of society.

2. THEORY

2.1 Introduction: The Pascua Lama Project in Three Transnational Spheres

The theoretical notions that inform this study were chosen for their ties with questions of community formation and the imaginary spaces that nourish it within the context of increasing economic globalization and trans-national practices. In the discussion that follows, I shall examine the relationship between three real and imagined spheres - local, national and global - made up of individuals interested by the Pascua Lama project, and each situated at unequal levels. At the same time, I shall explore the multiple imaginative sources and repertoires of meaning that spur on the different styles in which they take shape, and the trans-national character of the actors and groups operating at each of these levels, specifically, the state, local actors, "civil society" actors and the mining firm.

The analytical "levels" of local, national and global, allow us to gain insight into the oppositions and interactions between the state and "civil society." Taken together, these levels provide the tools necessary to build on existing theoretical structures that examine state/civil society relations predominantly within the space of the nation-state. In its historical genealogy, civil society is situated within the state, forming an intermediary domain between the ideal of the state and the family. The term is most often used today with reference to the work of NGOs and grassroots groups that seek to change state policies and claim space from it. Even though in some circumstances such groups may be conceived as emerging from below, "civil society" is still tied to an intermediary space. The commonsense perception of "civil society" rests on an imaginary space that envisions the state as high up, the family on the bottom, and other institutions, such as civil society, somewhere in between. In this sense, "civil society" has been described as "sandwiched between the patriarchal family and the universal state" (Mamdani in Ferguson 2004: 385). This particular configuration of society is explained by James Ferguson as the "vertical topography of power" (Ferguson 2004:384). The vertical topography of power fashions our images of political struggle as coming from "below," the "community" and "lives."

The vertical topography of power denotes a spatially-configured structure of power that is used by the state to gain legitimacy through claims of "vertical encompassment." Claims of vertical encompassment are claims that "naturalize the authority of the state over the "local" by merging three analytically distinct ideas - (1) superior spatial scope; (2)

supremacy in a hierarchy of power; (3) superior generality of interest, knowledge and moral purpose – into a single figure: the up there ‘state’ that encompasses the local and exists on a ‘higher level’” (Ferguson 2004:385). The state’s attempts at vertical encompassment and superiority involve social and symbolic processes that civil society and companies engage with. The implication is that we must treat state and non-state actors within the same framework, and thus the verticality and encompassment of state and non-state actors becomes an ethnographic problem. Calling into question “the vertical topography of power” brings to light the trans-national character of the state and “civil society” and demonstrates that the conventional division between the state and civil society no longer suffices. By rethinking our ideas about “community” and the “local” we may become aware of how the top and bottom operate in a trans-national global context. This approach lends itself to an understanding of how governmentality is both created and challenged, sometimes simultaneously (*ibid* 385-387). It may provide new ways of thinking about the interactions between states and social movements, and reveal hidden challenges for socially-motivated actors (*ibid* 384). It also allows us to bring to view the multinational corporation, and to examine it as an actor that engages with the state and civil society in social and symbolic processes.

I apply several different theoretical ideas in my analysis of each of these levels of interaction. Firstly, the responses of local communities to mining projects are bound up with possibilities for inclusion in trans-national processes. This points to questions about delineating the boundaries of the local and impels them to engage in a process of “self-definition” that draws on diverse symbolic sources. I draw upon the theoretical conceptions of articulation and positioning of Stuart Hall (1996) in reference to the “link” that local community actors form with issues of broad social relevance. The next aspect of this discussion takes the theoretical thinking of Benedict Anderson (1983) on imagined national communities as a point of departure in examining how environmentalism and related naturalist allegories have become an idea that is integrated into national political cultures. Finally, I consider the concepts of hegemony and the fetishism of the law, and civil society and the political imagination, as articulated by the Comaroffs (1999; 2000), while giving special attention to the idea of “civil society” and its current manifestation through the form of transnational civil society. In this emerging social field, non-governmental organizations and less formal community and local groups are joining resources, and working inside and outside of the nation-state.

2.2 The Local Level: Mining and Communities

The local community, in the case of mining projects and the political and public debates that foment around them, are only defined as such by the presence or potential presence of mining projects. These communities are invented and imagined in particular settings and moments in time, often in the panic of looming, fast-paced modernization and its concomitant changes that would be brought about by the installation of large-scale mining projects. Of course, while the community did exist prior to these projects, the form that the community will take once faced with necessity of articulating and defining itself, through its interactions with state government agencies and mining firms, cannot be determined beforehand. Even though the historical development of the community is a factor, the context of mining projects yields specific forms of local community depending on the particular contingencies of the moment in which they form. These forms are shaped by new relationships with public institutions, the firm, and NGOs, and through imaginative process made available by each of these groups. In the case of mining projects, NGOs are often involved in the debate over the installation of projects and related environmental protection measures that takes place between local communities and industry. At the local level, the possibilities for representation by NGOs are greatly imbued with the complex processes of self-articulation and definition of the community itself that is called for alongside the onset of modernization that comes with mining projects. Indeed, studies of community have long been preoccupied with the problems of delineating the boundaries of the local, often linked up through rituals, ceremonies and collective memories (Featherstone 1996:48).

Local people adopt different imaginary spaces in order to gain inclusion in the processes of modernization underway. Li observes that the self-identification of a group as tribal or indigenous is not natural, or inevitable, but neither is it simply invented, adopted or imposed (Li 2000:152). In fact, the way in which local communities choose to position themselves draws upon multiple repertoires of meaning in imaginative processes that are combined with opening up possibilities for social and economic improvement. In this process of self-definition, communities surrounding the mining project employ both traditional and novel strategies of inclusion and exclusion, including rhetoric of land, kinship, myth and cosmology (Ballard & Bank 2003:298). For Li, various strategies of inclusion and exclusion in community are broad and complex in scope, describing these

processes and the networks they incite in terms of "complexity, collaboration and creative engagement in both local and global arenas, rather than simple deceit, imposition and reactive opportunism (2000:173)." Authors note, in examining the strategies and shapes of the efforts of the community towards self-definition and representation, that local communities are not primarily preoccupied with ecological damage, but rather with questions of control over their own destinies. These hopes are with respect to the management of projects, the flow of benefits, and the limitation or redistribution of mining impacts (Wesley-Smith 1990:18). Often, Western notions of basic human rights and environmental destruction do not ring a bell as sharply for local communities as they do for Western audiences receiving their messages through the mainstream media.

In delineating the boundaries of membership and in turn, in creating and defining communities, the land often becomes a powerful symbol. Studies with local communities in Papua New Guinea show that land serves as a convenient discursive point of reference to ties to locality and to kin. "A claim to land, rather than some abstract notion of citizenship, is how the majority of Melanesians secure a foothold on the political stage and gain the attention of the state" (Ballard 1997:48). This is more true than ever in the case of mining in which gaining access to land is the question of concern above all others, including engagement with local residents, for the mining firm. In this way, corporation and government conceptions of recognition of the local community tend to be influenced by issues of residence and land ownership.

Self-identification of the local community based on kinship is another critical arena for strategies of inclusion and exclusion. Often the multicultural and diverse fabric among peoples in the vicinity of mining sites, and the shifting and sometimes transitory nature of social identities, complicate and confuse processes of registering local peoples with state authorities. In one study of transformations that took place in the Papua New Guinea Onabasulu community in anticipation of a mining project, the author shows that preparing to meet the requirements of those bringing modernization from outside to inside, such as mining and oil projects, involves a process of 'entification' or the making of entities from things that were previously either implicit or contingent categories (Ernst 2001:126).

The exercise of imagination in the quest for recognition and membership into the "community" or a particular group emerging within it, often calls upon knowledge of myth and cosmology. More attempts are made to include indigenous belief systems into the arena of negotiations and agreements. In the case of the Ok Tedi mine (PNG), the Telefol

people base their claims to the prospect on ritual locations in regional sacred geography, explaining their relationships to the land as forming part of their identity as ritual custodians. While community develops its own strategies, by forming various sorts of organizations, such as land councils and associations, community foundations and institutions, these emerging and invented imaginary spaces and formations come into being in relation to those created or given support by mining firms. However, in local communities people often continue to hone deeply cherished quasi-sacred classifications, showing that modernization does not necessarily bring about a loss of enchantment or a diminution of the fictional use of symbolic classifications in local institutions.

The growing branch of research in the anthropology of corruption is also relevant here because local peoples make sense of the new roles of the company and the state in assisting mining companies through corruption. This research is drawing attention to the place of narratives of corruption in local peoples' constructions of the activities of the state (Gupta 2005; Lazar 2005; Dracklé 2005; Zinn 2001). In fact, analyzing these relationships from the point of view corruption helps to understand why certain sorts of relationships with the mining company are accepted, while others are not.

As we have seen, the processes taking place in communities in the wake of potential industrial projects, which fundamentally alter local social relations, are not pre-determined but are rather contingent on a variety of factors, including the possibilities of local peoples to exercise their imagination in constructing links between themselves and with outside groups and social forces.

2.2.1 Articulation, Positioning, and Linkage Politics

Stuart Hall's notions of articulation and positioning provide a rich basis with which to delineate these processes in the context of the multiple fields of power and influence that take part in their unfolding. A process of "articulation" is one in which a collective identity, position, or set of interests is rendered explicit through discourse - comprehensible, distinct, or accessible to an audience - and is conjoined, or articulated, with broader social forces in order to define political subjects. Once two elements come together to form a "linkage," an articulation has been initiated. Each of these elements coheres under certain historical conditions, and at specific conjunctures, but there is nothing inherent or necessary about the connection they form. The idea of articulation, then, is useful in understanding

how an ideology empowers people and helps them to make sense of their given historical situation, without limiting the influence to socio-economic factors alone (Hall 1996:141-142).

The contingent aspects of articulation are important since articulation always involves a selection of elements structured through previous engagements. When cultural identities form, they emerge through processes of action and imagination shaped by the "continuous play of history, culture and power," and they consist of a positioning, an unstable point of identification, rather than an essence, never being simply invented. The most important articulations go beyond forming a connection and making boundaries around it, they involve "positionings" that connect with broader social forces. At the same time, "articulations" and "positionings" are limited and influenced by the fields of power or "places of recognition" that others provide (Hall 1995:8,14). Hall draws attention to the conditions of possibility and focuses our thinking towards those articulations that may inspire broad amalgams of interests and extend the possibilities of inclusion.

Those "places of recognition" that, for Hall, orient communities and group towards certain forms of positioning by creating places of opportunity and possibility, are also relevant in Arjun Appadurai's work on groups that are attempting to climb their way out of debilitating cultural abyss often caused by fast-paced change and the breakdown of social bonds (Appadurai 2004:66-67). These actions oriented towards the future tend to be set in economic terms, whereas cultural dilemmas and actions that are construed as things of the past constitute an important challenge for these groups. This compounds the dilemma of generating the cultural capital necessary to find solutions to doom and gloom scenarios of a future that is increasingly out of grasp (*ibid* 60). Through the idea of the "capacity to aspire," the author places culture back into the future by drawing a parallel between the fostering of "cultural capacities" and the possibility of the marginalized to seize hold of their own futures. The capacity to aspire is concerned with engaging with the norms that frame social lives – the "terms of recognition" (*ibid* 66).

Expanding on the philosopher Charles Taylor's (1989) elaboration of the "politics of recognition," Appadurai suggests that in order to make the crucial link between present circumstances and a brighter future, the marginalized must develop their capacity to exercise voice (2004:66-67). Exercising voice to the fullest involves using metaphor, cultural symbols, rhetoric, ritual and public performance in order to challenge and engage with social, political and economic norms; it is a distinctly cultural capacity. As a cultural capacity, it reaches well beyond the exercise of basic democratic citizenship. By engaging

the imagination of groups, exercising voice fosters the development of a “navigational capacity” – the capacity to construct pathways connecting aspirations to outcomes (*ibid* 69). Moving in this direction represents a more challenging feat for the less well-off than for the wealthy because the former tend to be less conscious of the links between immediate and distant objects of aspiration. This is precisely because the capacity to aspire, like other capacities, is reinforced through “practice, repetition, exploration, conjecture and refutation” (*ibid* 69). The more that the marginalized do so, the more apparent that the links between present actions and future outcomes become. In short, since imagining new possibilities for the future develops through cultural processes, exercising voice and transforming the future are reciprocally related. For public expressions that transform public meaning also transform the terms of the recognition. Indeed, the practice of aspiring is related to possibilities opened up through Stuart Hall’s articulation and positioning as they both involve rendering the implicit explicit through the construction of discourse. However, Stuart Hall places further emphasis on the salience for local communities of forming connections with wider outside spaces of meaning.

Mary Douglas adds another important element to the question of challenges to agency within communities – the breakdown of social bonds is a crucial factor in understanding why certain communities are less able to imagine a better future, which she refers to as the “culture of apathy” (2004:107). The culture of apathy reaches its bottom point once social bonds dwindle such that individuals are no longer capable of exercising freedom or of adaptive change. Indeed, the possibility for groups to imagine a better future, and to develop collective, communal responses to achieve it, particularly those of articulation and positioning in the sense of Hall, requires strengthening social ties. To apply the thinking of Douglas and Hall to the analysis of James Scott (1985) on the forms of resistance of the marginalized, we may see that the poor are unlikely to exercise the full force of the common reality and stake claims to rights because this would require a process of positioning and articulation, and stronger forms of connectivity than they behold. Open resistance becomes impossible due to the marginalization of the poor, itself a result of the severing of connections between ritual, charity, and sociability – of cultural knowledge – in the aftermath of losses of land tenancy that lead to increasing labour mobility, the Green Revolution, and so forth, all examples of social processes have led to the replacement of “open resistance” by peasants with “everyday forms of resistance” – such as petty rural theft and sabotage (242-247). Since articulations are always subject to re-articulation, in

changing historical, social and economic circumstances, identities too always involve questions of becoming as well as being.

This demonstrates the strong relationship between the emergence and exercise of discourse, the possibilities for recognition that encourage and foment this exercise, and the creative imaginary potential of local peoples to make connections with larger ambits of meaning. Furthermore, possibilities for recognition appear as an element of mediation in Hall's process of articulation and positioning since it is an important determining factor in the extent in which local imaginations find their way along the path towards building discourse, in which local peoples come to valorize their own frames of meaning to the point that they begin constructing them in discursive forms that are also salient to the wider society.

2.2.2 Local Communities' Networks with Transnational Civil Society

It is important to bring this discussion to the responses of local communities to situations such as that of Pascua Lama, and to the relationships they develop with NGOs as these responses take shape. Situations in which NGOs become vehicles of the "voices" of the marginalized and attempt to create place for these voices to be heard within larger structures, add to the complexity. When NGO actors communicate messages about the exercise of voice of the groups they represent, they change the terms of recognition that are present within social and political structures. This opens up new spaces of possibility for the future and alters the terms of recognition in such way that may even sow the seeds of new forms of knowledge within already established structures. There is then a mutually engaging relationship between "voice" and the opening up of the public sphere.

Articulation and positioning are important for the marginalized because they provide the tools to transform meaning, to create derision, and to fashion irony. In this way, they may help the poor to transform the hegemony that contributes in maintaining their subordinate position. Second, as these processes open up the sources of meaning upon which local communities articulate their interests, the larger public space of debate is also opened up. By making visible alternative voices heard, actors may be developing the social and cultural capital necessary to call into question the dominant forms of knowledge upon which the current "global environmental question" depends, while also building upon its very premises when most appropriate. The articulations and positionings that come as a result of these connections are never permanent; rather, they always exist in a process of

becoming, within the circumstances and necessities of the day. The classic literature on mining has also addressed questions of the historical specificity of community formations in the context of mining. June Nash and Michael Taussig underscore the intersection between tradition and modernity, by showing how remote indigenous communities have incorporated mining practices into local frameworks of belief and spirituality (Nash 1979; Taussig 1980). These practices may indeed be considered forms of resistance insofar as industrialized work practices are modified by communities that form in the context of the mine in order to maintain traditional practices. I shall build on these analyses by considering how communities form, not within the context of mining itself, but in the struggles of resistance in the wake of the mine. Much like the work of Nash and Taussig articulated the formations of community occurring at a specific historical juncture, the forms of community emerging in relationship with the work of civil society also describe new historically-situated possibilities available to them.

2.3 The National Level: Imagined National Communities and the Environment

The strength of the links formed among non-state actors has, in many cases, led the state to look for ways to renew their own imaginative repertoires. Benedict Anderson describes the nation as an imagined community because while members will never know most of their fellow members, in the minds of each the image of their communion exists. Each community is distinguished by the style in which they are imagined, a style which connects past, present and future members through an array of coherent images and memories that deal with fundamental questions of origin, distinctiveness and difference. In doing so, the imagined community bonds its members through an overarching meaning that turns death into continuity, rendering it sensical by bringing individuals together within a sacred totality. A critical factor of this construction of nations is the presence of print media that may bind people through a time-space compression of their dispersed quotidian. It is then through books, novels and news media that a literate reading public imagines itself as a single, coherent community (Anderson 1983).

In the current era, images and notions of environment are being transmitted through global and national media in ways that are useful for advancing national political cultures and community. As one author poignantly asserts, “[a]t a time when conservation is increasingly tied up with identity politics and the line between the potentially

emancipatory and the potentially reactionary is no longer clear, understanding the discursive linkages between national communities and natural communities is critical" (Brosius 1999:285). Indeed, national communities appropriate environmentalist ideologies in ways that bind up national imaginations with beliefs about the natural connections of certain groups or images to spaces and places.

Conventional ways of discussing identity and territory, which appear in nationalist discourses and also in scholarly studies of nations, are often channelled in present day environmentalism. The juxtaposition of nationhood and cultural groups is imprinted with naturalist or environmental imagery: "roots" and "soil" are associated with the stability of cultural groups and their attachment to nations (Malkkii 1992:29). An example relevant to the study of environmentalism is what Appadurai calls "the spatial incarceration of the native." This author has shown that the spatial incarceration of the native has been crafted by weaving them up with not only visions of physical immobility, but also ecological immobility (Appadurai 1988:37). Just as nation and nature are conflated, so are people and cultures. One example is how defending the rainforest has become tightly bound up with the plight of indigenous peoples. Ecological immobility is very pertinent here (Malkkii 1992:29), considering that many groups would be less likely to defend the rights of indigenous peoples should these individuals shift outside of exotic, ecological environments. Another telling example entails the development of Brazil's nationalist ideology in connection to a naturalist Amazonian allegory. The perception of Amazonia as wilderness was consolidated in the twentieth century with the effect that "indigenous peoples disappear from the social history of the area and from the policy recommendations of local administrators only to be later resurrected as part of the natural attributes of the wilderess" (Fisher 1996:196). Since the 1980s, Brazil's image has been intrinsically bound up with native leaders of the rain forest, the lungs of the world in an age of forest degradation (Conklin 1995). This ideology was twisted and turned into a pretext for the tenacious exploration of this region in the name of development (Arnt 1992 in Little 1999:272). As naturalist allegories are present in nationalisms, the state must also be taken as a social subject in the study of environmentalism. Despite globalization, the state remains a crucial locus for political desires and for identification, and its connections to naturalist thinking make it an important locus of inquiry into the social manifestation of environmentalism (Aretxaga 2003:393). A politically engaged anthropology should consider how these

formulations of nation and nature, culture and people, surface in environmental action, serving to reinforce certain categorizations of people.

These imaginaries also influence nationalist and nation-based appropriations of environmentalism. In the post-Brundtland era of sustainable development discourse, it could probably be contested that most countries in both the developed and developing world have linked national policy to an approach that rationalizes the environment, as is the case with sustainable development. Nonetheless, each case is specific enough to merit individual treatment and comparison. To ignore the specificities of each case would be to throw up one's arm in despair and dismiss the fact that national governments have, to greater or lesser extents, cleared room for manoeuvre within the neo-liberal paradigm. Certainly, the policies of the Washington consensus do not have the same implications for all countries in the world. This is notably the case with Brazil, where the powerful forces of homogeneity have not operated in a constraint-free environment, specifically, with respect to the environmental sector (Little 1996:3). In many ways, the environmental sector in Brazil is an anomaly within the generalized context of neo-liberal pressures. The role of outside criticism of the burning of the Amazon, international interest in preserving it beginning with UN Stockholm Conference on the environment in 1972, and the development of the nationalist natural allegory have contributed to the considerable political clout of environmentalism and environmental actors in Brazil. In fact, Brazil's environmental apparatuses developed out of trans-national relationships with the UN environment programme and international environmental NGOs (Little 1996:5). The elaboration of the Brazilian National Program for the Environment (PNMA), funded by multilateral agencies, illustrates ways in which local actors have become empowered, using their strategic positions to direct financial resources that are more generally controlled by bureaucracies. Social actors and NGOs asserted their own expertise in the face of bureaucratic and financial inefficiency that created an impasse in spending money locally that left much of the allocated budget untouched. New mechanisms were put into place to break the bureaucratic impasse and local actors and organizations were called in to participation in the elaboration and implementation of environmental projects (Little 1996:8-12). Where environmental imagining in Brazil is invested in Amazonian allegories, a similar sort of imagining is currently underway in Chile.

In Chile, since the start of the democratization period in the 1990s, environmental policy remains situated in the legacy of undying faith in the market mechanism, dating to

the Pinochet era. The Chilean Environmental Commission, or CONAMA, (*Comisión Nacional de Medio Ambiente*) continues to operate under central authority, as it is chaired by the Minister of the General Secretariat of the Presidency (SEGRPRES) (Silva 1996:17). As CONAMA is invested with the power to approve and monitor major development projects in forestry and mining, the implications of its decisions and ways of functioning are determinant for many communities. SEGRPRES relies almost exclusively on consultants from the private sector mining industry, the Ministry of mines and from the *Centro de Investigación y Planificación para el Medio Ambiente*, also closely linked with private sector interests (Silva 1996:17-25). In this sense, there is also a trans-national sphere of legal and technical mining consultants that have become engaged in the process of globalization and modernization underway in local communities. In the final chapter, I will explore the work of these consultants within the debate on the regulation of Canadian mining firms. This debate influences the very possibilities for local peoples to be included in the process of modernization. Silva describes this situation as the “environmental legacy of military rule in Chile.” While this context is limiting, the resurgence of environmental NGOs in Chile has opened up much debate, amplified by the fact that these NGOs have considerable international support. Given the struggles of certain Southern groups and NGOs with national government policy within the neo-liberal paradigm, translocal and transnational connections may offer Southern NGOs increased levels of autonomy. At the same time, these alternate connections expose them to direction or control in other ways (Fisher 1994:453). In fact, national environmentalist ideology and environmental NGOs influence each other and should be analyzed in terms of their connections, inter-exchanges as well as moments of confrontation.

Cases of environmentalist action under authoritarian regimes are especially telling of these types of relationships. Within the context of limited democratic rights and state repression in Burma, human rights activists of the Karen ethnic minority have linked environmental issues to human rights. A Karen student activist who led the NGO EarthRights International developed the concept of “earthrights” as the bond between environmental and human rights. Under the circumstances of the construction of the Yadana pipeline through Karen land in the 1990s, the Karen peoples were forcibly relocated and women and men suffered horrific sexual violence. All this was multiplied by the destruction and contamination of the rainforest as a result of the pipeline. Karen women spoke out about the violence they had suffered, inextricably linking this violence with the

appropriation and destruction of their environment: “earthrights” was born. Then, the environmental activism that has developed within the context of the Burmese regime has become a sort of resistance politics (Doyle 2006:755-756). These struggles are also transnational insofar as activists rely on support and recognition from outside groups and the government depends on foreign enterprises and governments to build the pipeline and sell resources. Doyle and Simpson argue that in few places elsewhere in the world has the link between human rights and environmental issues been as compelling as in Burma (Doyle 2006:755).

In Iran, the political regime has picked up on environmentalism as a means to consolidate its power structures. Unlike Burma, the Iranian state has deliberately stimulated the growth of civil society and environmental NGOs but within the margins of a state-controlled civil society (Doyle 2006:760). Those groups that form independently are co-opted by the state and most others are state-sponsored. Groups may deal with ecological issues only under the rubric of apolitical discourse. This has mostly led to a “conformist environmentalism,” with some exceptions. For example, the Green Part of Iran (Sabz Haye Iran), which applies to Western environmental terminology and challenges power structures, operate underground since it has been banned by the government and does not set up office for fear of retribution. On the other hand, moderate groups are tolerated because their promotion of public participation in the management of society coincides with the Iran government’s objective of downsizing the state (Doyle 2006:760-762). Hence, we see that national environmental ideology is, to a certain extent, dependent on the social capital produced by environmental NGOs, even though these groups are fairly strictly controlled by the state and corporations. The growing popularity and uses of the environment in a global world are being appropriated by nation-states in a way that reinforces or attempts to reinforce national imaginary spaces and political cultures.

2.4 The Global Level: Law in a Global ‘Environment’

The short *aperçu* of time in three local spheres of intervention that is the subject of this ethnography is, without a doubt, situated within a larger and continuous historical process in which ‘hegemonies’ are continuously being made and remade. Taken as the “dominant system of lived meanings and values, relations and practices, which shapes experienced reality,” hegemony impels people into assuming a set of activities and values,

and also serves in imposing a degree of order and stability in the world for a given period of time (Comaroff 1991:14). The colonial period transformed others by inscribing a set of terms of representation and communication upon them that were not of their own choosing. At the same time, this was never completely a one-sided process of domination by the colonizer that was in turn to engender resistance on the part of the colonized. It was, rather, a period of dialectic interactions in which signifiers were adapted, appropriated, and transformed on each side, and in which all forms of construction were embedded within the emerging semantic grounds of signifying practices. What's more, all this took place within the context of expansive universalism and modernisation through the framework of industrial capitalism. The post-colonial period has opened up new forms of domination by state and non-state actors, and these hegemonic forms came into being through the balancing of competing symbolic forces rather than the determining calculus of class conflicts.

In light of this, a perspective that reveals the signifying practices of the current era is that of 'millennial capitalism.' It is a period marked by instant returns on investments, of new forms of enchantment, and the changing shape of nation-states as they play the role of understudy to world market forces and global corporations, diminishing and homogenizing regulations and an increasingly global workforce, all of which is underpinned by overarching changes in the relationship of labor to capital (Comaroff 2000:328). Part and parcel of this process is the "fetishism of the law" whereby the law becomes the way to solve all problems, displacing the solutions to social discord in legal instruments, in constitutionalism and contract, and rights and legal remedies, that are given the magical quality "to orchestrate social harmony" and "to accomplish order, civility, justice, empowerment," (Comaroff 2000:328). While constitutionalism forges the impression of being a neutral medium for people of difference, it "has become a global argot that individuates the citizen and, by making cultural identity a private asset rather than a collective claim, transmutes difference into likeness" (329).

The fetishism of the law, and its idealization as a universalizing response and mechanism to social discord, is also becoming extended to mainstream environmentalist thinking. Resource governance, sustainable development law, legally-endorsed pollution trading schemes, and so forth, have been lauded as the sure solution to solving current and future conflicts and concerns over the quality and control of our collective natural environment. The construction and imagination of the environmental question is also

situated within thinking on globalization. The consequence is that the "global" sustainable development paradigm, in its attempts to work towards a universal legal framework, effaces local cultural realities out of the ecological question by discursively construing the problem as belonging to the "global ecosystem." To be sure, since the construction of the "environment" occurs within and through the channels of global communication, this also spurs on the global character of the environment, framing the ways in which we believe that we can become ecologically responsible (Little 1999:272). One author's study indicates that the diffusion of environmental messages through the mass media has led individuals to believe that ecological improvement is beyond the realm of their own actions, and rather, exists on a higher level that is inaccessible to them (Phillips 2000:171). In reference to the Rio Earth Summit that established the discursive parameters for this debate, another author asserts that the Summit's discursive parameters - the "language of Rio" - twisted and turned the ecological dilemma from distinct events to one crisis, of one global environment, existing in one global time: "the global 'media' present" (Harré 1999:16). This set the groundwork for responses that focus on specific types of issues of the "global" variety, such as climate change, which often lead to the erasure of both locally-based problems and solutions.

Since major international institutions such as the UN, and environmental NGOs have the scope and finances to reach the world over, their discourses and narratives have far-reaching implications. One important example, also relevant to the case study at hand, is the issue of climate change, a question around which attempts to build new legal frameworks to manage the future of the global commons are centered. Contending that the question has been given excessive attention, some groups indicate that the climate change phenomenon is a result of Western rationality and affluence and a means of controlling the future of development in lesser developed nations and even more, there are other issues more directly relevant to human health, such as air pollution. In a study of the 1992 UN Conference in Rio on the Environment and Development (UNCED), one author illustrates how the construction of nature versus society permeated relationships between "underdeveloped" and "developed" states in the conference, whereby the latter states were construed as active creators of historical change and the former group were seen as embedded inside of a non-changing, repetitive existence (Borgstrom 1997:33). An ardent way in which these state actors create the illusion of change is by coming up with broader and broader universalisms and finding ways to extend the reach of their implementation.

Moreover, the explosion of discourses on biodiversity, lauded and diffused by a plethora of environmental NGOs, another manifestation of thinking that serves to universalize ecological dilemmas, is described by Arturo Escobar as a post-modern manifestation of the West's historical encroachment onto nature, and also onto Third World populations. This author depicts the elaboration and application of discourses on biodiversity as a "semiotic conquest of nature" in which the West appropriates, re-codifies, and universalizes local forms of knowledge, in turn, renewing Western forms of symbolic capital (Escobar 1995:203). This involves the "domestication of all remaining social and symbolic relations in terms of the codes of production," (203). This is distinct from the earlier, modern form of the conquest of nature in which capital was generated by transforming the "conditions of production" to progressively encompass and capitalize all things that are treated as commodities, even if they are not produced as commodities according to the laws of value and the market, including labour, land, nature, urban space and so forth (200). While the modern form has led to the destruction of both the social and environmental conditions upon which capitalist production relies, the post-modern form has succeeded to a large measure in framing the environmental debate and its solutions in terms of the techno-scientific knowledge of biodiversity. By maintaining symbolic power over knowledge, advocates of this thinking maintain the power to determine solutions, to choose remedial options, to predict the future.

2.4.1 Civil Society and the Trans-national Imagination

Many of the discourses on the environment and attempts to universalize law in order to regulate it are indeed channelled by a growing body of groups and individuals that form part of a new version of "civil society," of which NGOs form an integral part. The earlier version of civil society has its origins in mercantile and industrial capitalism. Civil society emerged in this period as a response of the male, property-owning bourgeois class to the increasing power of the state; as Marx and Engel explain, civil society is the mere form in which bourgeois society emerged, in historic terms. In order to counterbalance this power, this group called for independent public institutions separate from the state, which they described as "civil society" (Nash 2004:437). In this sense, it is an "idea" with historical and philosophical roots that is serving to form an imagined community that works within a very real sphere of action of global proportions, building on trans-national relationships as a means of circumventing the unequal balance of power of economic globalization, most

frequently symbolized through the multinational corporation and its all-too-difficult to govern nature. Insofar as civil society may be mobilized to contest the excesses of the state, it may be a space for positive change. Comaroff indicates that this requires that it leave behind its origins in European enlightenment thinking in order that it might truly inspire the building of new publics, new spaces for dialogue and community that are grounded in practical challenges of real-life experiences (1999). It is in this way that new publics, new modes of association, new media of expression and new sorts of moral community may come into being.

Contemporary civil society has indeed emerged in very different forms and historical circumstances than those of its predecessors. This time, it has emerged in order to challenge major shifts in the global economy, such as post-Fordist flexible accumulation (Harvey In Nash 2004:237). Unlike those of the past, the groups that form current civil society at present are socially heterogenous and trans-national in scope. As a locus of inspiration for the trans-national imagination, civil society has also been considered as an ideological category of tremendous planetary success for its capacity to inspire new forms of "moral community." Described by the Comaroffs as "one of the big ideas of the millennial moment," the language of civil society indeed inspires new visions of democratic and moral community as well as social being by forming a sort of social category through which innovative, moral agency may emerge and be channelled through reformist action. By opening up spaces of reflection on new ways of working towards moral community in the given political landscape, the idea of civil society and the community formations it may bring about are rooted in imaginative activity. For June Nash, this is the most crucial task of civil society as the current juncture, for "the moral basis of an emergent world order is increasingly dependent on a sense of *comunitas* nurtured by trans-national civil society as it reached out to a broad, global constituency" (2004:438) These endeavours that drive on the spirit do so precisely at the same time when a triumphant neo-liberalism calls into question the very idea of society and community, by the fast-paced displacement of bodies, goods and values. It is also a time when geographically localized, nationally bounded conceptions of society and culture, of a homogenous imagined community, are called into question. The political imagination that inspires civil society indeed also brings with it a potential for renewal and emancipation from the bonds of neo-liberal ideology.

At the same time, civil society is also part of many of the universalizing discourses discussed above, which sometimes contribute to the fetishism of the law. The deepness of

this potential lies in the open-ended nature and even ambiguity of the “polyethic clutch of signs” the idea is used to represent (Comaroff 1999:3). It is at once a symbol of checks and balances on government, a means of challenging the stronghold of wealth and power by the few, a vehicle that converts popular wrath into social change. Oftentimes, it englobes emerging entities for which there is not yet a name, particularly moral preoccupations, hopes from popular sectors and sites and spaces of practice. As the Comaroffs note, even its ontological status is uncertain; it is sometimes a social domain, institution/practice, moral ideal, a normative condition (Comaroff 1999:6). As the more complex and multilayered its signifiers become the more it feeds the imagination but as this occurs the lesser it serves as a meaningful notion useful in attaining anything at all. Where it is taken to the level of abstraction, it loses its might as a tool that may facilitate increasing social and economic justice (ibid). It is here that the problem arises. For civil society cannot be removed from its historical relationship to the state even in cases where this relationship is ambiguous and tension ridden.

While civil society often imagines itself as working in opposition to capital and the state, it cannot be entirely separated from the state, given its underlying two-sided goal of both prosperity and political engagement. Both inside and outside of the state, civil society’s widespread appeal of late is most certainly connected to the breadth of its reach as an imaginative category, to “its capacity to condense distinct doctrines and ethical strains in a fan of pliable associations that can be variously distilled and infinitely elaborated” (Kumar 1993: 376). In fact, the ambiguity and discomfort with which civil society interacts with the state and its various arms and agencies, working at once to create upheaval in the forms and functions and also to gain a foothold into those very same institutions, is perhaps one of the reasons why “trans-national” practices and spaces of action so deeply encourage those who spearhead the “idea.”

It is indeed an idea that influences thinking about local spaces within an unfolding global order that carries with it media images, hopes for the future, and hybrid identities, all of which are connected to trans-national practices. Here, we take trans-nationalism to mean an emergent reality born out of ‘internal globalization,’ that is, the reality of globalization at the micro-level in which trans-national spaces are born of contacts of peoples from diverse backgrounds. Trans-national networks have a far more complex impact on the nation-state than simply causing its demise or continuation. The trans-national imagination depends upon the separation of the public and private spheres of the

state in forming its own sphere of action. At the same time, trans-national networks often comply with the nation-state and perpetuate its very own *raison d'être*, thereby feeding the fodder for new symbolic battlegrounds that draw on ideas of "multicultural civil society," "international cooperation" and so forth. These include those created through global, legal initiatives described above and through trans-national corporations and the global civil society, which we will discuss below.

This elucidates the question of the culturally specific nature of civil society. Where trans-nationalism is a salient category that exercises the imagination in one area, it may appear less pertinent in other sites where the separation between the public and private sphere is irrelevant or uninspiring. In areas of the world outside of the West, for example, clans have long been a central mechanism of articulation between the citizenry and monarchy checking excesses of regal power. Indeed, kinship has a public and private face, a political and domestic dimension. Ideas of civility and moral citizenship are always complex, historical constructions that are "grounded in political ideals and formal institutions, public manners and personal dispositions, conventions of taste and styles carefully attuned to sensuous regimes" (Comaroff 1992:27). In this sense, civil society is also an ethno-centric ideal that sometimes sits upon thinking about other non-West as pre-political beings that could benefit from Euro-model civic institutions.

Analyzing the efforts of civil society must take heed of its relationship to history and culture, of the cultural forms that political actors inherit, which shapes their practices and visions of a moral community even when it may be mostly unconscious or they aim specifically at subverting a particular legacy. In some cases, these rituals may link societies to their past, helping make sense of and respond to novel and contradictory circumstances of modernity (Comaroff 1992:xxx). These actions "are built on the ruins of earlier symbolic edifices and use their materials, even if it is only to fill their foundations of new temples, as the Athenians did after the Persian war" (Castoriadis 1987:121). While the historical and cultural circumstances of its origins muddy the issue, especially in its trans-national manifestation, its potential as a site of emancipation must not be left aside. For civil society to become a potentially transformative force, it must present alternative models of economic development and political organization that may be practically implemented, and agree with local social and cultural realities

The distinct character of the current trans-national civil society is that it is emerging in the context of economic globalization and when global 'environmentalism' has become a

paradigm adopted by dominant international institutions linked with these same processes of economic globalization. The universal appeal of environmentalism, with its links to ideas about the global commons, makes it especially natural to speak of global civil society in relation to environmental movements that often take the form an unbounded planetary sphere of NGOs and activities. However, that which might appear as a global civil society is perhaps more accurately described as a web of governance. One study of trans-national environmental practices in Madagascar is a case in point. The author of this study suggests that given the increasingly close relationships between states, global environmental NGOs, private companies and the World Bank, it is close to reality to speak of the production of environmental governance rather than the creation of a separate civil society (Duffy 2006:733). This proposition could be applied to many nation-states of the South and the North. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the development of environmental governance within the state and in relation to extra-state actors means that environmental concerns rarely reflect the needs and aspiration of the poor. National-level environmental NGOs (ENGOs) emerged as a result of top-down funding available from the European Union. This has led to depoliticized environmental groups since their interests are directly linked with those of the state. Furthermore, "conditionalities" attached to aid and donor programmes link these groups to expansive, homogenized systems of governance (Doherty 2006:887).

NGOs are important actors because they are directly engaged in acts of translation of the various imaginative processes discussed above in trans-national spaces, in a space where the community becomes an abstraction. In this way, they instrumentalize specific ideas about local communities while also elaborating imaginary spaces about themselves, and the possibilities they hold. At the trans-national level, questions surrounding environment often take precedent over other issues that may be closer to the real experiences of the community. When translating ideas about the 'environments' that form the habitat of communities, these acts becomes intensely political because they are linked to claims about identity and rights. As one author explains: "[...]environmental translations that portray people as rational, neutral and economically minded, and their socio-ecological actions as resource use, often miss the fact that human relations with the natural world are aesthetic, poetic, social and moral" (West 2005:632). This demonstrates that the work of NGOs, which is often to translate the meaning of environments, space and landscape, across time, requires a keen degree of reflexivity. Indeed, there are several important challenges in understanding production of translations on the part of NGOs in order to

write clear ethnography of the relationships they are developing with local communities and state actors.

NGOs have become involved in certain types of constructions of topologies in the name of environmentalism and the translation of relationships that people maintain with their environment. The challenge for anthropology here is to identify how environmentalism has created new subjects that are the targets for interventionist projects or agents called to assist with these projects (Brosius 1999:282). Concern for protecting the environment and environments, such as that of the tropical rainforest, have led to the creation of certain subjects: those who merit occupying these environments and those who do not. One author argues that alongside concerns with "biodiversity," indigenous people are often those categories of people whose way of life has been valorized. Attributing their way of life to biological conservation, they have deemed deserving to live in these environments. On the other hand, peasants and migrants from urban areas have not (282). Interpreting indigenous ways of being as inherently linked to ecological preservation misses the full scope of their existence, often reducing them to non-economic actors.

One author has demonstrated that international environmental NGOs produce indigenous people as a threat to their own natural environments, demonstrating the false interpretation of anthropological translations of relationships between these people and their environments (West 2001:69). To explain, relationships between indigenous peoples, conservationists and NGO field staff, a new kind of social group specific to the global environmentalism, were fraught with the co-optation of anthropological terms applied as a quick explanation for local social practices. Specifically, traditional land holding patterns were reduced by NGOs to ownership and indigenous peoples traditional practices were seen in opposition to rational and skilled forest management practices, as a "threat" to biodiversity. Indeed, efforts to conserve biodiversity in a "pristine condition" and to protect it from indigenous "overhunting" demonstrate a lack of understanding (West 2001:58-67). As well, as a result of the sedentary lifestyle of the people, it was wrongly assumed that certain parts of the landscape were not hunted. It has been established that in Melanesia the relationship between people and the land is tied to questions of identity, group affiliation, changes in landscape, external power, and economic transformations, thus generalizations about property relations and occupation practices are problematic (West 2001:60). Indeed, this ethnographic inquiry is important insofar as it demonstrates the problems of translating land and ways-of-being in Western terms and the misappropriation of

anthropological terms and notions by international NGOs engaging in trans-national relationships.

Paige West's study of an environmental interventionist project with the Gimi-speaking peoples in Papua New Guinea is an interesting example of challenges of translation of community values and wishes for the future that NGOs face in the exercise of their quite global and trans-national inspired beliefs about the world environment. The project is the result of a long series of exchanges between local and national and international NGOs, including USAID and the World Wildlife Fund, the Biodiversity Conservation Network (BCN), and was set up in order to integrate conservation and development (West 2001:56). Local indigenous peoples were encouraged to value "nature" through a program that linked biological diversity protection to economic markets through the creation of eco-enterprises (West 2005:632). Acts of translation on the part of NGO fieldworkers and conservationists failed to consider how Gimi live in and engage with space, nor how they create knowledge about that space. The overriding concern with valorizing "nature," in this part of the world that has now become sacrosanct to conservationists, led the trans-national networks of groups and individuals involved to create a project that is socially inequitable and inappropriate to the human relations of the Gimi with their environment. For the Gimi, their forest environment is sacred as it is a physical incarnation of their ancestor's life force (West 2001:635). Through song composition, hunting practices, relations with spirits and life forces in dreams and the forest, they create a meaningful sense of place. They also create meaningful spaces by translating forests into clan property. Then, the Gimi are in constant trans-active dialectical relationship with the forest through producing identity and space. The program staff wrongly assumed that the environment is simply a means of economic livelihood for the Gimi, thereby creating a program whereby conservation practices were given market-based motivations (West 2001:635-639). Indeed, analysis of the translation of environmental knowledge, skills and behaviour of groups on the part of trans-national networks, NGOs and international institutions must be keen in examining how these groups produce space and value.

Furthermore, acts of translation in ethnographic work, and in ethnographic analysis of the translational works of others, must be based on an awareness of the actors within certain "environments" to non-economic and non-temporal ones. This is particularly the case with respect to indigenous peoples. For example, the complex relationship between

indigenous peoples' economic and ecological practices has historically been misinterpreted by anthropologists, among others. Far from idealized systems of pre-capitalist economies, natives' ecological treatment of the cosmos has coexisted to a certain extent with capitalist forms of exchange (Varese 1996:63). We have been too quick to juxtapose ecological practices with economic ones, failing to take stock of the complexity of their interconnections and changes throughout different historical periods and encounters with other groups. Considering the above analysis, the implications of misconstrued translations for the forms of agency that environmental activists create are evident. It is also clear that developing just and engaged translational practices in anthropological engagements with the environment requires paying close attention to the complexities of multiple trans-national relationships, at the local, national and international level.

Comparing and relating the ways in which communities and organizations aspire towards the future by developing their own cultural voices with the efforts of NGOs engaged in trans-national environmental activism to become vehicles of the "voices" of the marginalized within larger structures are tremendously important. When NGO actors communicate messages about the exercise of voice of the groups they represent, they change the terms of recognition that are present within social and political structures. This opens up new spaces of possibility for the future and alters the terms of recognition in such a way that may even sow the seeds of new forms of knowledge within already established structures. Indeed, the mutually engaging relationship between "voice" and the opening up of the public sphere merits further attention.

Since the alliance between NGOs and environmentalists on the one hand, and indigenous peoples on the other, has truly come to fruition, anthropology's critical engagement with this phenomenon has revealed the complexity behind past assumptions in this regard. While the positive impacts of the Indian-environmentalist alliance are well known and highly lauded, it is important to engage with the less well known consequences of these relationships. An important consideration here involves naturalizing representations of indigenous people within the media and the marketing of environmentalism.

The internationalization of local Amazonian struggles is another case in point. The image of the ecologically noble savage is perhaps the West's latest imaginary space that has been transplanted onto natives. This is not to reduce the significance and positive aspects of the contemporary equation between indigenous resource management practices and

Western environmentalism, but to question its implications. As environmental NGOs recognized early on, indigenous leaders possess a strong symbolic capital as spokespeople of the environment (Conklin 1995:696). This symbolic value is particularly important in fundraising campaigns that depend heavily on contributions from sympathetic donors. It is also central in the marketing of Indian produced products such as rubber tapper products or of the Brazil nuts in Ben and Jerry's rainforest ice cream, whereby the producers are described as "rainforest people" (Conklin 1995:701-702). Since eco-activism tends to essentialize natives, those actions of indigenous peoples that run contrary with these typified images could be seen as evidence of corruption or a lack of so-called authenticity, or are simply ignored. Non-indigenous forest people lack the same symbolic weight. Focusing on the connections between natives and the forest also ignores the fact that many non-native peoples depend on the forest for their livelihood and are equally threatened by cattle ranching, colonization projects, and large-scale development schemes (Conklin 1995:702). The "myths of foundation" that are present in the social construction of refugees are present here with respect to the relationship between indigenous peoples and the environment (Malkki 1996:380). Pointing out these myths should open up thinking that narrows in on certain groups of people. This also demonstrates the difficulty of framing actions in order that they may appeal to Western audiences without a close regard for indigenous communities' own worldviews and life priorities (Fisher 1994:221). Like Edward Said's critique of Orientalism as a Western imaginary space, so is indigenism, and environmentalism, an invention of the West (Said). Then, we must be reflexive with respect to indigenism insofar as it is a social construction bestowed upon indigenous peoples.

The fact that these alliances depend on few intermediaries to represent communities to the entire world increases the likelihood that civil society actors may fall into the trap of indigenous essentialism. To return to the case of the Kayapó, we can see the challenges of circulating media images that rely on very few indigenous cultural representatives. Indigenous spokespeople are often seen by outsiders as metonyms, as symbolic extensions of entire homogenous indigenous community (Conklin 1995:704). One NGO spokesperson explains the reason for using Paiakan, the Kayapó leader in media relations: "We really needed someone to represent the human side...Paiakan had a genuine appearance, and of course the regalia made good media. He really seemed to represent the forest" (Conklin 1995:701). The subsequent defamation of this leader's reputation for unproven allegations by the media at the onset of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 demonstrates the tenuous

position of creating an indigenous metonym out of a single individual who often sits uncomfortably within his own community. In order to gain the political astuteness and cultural and linguistic competencies necessary in their role as mediators, paradoxically, indigenous leaders are often alienated in the process of representing their local communities (Jackson 1995). A similar situation exists with respect to funding agencies who rapidly redirect resources to more 'representative' organizations should a native leader be deemed inauthentic (Ramos 1994). The most important point here is perhaps that without critical reflection on the position of indigenous peoples in trans-national environmental movements, there is a risk of unintentionally reproducing colonial relations, particularly given the fact that indigenous' political power stems from Westerners' ideas about them and not from traditional forms of political power linked to economic clout.

In the case of mining, corporations are trying to come to terms with these changes and the new challenge posed by menacing NGOs and the negative turn in public perception of the mining industry in general. Their responses are often modeled after those of civil society, further complicating the role and influence of NGOs within local communities in the vicinity of mining projects. One most notable example was the Mining Minerals and Sustainable Development project (MMSD), a multi-stakeholder, global consultation process funded by a consortium of the largest mining corporations and administered by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). In the wake of the Rio +10 Earth Summit, the group hoped to come up with ways to contribute towards sustainable development (Ballard 2003: 291).

2.5 Conclusion

The reader should now see that civil society is a complex category that engages with the state and with corporations in its imaginative and representative role as a mediator with local communities. As civil society strives to develop imaginative alternatives that further its objectives of transforming patterns of economic development and political organization, its imaginings are developed in relationship to those offered by the state and those expressed by local peoples.

3. METHOD

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I shall outline my own ethnographic trajectory from the very initial stages of the project in the fall of 2006 up until the end of my field research in August 2007. I begin by tracing the ways in which I became aware of the theme of this research, and met with relevant actors in Canada, and how this eventually made it possible for me to expand my research project to include work with local communities and a non-governmental organization in Chile. I will also consider some of the challenges I faced along the way, and examine the implications of my research for the community I worked with. Furthermore, I have changed the names of my informants in the local community and with various organizations, however, I have kept the real names of the organizations themselves and of public officials.

3.2 An Unfolding Trajectory in Canada

The polemic over the Pascua Lama mining project first caught my attention in 2006 when I read an article on the subject in a review published by a Montreal non-governmental organization with a Latin American and human rights scope. I was interested in exploring, for my master's research, the practices of "civil society" and NGOs working in Latin America, particularly in the context of ecologically-oriented struggles. I met with some members of a NGO that had taken up the question and this led to more exchanges with several other groups working on mining issues and the issue of the regulation of Canadian mining corporations abroad. One of these is the "Grupo No A Pascua Lama Montreal," a tight-knit group composed of Chilean-Canadians, most of whom moved to Canada as political exiles at the onset of the Pinochet regime in Chile. They had been working on the Pascua Lama question since 2005 and at the moment I began working with them were striving to formalize the work of their group and to gain a more prominent place in the political arena and more attention within the Canadian media. The group is coordinated by an anthropologist who was very open to sharing his work and activities with me and who brought to my attention the national roundtables on mining. A professor also brought to my attention the work of Ottawa-based NGOs that focus on mining

questions, and the important work of an anthropologist in Mining Watch Canada. I soon became aware that this group was a key actor in lobbying the federal government to put into place the national roundtables. The roundtables were presented by the government to Canadians as public consultations of a trans-national scope, that would give the opportunity to the various government agencies and departments to gather ideas, suggestions and research papers from civil society – including NGOs, academics, students, lawyers, economists, and members of the concerned public – and from industry as to how Canada could effect improvements in the social and environmental conduct of its overseas multinationals, principally, by determining what sorts of “actionable” legal mechanisms could be employed in order to do so.

My participation as an observer in the “National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility and the Canadian extractive Sector in Developing Countries” and the organizing activity of the NGO community just beginning to form around the issue of Canadian mining multinationals, marked an exceptionally rich point of entry into the debate over Pascua Lama and the conduct of Canadian mining companies more generally. The roundtable process took place in the fall of 2006 in 5 major cities across Canada, and spawned a fevered exchange of information-sharing and mobilization activities within the NGO community across Canada. Most notably, a group of Quebec and Ontario based NGOs met in Montreal during the months leading up to the roundtables in order to conjoin their efforts with the media and within the roundtables, forming the “Montreal Mining Coalition.” The coalition’s activities culminated with a parallel public conference held at the Université de Québec à Montréal the day prior to the Montreal roundtable. The goal of the session was to make the public aware of and interested in the roundtables and to provide critical analysis of the process and also of various issues concerning Canadian mining corporations abroad and provide the space for NGOs, community groups and students to share information with the general public and to connect with one another informally. The opportunity for a close-up look into the exchanges taking place in the roundtables and also the activities stirring up around them was enthralling.

By following the activities of the roundtables in Toronto and Montreal, as well as the “civil society” activities building up on the sidelines, I gained a unique window into a plethora of local-global ties and also gave me the opportunity to make contact with members of Chilean civil society involved in the debate over Pascua Lama within their own nation whose participation in the process was facilitated by Canadian NGOs with whom

they work closely. This opened up the inspiring possibility of expanding my field research into a multi-site investigation. These activities create new localities in novel ways, expanding the terrain beyond the site of mines and multiplying potential sites of inquiry.

3.3 Towards a Multi-site Approach

I became aware of some of the debates underway within Chile through the Chilean representatives at the roundtables, in parallel conferences held by NGOs, as well as through the plethora of discussions among civil society actors and the news articles and commentaries circulating on internet lists and NGO mail groups. In Chile, ideas about the environment, water resources, indigeneity, history, kinship and culture, were fomenting the formation of communities among local peoples in the vicinity of the proposed mine, and also at the national level and regional level where the Pascua Lama question was becoming an intense locus of political exchange through its mediatization and mobilization of multiple actors, including local-level political figures. As the question took on a popular character, it began to pose new challenges to the “imaginative” authority of the Chilean state, and triggered the state to search deeper into its own historical imaginary. In doing so, they brought to the surface the historical and founding place of mining in the Chilean national imagination and inventive, probabilistic and scientific discourses that challenged the legitimacy of the mine given the reality that similar projects had contaminated and near-depleted water resources for agriculture in other areas of the same region in northern, desert Chile. The future of mining in Chile was being called into question in the media. This was particularly disquieting because mineral resources have historically been a central part of export revenue, even responsible for the growth of the capital city of Santiago. What’s more, on the sidelines, the local community became compelled to stake out a claim for itself amidst the hurried plans for modernization and infrastructure development of the mining firm and its political allies. Resolved to not remain the passive recipients of a pre-determined future, the local community became involved in a rich and complex struggle in their own right.

All this was unfolding in a place that up until this moment in the history of the nation was of rather little importance in the national map, a place formed of people who had never before been interviewed by journalists or made contact with environmental activists, who had seen very few development initiatives beyond the most basic rubrics,

and who had never made contact with researchers like myself who demonstrate interest in their opinions and way of life. The interactions between these three “localized spaces,” at once in a transnational space in Canada, in a national space in Chile, and in the local space in the mining zone, were absorbing. James Clifford has brought to our attention the richness that multi-sited research inquiries provide in the current era (1997). Authors have concurred that the next frontier of research in this area must be multi-sited because it is really only in this way that we may take heed of the rapidly evolving complexities between and within industry, the state, local communities, NGO and international networks (Ballard and Banks 2005).

It was at this point, during the roundtable process, that the possibility of extending my research to include a period of study in the local community in Chile took shape. Through a Chilean NGO that participated in the roundtable process I was put in contact with a local community group with which they work closely. One of the leaders of the group, who is also a politician living and militating in a tiny village in the Huasco valley where the mine is situated, happily accepted that I stay with him and his family and I took the opportunity with enthusiasm. With this opportunity, I reshaped the form of my study into one that would examine three forms of localization each with different types of interaction – the transnational level in Canada, the national level in Chile and the local level surrounding the mine. Taking a localized approach, I would examine and contrast how these different forms of locality have been constructed in each of these sites, while also considering how they are interconnected. Without a doubt, trans-nationalism is present at the local level, in the imagination and also in relationships that local leaders are building with outside NGOs, media and so forth, and at the trans-national level, on the other hand, both “civil society” and government expressed that bringing in “local” peoples to give testimony was of paramount importance in ensuring the success of the process and in demonstrating its legitimacy to the executive level of government. I found this approach to be a pertinent one in consideration of emerging challenges in studies of community responses to industrial projects and economic change.

3.4 Field Research in Chile

Over the course of the three months I spent in the Huasco valley, I conducted an investigation that combined participant observation and interviews with many local

peoples belonging to different community organizations - agricultural, indigenous, religious based groups - and with very different socio-economic statuses. I began with a set of questions which served well as a guiding framework, however, given the scope of my investigation, and the large diversity of my informants, I found it necessary to tailor the questions to the specific reality and circumstances of each informant. In total, I conducted 20 semi-directed interviews with a heterogeneous range of local peoples, including those who do not specifically identify themselves with a given group, as well as those who lead a community association. The diversity within my group of informants proved tremendously helpful and enriching for my research findings.

While some interviews lasted about one to two hours, others were conducted with individuals whom I met with on many occasions over the course of my stay and came to know as friends. Initially, I was introduced to the tightly-woven nucleus of individuals who lead the movement against the project, including medium-scale farmers, Vallenarinos, small business owners, youth, and environmentalists, who have formed a defense council through which they focus their mobilization activities. This council also works in close cooperation with the Catholic Church whose clergy and lay clergy have integrated the symbolic fight against the mine into weekly services and special celebrations and festivals. Through these groups, I was introduced to members of the local water basin management association or the JVRH (*Junta de Vigilancia de río Huasco*), composed mostly of small peasant irrigators. This association has become a focal point of attention in the Pascua Lama debate because of the new role that the mining firm is playing within their activities now that the firm has purchased a vast quantity of the water shares of the basin. I attended a local information meeting held by the association to relay information to local irrigators on protocols being developed with the mining firm, and also a general assembly of the association's members. Furthermore, I conducted an interview with the association's manager, technical specialists and with irrigators.

I also spent two weeks in the city of Vallenar, closest to the mine, during which I had the opportunity to conduct several interviews, including interviews with Vallenarinos who participated in training workshops conducted by the mining firm, community consultants and an anthropologist who all work for the firm, a local politician and community organizers.

During my time with the people living in the area of the mine, I attempted to gain an insider's perspective into their hopes and expectations about the future but I

encountered something quite different. I came across despairing feelings of exclusion and hurried efforts to join newly forming groups. Without the appropriate criteria for membership into these new groups that were forming, for example, kinship and indigenous ties, and land ownership, one was left out of newly formed associations, and this posed important consequences for one's economic and social status. I heard stories of people searching far into their genealogies for signs of the key last names that carry with them the chance for indigenous status, and of trying to secure even the most menial jobs with the mining firm through a friend hired to manage the very community programs set up to convince people of the gains of the project. The key point was less about the "future" itself than about the future of the meaning of "community." The people I spoke with had little time for this sort of reflection because they were too busy scrambling to get in, to become a part of the process that was pushing so many aside. They were, however, becoming greatly involved in another process. This process involved the self-articulation and self-definition of their identity as a community itself. The forms that emerged were connected with possibilities to make claims to resources and for political and cultural recognition. In this context, gaining membership into newly formed groups that had in fact obtained this legitimacy was of most importance to local people.

With this in mind, once in the field I transformed my methodology in order to best capture this reality. I focused on transformation within the formation of communities, and began to explore how these formations were connected with trans-national relationships and practices. I felt that this orientation would contribute more carefully engaged research, from a political and social point of view, than my previous questions that were circumscribed to the construction of the ecological movements and their relationship with an environmental non-governmental organization in Santiago de Chile. This was challenging because it required that I work with several different groups some of which maintained conflictual relations with each other. On occasion, my own loyalty was challenged by individuals who did see the purpose in conducting research with multiple actors.

3.5 Research in a Site of Conflict

It was indeed a challenge to conduct research in the context of a conflict with intense and tremendously sensitive political, economic and social dimensions. Having said that, these challenges were surmountable and as time progressed I became more readily able to contend with them. For example, some individuals subtly tried to find out whom I had conducted interviews with, and where I was staying, before accepting a request for an interview. In some cases where a potential informant was suspicious of my status, simply explaining the sorts of people and groups I had met with, without mentioning names, and also that my study is a descriptive one that does not seek to support of one group or another, seemed to work well. In another case, some individuals thought I could be a spy for the mining firm at an information meeting given by the JVRH, but people I knew quickly convinced them that I was a student from Canada. Furthermore, considering that my point of entry into the community was through the NGO that is working with a specific agenda with respect to the Pascua Lama project, it was a significant challenge to make contacts with those groups on the other end of the spectrum, particularly, the neighbourhood groups receiving support from the mining firm and the Diaguita indigenous group, which is also accepting certain forms of support from the firm. At the same time, while this latter group is engaged in certain projects with the firm, there is considerable overlap among their participants in other groups, which in fact demonstrates quite clearly that the lines of division are far less solid than they might appear at first view. Understanding these complexities formed part of my own research objectives and served to advance forward the depth of my own understanding.

Nonetheless, given the relationships I had formed with certain groups early on, it seemed necessary for my own credibility to at least spend proportionately more time with them than with the others. And naturally, while these other groups accepted requests for interviews, they were less open to my following their activities. One of the indigenous groups had hired anthropologists and communications specialists as consultants to assist and work with them in creating and implementing their own social and economic development plans and in forging a public image of their organization. In this way, while they would be happy for people to join this team, they were less open to independent research. I offered to translate my own work for them, and should I continue with my

research with this group, I shall make efforts to collaborate with them, and find ways to make my research relevant to them.

For certain environmental activists, research must be oriented with a view to “help the cause” or lend support in some very direct, concrete way. While I aspire towards developing a socially-engaged anthropology, how one goes about this and what counts as “concrete action” was at times a sticky and confusing question in the context of the field. Since my research was broad in scope I was sometimes asked to explain its pertinence, and this offered me the opportunity to simply explain my own point of view – that taking a larger perspective may lead to findings and analyses that could make another sort of contribution to knowledge or help the community to make other sorts of reflections on the process in which they are living. Sometimes I explained that simply documenting the work of the mining firm in the community might be useful. Another challenge was the many questions I received with respect to my own opinion on the mining firm. Depending on the situation of the individual and the distance they maintain vis-à-vis the community, I sometimes gave general impressions, but in most cases, I found a way to politely decline. Of course, placing a name, let alone a theoretical social science category, on a real life experience of a community member, or even simply one’s own surprise faced with a given circumstance, may in itself be a violent act.

The most difficult situations arose, on a few occasions, when an activist or researcher from outside the community arrived and began asking me questions, sometimes very insensitive ones, about my interpretation of the situation in the very presence of local, community members with whom I had developed friendships without explaining the academic details of my research. In these moments, the locals would look at me very differently, perhaps wondering how I would behave and what I would say when asked to respond in my role of researcher, and I tried to maintain my role of participant-observant. Later on I was to discover that the very presence of the activist in question has become a controversial one in the community and this confirmed my belief in the importance of exercising caution and moderation in expressing one’s impressions and ideas in front of locals.

Given the course of time, there were even several locals and some Vallenarinos who expressed support for this sort of approach. As they indicated, given the complexity of the situation and the new forms of affiliation developing within the community, an outside analysis with a broader orientation is important. Taking such a position allowed me to

conduct interviews with the firm's own employees in the field office and Vallenar office, which may not have been impossible, but certainly would have been more difficult if I had chosen to conduct research uniquely, for example, with the defence council. It is here that what may have been challenges at the onset of the study turned into positive implications. For the breadth of my approach incited certain sorts of reflections beyond the rubric of internal discussions in the group, perhaps leading to new perspectives on the changing reality. I have chosen to present these interviews in English, translated by myself. Where I have found that it is necessary to explain a culture nuance in the translation, I have added a footnote.

3.6 Implications of the Research Project

With respect to the implications of my presence and methodological approach on the local community and the Chilean community in Canada, I noted several observations that merit attention. First and foremost, the very presence of my self, a Canadian citizen who has no kinship ties in the community or in Chile for that matter, signifies and symbolizes that the Pascua Lama question has without a doubt become an international one capable of inspiring close-knit transnational relationships. In my case, since these transnational links were forged as a result of bonds developed by community leaders with a Chilean NGO, my presence was perhaps also a reminder of the emerging place of this NGO in the community. In some families, the Latin American Conflicts Observatory (*Observatorio Latinoamericano de Conflictos Ambientales* - OLCA) has become a household name, and a place of support and refuge on trips to Santiago. Moreover, those most interested and involved in the Pascua Lama question seized the occasion to ask me questions about Canadian politics, economy, and culture, since Canada is the home nation of the firm leading the mining project. Once I arrived back in Canada. The Grupo No A Pascua Lama in Montreal asked me to give a presentation about my experience and expressed their very deep interest in my discoveries which allowed them to understand other elements of the issues from a different perspective than that of their contacts in NGOs. They were also thankful that I relayed to them documents that the mining firm transmits to the community, local news articles and documents.

In the context of the very political nature of the subject, the choices I made over the course of my study had other sorts of implications. For instance, my presence in the

particular village in which I lived for almost three months, in the home of a tremendously well-known community leader was, in itself, interpreted by certain individuals to be indicative of my own affiliation. In fact, I found that even the way in which I chose to conduct my research became political for many, that is, my choice of informants, and where and with whom I chose to divide my time, were sometimes given close attention and used to draw certain sorts of conclusions. I came to realize that other researchers who had been in the valley less than one year before my arrival had been predominantly interested in the question of indigenous peoples, the impact that the project might present in their regard, and their cultural traits, mythology and way of life. One researcher in particular, a well-known Mapuche lawyer and activist, affiliated with an important indigenous rights NGO based in Santiago, conducted in-depth research with indigenous communities that she published in book form. The study became an important source of recognition and validation for many indigenous peoples in the area and also served them well in their struggle to obtain official legal recognition by the state. To relate this to my own experience, I found that those who were not included in this process looked to alternative avenues of support, representation and recognition, for example, through non-governmental organizations, documentary journalists or foreign researchers like my self. Those who are less involved in the struggle were naturally less concerned with these sorts of issues and perhaps less sensitive to the details of my investigation.

I believe that my presence also had an impact, albeit it a rather small one, on the activities of the mining firm within the community. As I will explain in the subsequent chapters, the firm has begun to elaborate a variety of projects with groups of people and institutions in the community. The employees I met with for interviews were very interested in knowing with whom I had made contacts, my educational background and the objectives of my research. In one informal conversation with the firms' communications consultant, the employee immediately compared my activities to other student researchers who had spent time in the area over the past two years. As she seemed to have predicted, my subject area, anthropology, and my own age, fit precisely into her own observations of foreigners who arrive to conduct studies. She also seemed to note mentally where I was staying and with whom. While I am not sure how my presence, and the presence of other researchers like myself, may or may not influence their own policies and programs, it is clear in the very least that the enterprise is interested in surveying studies that are going on in and around the area of the mine.

To take a step back, my presence as an observer in the roundtables also had some implications. The very fact that myself and so many members of the public expressed interest in participating showed the government, from a political perspective, that the question of Canadian mining multinationals operating overseas is indeed an important one on the public's agenda. I was also one among many students and academics to participate and observe the process, which also showed to government that these questions are more and more present on the research agenda within Canadian educational institutions. While it remains to be seen, it seems reasonable to say that the strong level of participation in the process may have an effect on the readiness of the executive level of government to take some form of action on the question.

3.7 A Note on Timing

The precise moment I chose to conduct my investigation in Canada and Chile undoubtedly had a profound impact on my findings and hence is worth considering along with other methodological questions. As discussed above, conducting research in Canada during the period leading up to the roundtables was very particular indeed given the heightened level of participation, enthusiasm and activity from "civil society" and the NGO community across Canada, an energy that also inspired the participation of various groups from around the world, most notably, OXFAM Australia that has also been working closely on the question of the responsibility of mining firms in their own state.

Within Chile, the period from June through to August of 2007 was an ideal time to investigate the changing forms and definitions of community for the reason that the mine was set to start functioning in only four months of my arrival date in the valley. This instilled a noticeable sense of urgency in the community to join one group or another and to position or define oneself vis-à-vis the project itself and also with respect to the emerging community groups seeking to speak and represent themselves to economic and political leaders. The necessity to take a position at this time also deepened and fomented the vast array of signifiers of meaning evoked by local peoples, making them perhaps more spontaneous and palpating that they may have been at other moments. From a very human perspective, these reactions and expressions are at once the stuff of creative place-forming agency and the heart-wrenching lexis of the all-too-soon defeated and their despairing onlookers. It is the imaginative engagements of the content creators of a neo-

liberal age preoccupied with the rapid expansion of its own pre-established forms. This was occurring at a moment in which the contradictions of fast-paced modernity were sending local peoples and “civil society” actors scuttling in search of answers to confusing questions.

On a final note, from the fall of 2006 through until the summer of 2007 when I conducted my field research in Chile and Canada, the analytical framework that I propose here transformed many times, in relation with the encounters that I made and the possibilities that were offered to me. The moment in which I conducted my research had a great influence on my methodological choices and decisions, in fact, inspiring my own imagination in formulating an approach of investigation that would best make use of the social configurations and reality of the period of time at hand. Through this process of elaborating an appropriate methodology and analytical framework, I have become aware that ethnographic research is a dynamic process that evolves in relationship with the specific circumstances and moments of the research itself. In order to capture ethnographically the ways in which the formation of locality at the local level have influenced and informed the politics of the Pascua Lama project at the global level, a key theoretical statement of this research, I have organized this research differently than most ethnographies of local-global connections; I have begun with the local level, to then move to the national and global level. The first ethnographic chapter to follow considers how communities of resistance, in and around the proposed mine, have shaped the particular “locality” that has then been appropriated by outside actors in Chile and abroad.

4. A BABEL OF WATER

4.1 Introduction

“Water is worth more than gold” (*Agua vale más que el oro*) has become the mantra of the movement of small farmers, ecologists, local people, and religious leaders, who have been working in resistance to the particular vision of development and the future that the mining company presents to the community. With water as their vehicle and leitmotif, this group strives to transform the values, and ideas of the people, and creating difference with a very different mantra from the one that is being diffused by the mining company itself, enrobed in the promise of a modernized future. Creating sustained opposition to the mine requires challenging mining as the dominant and taken-for-granted route to social and economic improvement: a formidable task. James Ferguson explains that once the promise of modernization through mining fell apart in the Zambian Copperbelt, to turn into a “modernization myth,” the fundamental categories that shape one’s interpretation and organization of experience were shaken.

On the one hand, the narrative of modernization was always bad social science; it was (and is) a myth in the first sense, resting on fundamental misperceptions about the modern history of urban Africa. But, on the other hand, the myth of modernization (no less than any other myth) gives form to an understanding of the world, providing a set of categories and premises that continue to shape people’s experiences and interpretations of their lives.

(Ferguson 2000:13-14)

In the Huasco Valley, water has been met with mixed success as an impetus in challenging dominant framework of development. As an economic necessity for the agricultural communities around the mine, and a socially-binding sacred symbol, in many respects it has become a “link,” in the sense of Stuart Hall, in the articulation of the local community’s interests in connection with those of transnational civil society actors concerned with long-term sustainability of natural resources.

With water preservation as a fundamental long-term goal, those who oppose the mine have counteracted the promise of immediate modernization offered by the mining project, by focusing on possibilities for an alternative future, based on a long-term vision that is socially and ecologically oriented. Changing the temporal references of the community has been a key element in the opposition’s efforts to change local peoples understanding and experience of the process of modernization. The ecological crisis has

launched a process of erosion of the stable and reliable time order of Western civilization. Set alongside this context, “speaking in the name of ‘nature’ has become a complex reality in which the creation of temporal references is not one action among others, but the underlying scheme of all sensible argumentation”¹ (Trom 1993:111). Where temporal references often become moral assessments in the cultural and political clash over saving the planet, by speaking in the name of water and of its preservation for future generations in terms of quality and quantity, individuals have formed a movement of resistance that creates difference with the short-term framework of the mining company.

The Pascua Lama mining project, like many others, is set to operate for a relatively short period of 17 years from the moment that the extraction of gold begins. Those who oppose the mine assert that the slim and short-term benefits for the community will do not measure up to the long-term consequences that will almost certainly be endured. Their point is well-taken: the company has no interest in the sustainability of the community, which is just another check-in spot on the neoliberal agenda of mining executives. The issue of water preservation and pollution provides a symbol through which the community may represent their disenchantment with the destruction that mining culture has brought to the northern regions of Chile, such as water shortage, deaths, alcoholism and illness, and imagine alternatives for the future. The movement against the mine has connected local peoples with Chilean environmental NGOs and Canadian NGOs focusing on mining, and local people build on the energy of the trans-national network to strengthen local community organizing and develop effective forms of representation.

The main local group that has formed to build resistance to the project, to inspire local people to imagine alternatives, and to represent the community’s interest and express opposition to the mine, is the Huasco Valley Defense Council (*Consejo de Defensa del Valle de Huasco*). This group is using the issue of water in order to connect the potential destruction of the Pascua Lama mining project with larger issues of the privation and monopolization of water in the area, and of the autonomy of the community from decisions being imposed upon them from above. In doing so, they are attempting to transform the way in which local people perceive of the narrative of modernization through industrial mining, that the

¹ This translation and all following ones are my own. “S’instituer en porte-parole de la “nature” est une opération complexe dont l’activité de temporalisation n’est pas une composante parmi tant d’autres, mais le schème à l’intérieur duquel s’insère toute argumentation sensée” (See Trom 1993: 111).

state furthers, and even challenging the categories and interpretation upon which this narrative is constructed.

Some of the group's strongest supporters are individuals who have themselves migrated to work in Chile's northern copper mines and witnessed the environmental consequences and illnesses caused by these projects, have returned to their farms later in life, and often in their 40s and 50s have joined the struggle against Pascua Lama. To this group of people, the potency of the promise of progress sold to the community by the mining firm does not hold up because they know that miners and their families are only ever supported by mining companies for the short duration of their contracts that often render these workers ill and incapable to keep working. This classic problem in mining has been documented by Ferguson, his study of the Zambian Copperbelt, and mining communities across Latin America (2000). The involvement of these workers in environmentally-based claims to rights for communities is interesting insofar as these workers are forming part of a new generation of struggle that is focused on global issues and strengthened through trans-national ties. Yet these sorts of claims, in order to resonate in legal and political fora, and also with media, must be connected to specific local areas. As Arturo Escobar explains, construction of locality is important for ecological movements and for their efforts to separate themselves from global, frontier-less capitalistic discourses (2000:114).

Despite the immense success with the media and within Chilean national politics, their constructions of "locality" have often failed to serve in offering local peoples a feeling of inclusion in the processes underway. Opportunities for membership in newly-formed groups that make demands on the state for resources, and also for renewing claims within long-standing groups, however, offer local people avenues for inclusion in cultural and economic terms. Local peoples become reluctant to represent their interests with respect to the mine in terms of opposition, when joining an ethnic or indigenous group may prove more effective in exacting demands on the state, and may also provide more meaningful forms of cultural recognition than those offered by ecological groups. We shall see that choices to oppose the mine, accept it, or wither somewhere in between, are linked to the extent of one's inclusion in the plans of economic development that are part and parcel of the project. This is the case with irrigators' association, and to varying degrees with each of the two indigenous groups present in the Huasco Valley.

In the case of the irrigators association, while the group has taken up the issue of water in cooperation with environmental NGOs, the group does not definitely oppose the mining project. With the exception of the association's directors, made up of economically powerful landowners in the area, who have demonstrated clear support for the mine, the majority of small-scale irrigators have expressed very different opinions about the nature and degree of opposition that should be expressed to the state and the mining company. I would argue that they ultimately hope to gain from improvements in irrigation system that the company might provide. It is perhaps due to this grey zone of uncertainty and challenge, without outright refusal, that the Pascua Lama project has become a platform through which to express their general opposition to Chile's neoliberal policies that have led to the privatization of water. As we shall see in the next chapter, these social configurations that have developed in the context of the mining project are even rendered more complex by the emergence of indigenous groups.

4.2 Building Resistance, Inventing the Local Community

4.2.1 Water is Worth More than Gold: A Powerful Metaphor

Very few of the people in the local community who worked for Barrick during the construction of the infrastructure for the mine, actually worked for the mining firm. Between the firm and the majority of workers, one finds three to four levels of subcontract firms, and the consequences of the lack of direct relationship between workers and their employers are many. This is particularly true in the risk-filled work of miners in which deaths are as frequent as they are devastating. In the Pascua Lama mine, in the ten years in which the mining infrastructure was being constructed, 14 deaths occurred, and none of them were officially recognized by the firm. The despairing silence that surrounded these occurrences has hung like a black cloud over the communities in the vicinity of the mine, particularly those in the uppermost regions of the Cordillera. This presence of death and destruction, brought upon by the multinational mining firm, became a narrative that extended throughout much of the work of the community. This was a symbol that the Huasco Valley Defense Council, in which the Catholic clergy and local ecologists play leading roles, used in contrast to the symbol of water that they expressed to the community. In fact, the group began with the efforts of a Catholic nun, Antonia, and a lay clergy and municipal counsellor in the Huasco Valley, Luis. Metaphors of "water as life" abounded on

the walls of chapels, outside homes and farms, in the songs of resistance, on vehicles, and even in religious festivals, that linked the procession of the Virgin of Tránsito, a local Catholic ritual, with readings of selections of the scripture that speak of water as a source of healing.² At a protest in a village, one farmer carried the sign on his truck: "With the fever of gold, we will be left without water" (*Con la fiebre del oro nos dejarán sin agua*) Barrick Gold has also responded by contracting out its own graffiti work, in which green and blue paint is used in slogans that often include water droplet, for example, "Things will be better with Pascua Lama" (*con Pascua Lama mayor*) (see Annexes 1, 2, and 3). We will return to the interactions with Barrick Gold later on in this chapter, and in the next chapter. Those struggling against the project attempt to counteract the narratives of the state, like the one mentioned above, that are grounded in a promise of modernization that the company was actively spreading. This group has contrasted the life-giving and purity of water with the destruction of life already brought upon by the mine, and by linking this destruction with the deceitfulness of the company's own modernization "myth," filled with empty promises of jobs, specialized education, and a brighter future.

The work of this group on the preservation and protection of water is deeply bound up with religious discourses and practices on the preservation of life itself. The most important saying of the groups – Water is life (*Agua es vida*) – is written on homes, schools and churches, alongside murals that show the water in the valley, and has also become a new focus of the traditional religious festivals of the Virgin Mary in the villages. The leader of the local church has adapted his sermons, which he conducts along with the nuns in over two dozen villages that span the Huasco Valley, to express the sacred nature of water. The priest's own version of the Holy Trinity was transformed from its original version as including the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit, into a different tripartite configuration that includes the psychological, physical and spiritual aspects of the person. This priest has taught that water is important because it is necessary for our physical needs and also for our spiritual needs. A radio program was started by this group, called Seeds of Water (*Semillas de Agua*), in order to discuss local water politics and issues in connection with the mining project as these questions become more and more relevant to the community. These projects have indeed reverberated throughout the community. From the last village in the

² "Water is life" or "Agua es vida" has a spiritual and poetic connotation in Spanish. Other important exaltations expressed in religious processions and manifestations are "Gold cannot be eaten, Water is not to be sold, The earth belongs to the people, who fight for it and defend it" or in Spanish, "El oro no se come, el agua no se vende, la tierra es de la gente que lucha y la defiende."

highest area of the Cordillera, to the nearest city of Vallenar, I heard stories about water and life, and how they intertwined. Local people explained to me that with the Pascua Lama question, they have become aware of water issues in the region, the importance of the glaciers and the consumption of water by mining companies. The Valley Defense Council has succeeded to a great extent in changing people's perceptions of the promises that Barrick will bring.

Individuals have most often referred to the relationship between people water and life when explaining why they opposed the project. Paula explains:

For me, two years ago, the theme of the glaciers did not matter to me. I would hear about the theme and it did not effect me. Now I am better informed, I think that it's a very difficult question. I believe that yes, it's true what they say about the glaciers. I've seen photos, and seen a lot of information about the glaciers, that they feed the river, the rivers I mean, because there are three rivers that come from high up and join into the Huasco River. Then, it's a precipice, and the glaciers are very small, a little thing something like a rock, but then I realized that it's not like this, that the glaciers are immense, big, you understand? If it were I who had to choose between the glaciers and the mine, or between my principles and practicality, I would go with the water. Water is life, it's what we need to live. Money is important, but without water there is no life.

Water has become a sacred element in the joint efforts of the local Catholic Church and the environmental NGO spearheading the struggle against the mine. These are alternative sites of symbolic and discursive contestation against the dominant narrative of the firm, and the state that has facilitated the rendering invisible of the numerous deaths of workers. And these spaces of contestation have opened up new avenues of recognition, particularly among young and marginalized individuals in the valley, often without work, who have gained value by participating in the defense of nature and looking for alternative lines of work. A leader of the Huasco Defense Valley, Marco, explained to me that he is concerned with looking for alternatives to the way mining is practiced in Chile. Most mining companies enter a community, and operate for a very short period of time, in fact, they work as fast as possible to extract as much as ore as they can in as little time as possible. As Mauricio has explained, this sort of in-and-out mining has devastating environmental and social effects. He believes that the groups' negotiations with the mining company should also focus on the time span of the mine. Instead of operating for only 17 years, perhaps it should function for 100 or more years.

The work of the Huasco Valley Defense Council has from the very early stages been in cooperation with the work of several environmental NGOs in Chile, and most particularly the OLCA, which provides connections with the Chilean and international

media and juridical and scientific support. This NGO, in its role as the main intermediary with the outside activists and a globalizing media served by the Internet, has opened up the Huasco Valley, transforming it into an arena for interaction of great proportions. The multi-sited and multi-vocal work of the NGOs has brought new agencies, concerned actors and issues from a wide range of interconnected locations into this particular area. This has brought with it the formation of a particular "locality" in province of Huasco, which is colored with trans-national interactions. This is in tune with the work of Arturo Escobar who notes the importance of the creation of "place" for ecological movements. While the global is bound with space, capital, history and agency, the local is tied up with space, work and tradition (Escobar 2000:114). Affirming place, and relating the place to local forms of agency, is essential in counteracting the discourses upon which economic globalization resides. The Huasco Valley Defense Council has witnessed the limits of constructing locality as a means of preserving water and glaciers, as well as agriculture as a viable form of livelihood for the community. Water has served as a powerful and spiritual source of the imagination and as a response to destruction caused by mining, yet without an economic alternative, these actors have been loathe in creating a broad traction with the communities around the mine. Having said this, those involved with, and who identify with the movement of resistance to the mine, are mostly villagers living in the upper Huasco valley, the precise location that has become the vehicle of the movement. Barrick Gold, perhaps in reaction, has made efforts to extend the imaginative construction of "locality" to the city of Vallenar. In one of its informative pamphlets, it explains that the mining project concerns the future of Vallenar and the province of Huasco as a whole. Under the heading, "Optimism over the Future of Huasco and the Region," the document contains citations of a political counsellor of Vallenar, the president of the Chamber of Commerce of Vallenar, and the mayor of Huasco, another neighbouring town (see Annex 5) (Barrick 2006b).

It is not surprising then that an important limit in the construction of resistance to the mine has been a general disenchantment with the movement by people living in the city. In Vallenar, the city closest to the mine, the Valley Defense Council's work has not had the same impact as it has had in the valley where its images and stories resonate with local people. In virtue of their status as urbanites, they do not fear having their irrigation supplies for farming dry up, or losing their land, as is the case with the peasantry. Nor do the people in Vallenar have the same intimate connection with the destruction caused by the mine, for example, the deaths of people from the valley that occurred in the late 1990s.

Barrick's campaign on television and in newspapers and pamphlets speaks about a new more modern future for the city, and includes scholarship programs and sponsorships of environmental and sports programs with local high schools. This has brought back hopes of another mining boom that the city witnessed in the 1970s and 1980s when the Pacifico Mining Company was operating in the area. Barrick Gold has used the support garnered from people in the city of Vallenar to demonstrate community support of the project, demonstrated by an open letter written by several organizations within Vallenar and posted on Barrick's site. Early on in the struggle, the Defense Council attempted to bring some of the neighbourhood councils on board, but with little success. As Luis explained to me, after working hard to bring neighborhood associations on board, and to change their way of seeing the project, we eventually gave in. They were offered leadership training workshops by Barrick and many other forms of support. He showed me the photo of the woman who is acting president of this particular neighbourhood council on one of Barrick's information pamphlets (*informativos*), in which Barrick's work with the councils was highlighted. Her photo on the pamphlet was a sign that she had given in to them. As their work in the city became more frustrating for these reasons, they then chose to focus their work on the valley, and in bridging ties with like-minded organizations from around the world.

4.2.2 *Transnational Ties and the Construction of Locality*

Although the fact that local activists do not have the brute economic resources to buttress their vision with hard plans and programs for social and economic development is certainly a challenge in their work, transnational relationships have been a sufficient, if a partial answer to this dilemma. Despite the despair of local activists, the work of Barrick Gold within the community has led to an acute awareness among local people of the company's role in determining how the community represents itself and even the form of the community itself, and the transnational activists and NGOs have provided an alternative avenue of representing the community.

Barrick's entry into the community has indeed been anything but inconspicuous. Their interactions with local people have included everything from offering monthly pamphlets that announce the programs and initiatives in the community to building them new one-room houses, from granting scholarships and sports team sponsorships to handing out television sets and electronic toys, from the improvement of sewage systems to

bringing milk-producing goats into rural primary schools, and from offers of casinos to indigenous groups to free trips to Peru to meet other indigenous peoples "working together" with Barrick Gold. People told me that even though they have accepted things, they are not sold out, and that the most important thing is that their community groups remain autonomous from the company. Once Barrick became involved within their local community organizations itself, many people began to ask themselves serious questions. An irrigator and member of the Huasco Defense Valley expressed: "We see that they were taking over our communities, our neighbourhoods, and they are not the community."

The Huasco Valley Defense Council would often present the latest documentaries produced on Pascua Lama to the members of the community. The crowd cheered for their friends and neighbours as they appeared on the screen, if even at a glance. The documentary told stories of local people who have started small businesses producing fruit jams and pisco. The film also presented stories of a much sadder variety, of a woman whose son had died in a truck accident on his way to work in the mine in the 1990s. The mother explained that he would go high up into the mountains, in a truck with a big crew, and that the company would give them lots of alcohol to drink. The reaction that this created in the crowd was beyond emotional. These were friends and neighbours who had gone up to the mine and who were not to be forgotten.

Numerous films have now been produced by the vast network of activists, journalists and NGOs collaborating on Pascua Lama. These films had become an important source of representations of themselves for the members of the community, and also a source of personal reflection. The discussion that followed the evening mentioned above was telling, for it provoked a heated debate on who, precisely, should be leading the struggle against the mine: local people or international NGOs. One local farmer expressed: "It is not people from the outside who will determine our future. We are the ones who should be leading this struggle." Everyone in the room seemed to agree. And at the same time, they recognized that the films were bringing people together in villages all over the valley. They were not only informing people about political and economic issues in regard to the mine, they also were providing a window for self-reflection. As people saw themselves in action, they reflected on the valley, its peoples, landscape, and future. Later on, someone told me that the lack of leadership in this valley is a huge problem and that the people shouldn't wait for foreigners to make films before taking a stand.

That same evening, the leader of the Valley Defence Council announced to the group that the Chilean Parliament has at last agreed to send a small team of national parliamentarians to the valley to investigate the situation. After a winter of struggling for visibility in the Chilean Parliament, local leaders and NGOs had achieved a huge success. Their excitement was palpable, and as we drove down the mountains to Vallenar, shortly after hearing the news, Luis Faura began mapping out the program of activities. Choices were to be made about what to show the parliamentarians, where to bring them in the valley, and so forth. In fact, we would take the politicians to Chollay, a village that had become symbolic in the struggle against Pascua Lama, and a place where festivals and demonstrations for water and life by now had become a ritual. This village was also the last one to have a water supply for personal consumption that comes directly from the river, with no filtration system. Luis had become a prominent community leader in the struggle against the mine, and he also acted as the intermediary between OLCA and the municipality of Alto del Carmen, that governs the upper regions of the Huasco Valley. The relationships developed between local peoples and the loose coalition of NGOs working on Pascua Lama, in Chile, Canada and several other nations, have inspired new forms of association, and community in the local sphere linked through the powerful symbol of water.

The Valley Defense Council is mostly formed of religious actors, ecologists and local people, who have recently moved into the area but who do not have kinship ties to the community. The local indigenous people, on the other hand, do have strong kinship and historical ties and it is perhaps for this reason that this group is looking to the indigenous peoples in their efforts to construct a "local community" around the mine. This is important in their interactions with the media, state agencies, and even activists. Water has been powerful, but it alone does not have the strength in tying together the binds of kinship and to the land that the local indigenous peoples have. Nor does it have the potential for economic improvement that membership in an indigenous group provides, especially with respect to scholarships. Moreover, while the indigenous people do indeed embody the idea of locality, with their historical, and legal, ties to the land, the legal separation in Chile between land and water ownership has led to interesting consequences in their articulation of their interests. The Huascoaltino indigenous group has steered clear of the fight for a just distribution of water, channelled through the irrigators' association made up of peasant-irrigators who do not necessarily see themselves as indigenous. While there is indeed a fair

degree of overlap in the membership of both indigenous organizations and the irrigators association, the separation in terms of thinking and identity is clear enough that these groups have not demonstrated any sign of wanting to unite to form a broader group. At this point, we will turn to the irrigators association in order to examine how one particular group is negotiating between a struggle for inclusion in the process of economic development, and a desire to remain autonomous from the mining company.

4.3 The Changing Form of Water

As Stuart Hall has indicated, new political subjects are formed through the linking of pre-existing groups and issues, which in turn, leads to the forging of new identities and interests. In tune with this idea, the NGOs and the Valley Defense Council have articulated their movement for water in connection with the interests of the irrigators groups, leading to a calling into question of the Water Code, and the privatization of natural resources that sit firmly on a neo-liberal framework of development. Even though the irrigators association does not clearly oppose the mine, the collective efforts of these groups have turned into a platform to voice opposition against the nationwide process of privatization of water and the preferential access given to mining companies and agro-industrial firms.

During my field research, I attended several assemblies of the irrigators' association that were each very different from the gathering described above. Where the films that were shown in different villages by members of the Valley Defense Council inspired applause, discussion, and interaction, the mostly indigenous peasant-irrigators who attended this meeting in one of the uppermost villages in the Cordillera spent most of the time sitting and watching in silence. Most of the fifty irrigators that had gathered together were mostly indigenous people. The gathering consisted in a presentation given by the General Manager of the JVRH which is the new form that the historical irrigators association of the Huasco Valley has taken since 1999 when the irrigation infrastructure was modernized through the construction of a large dam. The meeting highlights many of the local issues over water and demonstrates clearly deep historical reasons that the irrigators have not grouped together to put forth a more concerted opposition than they have, and how Barrick has found a way to build upon the historical subordination of the vast majority of irrigators to the Directors of the association.

The meeting began with a presentation by the manager of the series of protocols made between the JVRH and Barrick Gold. There were two protocols already signed with Barrick, in 2005 and 2006. These protocols included measures that require Barrick to improve the quality of water treatment during the Pascua Lama project, a compensation fund of 60 million dollars that would allow the JVRH to improve the infrastructure of the water reservoir and canal system, and obliged the association to renounce the right to pursue Barrick for "environmental damage" after the project. An investment committee would be formed to manage the distribution of the compensation fund, including members from Barrick Gold, the JVRH, and the regional government of Atacama, and would be directed by the JVRH.

There was also a clause that required the company to construct a new water reservoir in the Carmen River, which has fomented already existing conflicts in the upper area of the Huasco Valley, which forms the municipality of Alto del Carmen. Alto del Carmen is divided into two rivers, the Carmen River and the Tránsito River (see Annex 4). The Carmen River is inhabited by peoples of Spanish descent, many of whom have pisco producing factories and fruit farms, whereas the Tránsito River is inhabited mostly by indigenous and mixed peoples who work as wage labourers and small farmers. This somewhat arbitrary separation has taken hold in the imagination of the people of the Huasco Valley. Local tales tell of indigenous peoples who were forced in the high mountains of the Tránsito River by the Spanish who were told to settle on the other side. The municipality's recent initiatives for development in tourism have fomented this imagination, describing the area around the El Tránsito River as the "Valley of the Indians" (*valle de los Indios*), an indigenous bastion since the 16th century. The valley on the side of the Carmen River is described as the "Valley of the Spanish" (*valle de los Españoles*) most noted for its production of pisco. In the village where I stayed, in the valley of the Tránsito River or the Valley of the Indians, there was a grape-producing agro-industry that employed many local people and was owned by people from the Carmen River. The farm had taken over more than half of the arable land in the village, formerly made up of small farms, in less than 10 years.

The resistance to the project has been most ardent in Alto del Carmen, and even more so, in the Tránsito Valley. These people who have been mostly left out of the protocols and initiatives with the enterprise form the same groups that have become the "local community" associated with the Pascua Lama mining project, which has predominantly

become imagined as an indigenous one. This raises interesting questions about cultural diversity and legal pluralism in the local management of water. Some Latin American nations have established policies in this regard, by granting different degrees of self-government for their own territories to peasant and indigenous communities, for example, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador have made constitutional changes in this light. However, these changes are not reflected in water laws (Boelens 2005b:149). Chile represents one of the most severe cases, where the corporate sector has gained monopolies over water rights, which precludes the possibility of substantial changes towards legal pluralism that recognize multiple forms of water use by different groups (Dourojeanni 1999 in Boelens 2005:149). The Chilean President, Michele Bachelet, has most recently announced that she will make constitutional changes to recognize indigenous peoples and land (Nación 2007:3). However, the already existing constitutional distinction between land tenure and water shares is nonetheless likely to limit improvements in the access of peasants and indigenous peoples to water resources. In fact, discrepancies between the neoliberal water law and legislation for indigenous management are enormous, and certainly, when conflicts arise the water law, and also the mining law, have proven more powerful than the most recent indigenous law, passed in 1993 (Boelens 2005b:157).

Barrick's agreement to build a reservoir on the other side of the valley was symbolic of the company's disconcertment for the plight of small and indigenous farmers, and of the support of those from the other side of the valley, who not only favoured the project, but also were leading industrial expansion in a valley where peasant farms still existed a few years ago. The directors of the JVRC are almost all business owners from the Carmen Valley. With this in mind, the underlying purpose of the meeting seemed nonsensical. It was to gain support for the modifications made in the third and possibly final protocol, this time, created in the form of Fund of Environmental Compensation. The proposed change in this Fund was to transform its legal character into a "social" fund in order to avoid paying taxes on the money. For the irrigators, this change represented the wishes of the business owners of the Carmen Valley to profit as much as possible from the Pascua Lama mining project and Barrick Gold's resources. It smelled of corruption, and of the selling out of the former Irrigators Association that once represented their interests. The Manager reluctantly opened the floor to questions.

Some comments addressed the lack of community involvement in law-making processes: "Does the law say that you *must* create an accord with Barrick?" and "Why did

the community find out about the second protocol two months after it was signed?" were questions posed to the manager of the JVRH. However, the comments of a local community leader, Luis Faura, who has taken on the fight against Pascua Lama, acting as an intermediary link between local peoples and several social and environmental NGOs, gained the greatest applause from the listeners who had remained mostly quiet up until this point:

Over 200 new requests for underground water rights are being approved. We're losing time. Copiapó, the neighbouring valley already has no water left, and soon, the central government will come here and send our water to Copiapó.

The Manager's response was simple. We cannot go against the decisions of the Supreme Court over the distribution of water, and in Chile, mining is our model of economic development. Chile is a mining nation. This point came up again in Santiago, in the Environmental Commission and in Canada, in the National Roundtables on mining. In fact, the Pascua Lama project has become of vehicle for local peoples to assert their will to make their own locally-based decisions about the uses, mechanisms for preservation and distribution of water, calling attention to the flaws of the national Water Code.

4.3.1 Local Water Politics and the Water Code

The 1981 Water Code set the groundwork for the commercialization of water and fundamentally altered the system of water use and distribution among small farmers. In the Huasco Valley, the area in the vicinity of the mine, this has led to many changes in the organization of water usage. It was at the time of the construction of the river basin, in 1999, that the full impacts of the changes were put into place. This major infrastructure project led to the replacement, of the long-standing Huasco River Irrigators' Association (*Asociacion de Canalistas de rio Huasco*) that was formed in 1903, and is made up of several dozen Water Communities (*Comunidades de aguas*). The group that took its place is the Monitoring Group of the Huasco River (*Junta de Vigilancia de rio Huasco - JVRH*). This new group gained official legal status in 2004, and has become involved in a process of modernization and specialization of the management of the river reservoir and distribution systems, hiring several new specialists between 2004 and 2007. The group has also become engaged with Barrick Gold in the management of the reservoir.

Thus the changes in the form of the group, from the irrigators association to the Monitoring Group of the Huasco River (JVRH), were facilitated by the introduction of the

Water Code in 1981. This set of laws allows for joint management of water basin and water distribution between the public and private sphere based on a system of water rights that determine the level of votes that one has in the decision-making bodies. Private enterprises were given the authority to resolve conflicts over water, and because of the bureaucratic complexities and costs of claiming water rights, indigenous and rural communities made little or no use of this law. Once the water code became effective, communities were required to register their local rights with the state, transforming traditional and collective water holding practices to individual ownership.

It has taken over twenty years for these changes to come into effect in the Huasco Valley mostly because until recently, industrial agricultural enterprises and mining firms were not present in the valley.³ Most of the economic activity involved artisan miners and small-scale agriculture. As a result, requests were never made for large quantities of water on an industrial scale. In the former organization, irrigators managed water based on time of irrigation, for example, one Water Community may have one week of irrigation per month. Decisions were made collectively by the Presidents of each of the Water Communities. With the 1981 Water Code, the divisions based on measures of time were turned into water “shares,” a veritable tradable commodity, where each share equals a given number of litres per second. In order to gain access to these shares one must make formal requests to the regional water management body. Those seeking to use water shares for industrial purposes are given privileged access over small farmers. In the situation when two groups request new water shares in an area with limited resources, this may lead to a bidding war, according to the procedures set out in the Water Code (Boelens 2005b:158).

³ Up until the 1990s, many indigenous peasants did not have registered water rights, and when formal attempts to gain these rights were made they were unable to do so. There was either no available water, or existing water courses or water rights had already been granted to agro-industry, and mining and logging companies. There were cases of complete settlements, which formerly had access to water, that found themselves with restricted and irregular access. The effects of these rapid changes are unknown or unclear to most local people, and the result has been the abandonment of farming and migration to mining zones. As a result, there is a competition for water between mining companies at a macro level, and conflicts arise between private enterprises with water rights and the inhabitants of these areas (Muñoz 1999 in Boelens 2005b:) (Boelens 2005:158). An Indigenous Land and Water fund was created to assist indigenous peoples in gaining rights to water (Boelens 2005:159) Despite this, it remains difficult for indigenous peoples to gain water shares especially where third parties are involved (cf. Aylwin 1997; Toledo-Llancaquo 1996).

Many authors have warned that Chile's neo-liberal water policies have led to private water monopolies, water hoarding and speculation by mining firms (Boelens 2005:10).⁴ Indeed, over 90 per cent of available water in the Atacama region, where the Pascua Lama project is located, has been claimed, mostly by mining companies (MMSD in Clark 2006:98). This puts many peasant and indigenous peoples at a disadvantage even in situations where they may wish to expand their farm to an industrial or semi-industrial level. In the Huasco Valley, it is clear that mining enterprises are being given the first right of access to water. Local people also believe that the increase in value of water resources as a result of the discovery of gold and copper has led to water speculation, or the buying and selling of water shares that is based on privileged information about future mining projects and local development. They argue that this ultimately raises the prices of water shares since there is no mechanism that maintains a fixed and accessible price of water for small farmers.

Furthermore, the new system of water shares is buttressed by an entirely different system of decision-making from that of the irrigators association. Under the new protocol that came into place with the establishment of the JVRH, each share equals one vote. Since Barrick has purchased more than half of the water shares in the JVRH of the Huasco River, irrigators have become largely excluded from an association that was once their own. Peasant-irrigators expressed to me that water communities were re-organized in order to prevent them from effectively organizing in the time of Pinochet. Conflictual politics over water began much earlier than the announcement of the Pascua Lama project. The drying up of ravines in the valley was a major cause of labour migration of small farmers to Chile's northern copper mines in the 1960s and 1970s (Velooso 2002). Even earlier, during the colonization period, conflicts over water abounded once the irrigators in the upper areas of the valley realized that, despite promises by developers of the dam and the modern irrigation system, the dam did deplete water supplies.

The dissent that has developed in wake of the Pascua Lama project is different from past conflicts insofar as it focuses on challenging the political and moral legitimacy of the 1981 Water Code, oriented by neo-liberal policies to render natural resources accessible, first and foremost, to multinational capital. The irrigators group is calling into question the

⁴ There are no financial or legal impediments in place in Chile to prevent the monopolization of water, even in areas where drought is common and peasant communities' livelihood is put into peril for these reasons (Gentes 2000).

premises of the Code by focusing on the right of the local community to protect and determine the future use of water.

4.3.2 Barrick Gold and the Positioning of the Irrigators Community

Several weeks following the village meeting, the JVRH organized a General Assembly to hold a vote on the protocols prepared with Barrick. Barrick's presence was more than obvious. The mining company's representative was not only the sole man dressed in a suit, by now, everyone was well aware that over half of the water shares available in the reservoir had been sold to Barrick and that such an unbalanced scale would certainly lead to consequences for the community. While many irrigators believe these meetings to be a waste of time because the directors would make the decisions they want anyhow, many others were out in full force. In fact, one group of irrigators had been preparing a set of reclamations in the past weeks, and collecting signatures from other irrigators in as many different areas of the valley as possible, to increase numbers and geographical representation. This would counteract the uses of the historical imagination of the valley by the JVRH, which they use to make it appear that only irrigators who oppose their plans are indigenous, from the area of the Valley traditionally and historically associated with indigenous peoples and culture who oppose their plans. The irrigators formally presented their reclamations in a letter to the directors of the Monitoring Group once the presentations were made. The irrigators argued that the Directors of the Monitoring Group have renounced their historical role in the community of defending water rights of its members, and opposing the approval of new water rights. They called on the directors to stop approving new underground water rights and to respect the watershed system of the Huasco valley and its fragile relationship between surface and underground water. They also urged the Group to conduct their negotiations with Barrick Gold in an honest and transparent manner, particularly with respect to the creation of new protocols that guide the distribution and use of compensation packages. For the irrigators, these protocols are unacceptable, as is the financing of a major infrastructure projects to facilitate mining operations, unless they are developed in consultation with the community. The proposal failed to pass due to a lack of quorum.

In an earlier letter addressed to the JVRH from the irrigators, they expressed their frustration with changes in the voting system since 1999. They even went so far as to convey their desire to boycott the organization in order to demonstrate to the Monitoring

Group's directors that, from their point of views, the Group is no longer a legitimate organization that represents the interests of the irrigators. The letter connected their critique of the JVRH for having passively been drawn into a relationship with the mining company, and their challenge of the Water Code itself. It also subtly demonstrated the irrigators' awareness that despite the fact that the Water Code was passed in 1981, it was the major industrial mining project of Pascua Lama that in actual practice effected the change in local water management called for in the Code. The letter explained:

The irrigators have been individualized, and we are manifesting as the persons we should be and not for "shares." We do not feel represented at all by the directors of this organization (the JVRH) that is managed arbitrarily and according to the conveniences of some. We do not want to participate in any more assemblies in which the irrigators of canals 1, 2 and 4 never obtain their objectives, and the large landholders of the third canal control everything. Thus our participation is a total waste of time.

The JVRH has become a pivot between the mining company and local peasant-irrigators, and a place where local farmers make efforts to represent their interests. Building on their contestations put forth in the assemblies of the Monitoring Group, they carry forward these dissatisfactions by bringing them to the Water Directorship of the region of Atacama. The community of peasant-irrigators represents their interests with respect to the Pascua Lama project in terms of their dissatisfactions with changes in local water politics, and by opposing broader neoliberal policies of water privatization and policies that make it easy for industrial-level companies to obtain water rights at the expenses of small farmers. This provides a "link" with their work and the work of environmental NGOs that are spearheading the campaign against Pascua Lama at the national level in Chile. The claims made by the irrigators at the General Water Directorship at the regional level were brought to the water governing body at the national level by the environmental NGO (OLCA) working with the irrigators, and even all the way to the national parliament.

Barrick's involvement in the development of the irrigation infrastructure of the community of irrigators makes this situation more complex because their financial contribution to the water reservoir system had coincided with major modernization projects. For some, these contributions are facilitating the goals of long-term projects, and for others, these projects would continue to be developed without Barrick's presence. Most specifically, the capacity of storing water in the reservoir has greatly increased since the construction of the Santa Juana reservoir in the Huasco Valley, which has led to creation of new 1800 additional water shares. This allows farmers to plan production for up to several

years in advance, due to the guarantee of a certain level of water resources. These developments were welcomed by many irrigators who have been able to improve cultivation as a result. On some level, irrigators want to maintain distance between the JVRH and Barrick, as the JVRH is their organization and one that has served them in developing irrigation systems in the valley, and on another level, the corruption within the JVRH since Barrick's arrival is obvious to them.

Question: Has the JVRH changed since Barrick arrived in the valley?

Javier: Let's not confuse the fight against Barrick with the JVRH. The JVRH is one thing and Barrick is another. And I would tell you, for these questions are of life. We've had 6 or 7 years of dryness because there was a lapse in the rain....This year the rain is at 700 mm and this is good...For us, we are in a good position. In terms of how much irrigation water I would say that we have enough water to irrigate for at least another two years!

Barrick Gold and the JVRH have come to occupy both different, and similar, places in the local communities' imaginings on the process of modernization and industrial development. On the one hand, they represent the promise of further development and of guaranteed water supplies. By improving the irrigation and dam system, water could be stored for greater lengths of time and make agriculture more predictable and controllable. On the other, they represent important alteration in institutions of the valley, most specifically, for the Irrigators Association of the Huasco River. What unravels is a process of negotiation between the hopes for development and the desire to distance one self from corrupt and immoral behaviour by disapproving of the association's wrongful acceptance of bribes by Barrick. The villages in the lower areas of the valley that were destroyed during the construction of the barrage are no longer discussed in the group.

In the JVRH's earlier form as the Irrigators Association of the Huasco River, (*Asociacion de canalistas de río Huasco*), the group had historically played a sort of paternalistic role with the hundreds of small irrigators that form its membership base. Many of these irrigators live in villages of the Huasco Valley at very high altitudes of the Cordillera and thus have little or no accessibility to become involved in the development of collective decision-making process over water management. The directors of the JVRH have long been formed of the major economic actors of the Valley, including owners of agro-industrial and pisco producing enterprises, and employ large segments of the population of the valley. The leadership of the JVRH is a natural, taken-for-granted fact in the imaginations and memories of the local peoples of the valley, as a result of the historical

role they have played since the colonization period in damming of the high altitude lakes of the Cordillera and the subsequent construction of the system of canals all the way down the valley to the last village before the ocean. The group also acted as a legal and bureaucratic liaison between the Cordillera villages and the closest representative of the colonial state.

For many members of the local community, and particularly the irrigators, this relationship of trust has been seriously called into question by the joint initiatives between the JVRH and Barrick Gold. These initiatives are intended to serve as compensation for the environmental and social consequences of the mining project and to modernize existing water management systems according to the official discourse. They include “sustainable development” programs, the setting up of water monitoring systems, and the construction of a second dam in the valley. Beyond the companies’ involvement in infrastructure and development projects, the finances provided by Barrick for its joint initiatives with the JVRH also includes becoming involved in establishing local water quality and management norms, or “secondary norms” in the national Water Code, which do not yet exist in many localities across Chile. Within the community itself, rumors run rampant as to the actual spending of the 60 million dollars that Barrick transferred to the community.

Another important consequence of Barrick’s presence is that the value of the natural resources in the valley has risen substantially. This has followed with a rapid increase in requests for new water rights on the part of mining firms, often in quantities that surpass actual industrial needs. There is a direct relationship between the mounting use of water supplies, out of the control of the irrigators, and Barrick’s mining project. This is not just because of the water shares bought by the firm itself, and that will be used, but also because of the chain reaction of other mining projects requests for industrial water shares that has come about in consequence.

All of this has led to changes in the structure and functioning of the irrigators’ association. Formerly, when local peoples referred to the Irrigators Association, they meant all of the members of the group. Since the JVRH replaced the older one, the local people refer to the group as one that is made up solely of the executive committee. Members also expressed frustration over the reorganization of the water communities that took place at the time of Pinochet, telling me stories about how the water communities functioned before changes were made. In a valley 100 km long, there used to be four water communities, they explained, but at the time of the dictatorship divisions were made into over 30 different communities.

Maria: ...We could not reorganize because they don't want us to, they did this on purpose.

Question: Do you think it would be possible to change the boundaries?

Maria: You have to represent yourself in the way that you're told. It's that the neighbourhood councils can get resources for the community.

The impact that this had on Barrick's claims to know the wishes of the community and to be addressing these wishes is evident. Luis Faura makes this point abundantly clear: "Barrick thinks that the Junta de Vigilancia is the community, but we will show them otherwise." In fact, this is the struggle itself, over defining the community, and thus determining who has a legitimate corridor of access to negotiating with Barrick.

4.4 Conclusion

As we have seen, the work of those groups within the community struggling against the mine is closely tied to spiritual imaginings of water as a symbol of universal life. The irrigators association, however, does not demonstrate clear opposition to the mine, but rather they wish to become included and to stake a place in the decision-making process that is underway. Rather than oppose the company directly, they direct their opposition to what they perceive as violations in the relationship of confidence between irrigators and the leaders of the organization. Their opposition becomes most intense in moments when exclusion is also heightened. Since irrigators have focused on the corrupt acts of its leaders, NGOs have highlighted this in their work with the community and made a link between local challenge of water privatization and national and international lobbying that focus on the problems of water distribution and quality posed by the mining project, a theme that will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 6. We shall now turn to the question of how indigenous organizations form part of the process of struggle and the formation of community at hand.

5. A STRUGGLE FOR INCLUSION

5.1 Forming Indigenous Communities

The work of the irrigators associations, religious and ecological groups discussed above, is rendered further complex by the emergence of two indigenous groups, which have also formed ties with different civil society groups both in Chile and around the world. With the assistance of NGOs and social scientists, the "Huascoaltinos" resurrected a historically formed group of farmers and indigenous peoples, based on historical claims to land dating back to the colonial period, archeological records, as well as lineage. In 1997 the group gained legal status as an "agricultural community" from the Chilean state who deemed them to be the inheritors of the Huascoaltino Farm (*Estancia Los Huascoaltinos*) initially decreed by a judge in Vallenar in 1903 (Campos 2006:7). Since this time, six new mining projects are now under construction including the Pascua Lama project, on and near the lands that were attributed to them. This group has focused on the land instead of the water, and I would argue that this is because of the legal separation between water and land, and of their exclusion from questions of water ownership, which is centered in the irrigators association, made up of peoples of mixed descent from a broader geographical area than the area where people who identify themselves as indigenous are situated, the uppermost regions of the Huasco Valley on the side of the Transito River, known as Huasco Alto.

The Diaguita indigenous group, on the other hand, was formed and given legal recognition as an "indigenous" group by the National Commission for Indigenous Development (*Comisión Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena - CONADI*), and the President Michele Bachelet in a ceremony in 2006, in which Diaguitas were brought all the way to the Chilean Parliament in Santiago at the Plaza de la Moneda (El Diario de Atacama 2006:A17) (see Annex 8). The Diaguita group has developed strong links with the CONADI, and also with national indigenous rights organizations. They have also developed a different set of criteria for membership than the Huascoaltinos, this time based on direct kinship ties through policies of naming instead of broad historical ties to the agricultural community that led to their exclusion from the former group.

This demonstrates that "community" is far from a category that can be taken for granted but rather it must be delineated in each context and given moment in time. This

task is challenging because “community” identity is linked to struggles for both resource distribution and cultural recognition. In this case, since the Huascoaltinos indigenous association is not the organization that manages the water resources, tying culture and identity to natural resources has been all the more challenging. In some Andean irrigators’ communities, water has become linked to identity, and the linking of identity to rights brings many new questions into the politics of water control. On the one hand, “peasant” is a socio-economic category, and on the other, “indigenous” denotes ethnic and cultural characteristics of Andean peoples. Legislation enacted in the name of indigenous and peasant populations tends to disregard the fact that Andean cultures and their forms of self-government are dynamic and in the process of adapting to new contexts (Boelens 2005:162-163). Indigenous laws apply traditional Andean concepts of “community” and new realities are not taken into consideration; the laws do not consider diversity that exists within ethnic groups and peasant communities (Golte 1992 in Boelens 2005:163).

In this case, the category of “indigenous” has been tied up to a policy-based name, regardless of one’s economic status as a peasant or pastoralist. This has led to ironies where most individuals who qualify for membership live in cities, outside of the agricultural area that would be affected by the mine. This has created an abstract quasi- peasant indigenous ethnic group, which holds traditional peasant rituals in the countryside for members who are in fact peasants, yet encompasses a broader group of people who for the most part have never met each other. The politics of “names” has been no less than controversial and confusing to those local peasants excluded from these initiatives. As James C. Scott has explained, the politics of naming is historically a crucial way in which the state makes rural and agrarian populations “legible,” in order to control their obligations to the state, most notably through taxation (1999). In this case, through the selection of certain names, the state has limited potential claims to resources. The irony here is that this has done little to assist rural and agrarian communities since most of the individuals possessing these last names, which were resurrected through 18th century colonial archives, now live in cities and have little or no practices that are characteristic of the peoples that inhabit this valley.

Barrick’s own programs are formulated in reaction and interaction with the changes effected by local actors and community groups, state agencies and NGOs, and have played a very important role in the way that the community has come to represent and organize itself. They pay heed to both new initiatives and pre-existing social and economic realities of the community, often challenging the very cornerstones of the Defense Council’s

arguments for bringing people on board of their own struggle against the project. It focuses on alleviating risk, the main deterrent for working in mines, and on specialized technical education, an important reason why the poorest are often excluded from mining jobs. They also focus on the promise of a brighter future. Behind what may appear to be a disordered campaign of seduction to gain support for the mine, the company has adapted its policies and programs in order to influence new formations of communities that are likely to support the project. The most significant instance of Barrick's contribution to the formation of communities of interest at the onset of its own mining project involves the indigenous women of the Huasco valley. Barrick has contributed to the defining of these women as "indigenous," who were formerly peasants or salaried workers, and in doing so it has gained advantage by rendering explicit a system of social and economic inequality between the genders that was once implicit.

5.1.1 The Invention and Reinvention of the Huascoalinos

It may appear logical that those individuals with rights to land team up with the irrigators' association, with their rights to water, in defending their collective interests in the Huasco Valley to the mining company. However, the particular reality in the moment in time in which the community has come face to face with the company, has lent itself to a separation between the irrigators' association and the Huascoalinos in terms of their forms of representation. The Husacoalinos have a strong claim to historical roots, and a close, geographically specific connection to Huasco Alto, the uppermost region of the Huasco Valley where their organization was initially formed, and where it played a key role in the damming of the mountain lagunas that irrigate the farms of the entire valley. When this identity that existed throughout the 19th century up until approximately 1903, was officially and legally re-established in 1997, a new set of indigenous laws had been put into place. The 1993 Indigenous Law grants indigenous peoples and associations legal status and this creates a new private rights holder: the "indigenous community." The Huascoalinos were not to be recognized as indigenous for the state had come up with a new set of criteria for membership into the "indigenous community" of the area (the Diaguitas), based a politic of names, that excluded the majority of the members of the Huascoalinos from being recognized as indigenous. Then, those with rights to land were not given this status, whereas the Diaguita group was given this recognition, without rights to the land. The

latter group is mostly led by women and supported by Barrick Gold, and to this process, we will return later on in this chapter.

This has engendered a rush to join one group or another, for access to resources, for recognition, and ultimately not to be left out. Membership in one or another of these groups is very important to many people in the valley, for they have become the main vehicle of access to the state and even to NGOs. A competition has also emerged in wake of the mining project to bring people on board with one group or the other. The leader of the Diaguita indigenous group explained to me that not just anyone can form a community, and many other peasants explained that it is very important to be a part of a community now.

The Huascoaltinos' development of a strong historical and geographical identity, and moderate opposition to the mine, has served in garnering support from the NGOs concerned with the Pascua Lama project. They have tended to support the work of the Huascoaltinos over the Diaguitas, who have been considered sell outs and have been black-marked by their involvement with Barrick Gold. The Diaguitas, on the other hand, have found support from NGOs that focus on the development of indigenous rights in Chile, and with direct links to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples. The Valley Defense Council has contributed to the construction of the locality through the identity of the Huascoaltinos. Where the city of Vallenar and towns in the lower regions near the ocean have been left out because they are not the one who will most be affected by the project, many actors have imaginatively transformed this area into the veritable "local community" that one day may be faced with bearing the brunt of the mine.

In 1997, when the government recognized the Huascoaltino group legally as an Agricultural Community (*Comunidad Agrícola*), they were granted title to 10,000 hectares of land, mostly in the mountainous area of the valley. This historical and geographical identity has become a vehicle for the work of NGOs. Even though many people are excluded because, historically, their family did not join the group, they have the greatest legitimacy for several reasons. The group is mostly preoccupied with territorial rights and also with the development of agricultural production and tourism. Leaders of the group have become involved in the creation of the Sendero de Chile, a hiking route through the mountains that the group hopes will attract tourists to the valley. With the assistance of a group of Argentine and Chilean specialists, they have begun to develop independent educational programs to prepare their *comuneros* for working in tourism. They not only present an

economic vision of an alternative future for the Huasco valley, but they do not accept "petty handouts" from the mine like the Diaguitas, a marker of the group's corruption, and are led by educated male farmers who know how to stand up for themselves. Whether the group is willing to extend membership to indigenous peoples in the valley who were not a part of this is unclear and very unlikely. Despite some overlap in the membership between the two groups, many of those left out of the group have looked to the Diaguita group for inclusion.

5.1.2 *The Emergence of the Diaguita Ethnic Group*

Where membership in the Huascoaltino community is based on land, membership in the Diaguita is based on names. The individuals now recognized as forming part of the Diaguita ethnic group did not come together to reclaim their identity to government. Instead, it was government and an indigenous rights NGO, in the context of the Pascua Lama mine, that approached the group with the intent of conducting research into the historical and cultural development of the people of Huasco Alto. Initially, research was conducted by Nancy Yanibez, a Mapuche lawyer, Universidad de Chile professor and leader with the Observatory for Indigenous Peoples' Rights (*Observatorio de los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas*), a group with connections to the United Nations Commission for Indigenous peoples. The research demonstrated that, based on archeological evidence, the "Diaguita" peoples once inhabited the valley, and that at the time of the Spanish conquest a number of families were recognized by the colony as "indigenous." These official family names were chosen based on the names of indigenous peoples that were recorded and registered by the colonial state, and those with one of these names as either a first or second surname, or with a grandparent with one of these names, became eligible for membership in the Diaguita ethnic group. CONADI made this decision based on research conducted by social scientists, NGOs, and some local peoples.

The Diaguitas were inaugurated in an official ceremony directed by President Michele Bachelet herself in the Plaza de la Moneda just outside of the national parliament in Santiago de Chile. Held just a few weeks after major protests against Pascua Lama made headlines, this event also made news for it marked the beginning of what Bachelet explains as part of a process in which the state will take a more active role in recognizing the multicultural reality of the nation. This event is important because it underscores the relationship between the recognition and Appadurai's notion of the "capacity to aspire"

(2004). In gaining this recognition, the Diaguita group began to develop a sense of cultural and moral legitimacy to inspire local people to become engaged in new projects, for example through artisan work, and also to resurrect rituals of the past. In a very short period of time, the women who are recognized members of the Diaguita ethnic group have become important voices in the community. Let us take a step back for a moment to trace the origins of the group.

5.1.3 *Barrick Gold and the Diaguitas*

The makeup of the Diaguita group and its leadership, now formed by the government itself, is quite opposite to that of the Huascoalinos. The Huascoalinos are led predominantly by a group of men, and according to their traditions, land is passed from father to son. The leaders of the Diaguita association, on the other hand, are all women, and their plans for the future have become interlaced with national projects for women's empowerment and women's inclusion in economic development initiatives. I would argue that what is an implicit conflict or inequality between men and women over property and inheritance has transformed into a conflict over names, and the government has played an important role here since they determine the names that provide a ticket to ethnic membership, and Barrick is playing a key role in bringing about these changes by providing economic resources and also the visible recognition that encourages the formation of this group. Barrick's programs with the community, which began in 2004 and 2005, initially addressed all the towns of the Huasco province, including Freirina, Vallenar, Huasco and Alto del Carmen, as well as the regional capital of Copiapó, during which time Barrick conducted small spontaneous meetings with local leaders and a door-to-door effort to encourage citizen participation. At this stage, the company sought out individuals with family or kinship ties in the valley to encourage local people to accept money for festivals and community events held by community groups. They contacted each "neighborhood council" in each of the several dozen villages in the valley one by one. As Barrick developed ties with already-existing community groups, there was no mention of any indigenous group in the description of potential impacts on the community provided at the time, for there were no indigenous groups, at least officially. The 2004 study made reference to existing archaeological sites of the Diaguita-Inca, situated on the Estrecho river, that would not be effected, but did not mention any people (Barrick 2004:22,25).

By 2006, these programs were reformulated to focus on the Diaguita women of the upper region of the Huasco valley, and school-aged children, just as the Huascoaltinos became a strong presence in this same area. They were offered a trip to Peru to visit indigenous peoples there who were working on joint projects with Barrick. They have become like a women's development NGO. They have provided assistance for artisanal crafts, solar kitchens, support for school clubs and sports teams, small business initiatives, such as producing food items that have included honey. Since women have mostly been left out of the Huascoaltino group, this strategy has allowed the company to support a group that is important within the precise geographical and cultural region that has become imaginatively connected with the mine, through the processes described above, and at the same time, form a new group in this area. It is undoubtedly for this reason that the formation of this group has been met with so much controversy, by NGO groups and the Huascoaltinos themselves.

This separation coincided with the legal recognition of the Diaguita group by the state. This decision was met with enormous frustration and confusion that continues in the local community to this day. Why one's neighbour has suddenly become indigenous when one has lived a similar lifestyle with this neighbour was a question I heard again and again. Rumours have circulated about the Minister of Education's involvement in the decision, because her last name happens to be Campillay, one of the chosen names. A second paradox is that the families with these names were the groups chosen by the colonizers to begin with, as legitimate groups that may maintain their agricultural practices and land. The decision was all the more suspicious since the majority of individuals who had gained indigenous status as "Diaguitas" actually live in the cities of Vallenar and Copiapó, and do not have contact with the ancestral land nor did they maintain any indigenous practices at all. Selecting a list of names, and justifying these selections historically, is indeed one way for the state to render the community "legible," to apply a concept of James C. Scott (1999), and ultimately to assuage what could have been an important movement of resistance into a bureaucratic task of resource allocation. This is also in tune with Pierre Bourdieu's assertion that the struggle over representation within the bureaucratic state plays a role in dividing groups (1984). While fully proving this argument would have required further research within CONADI, and other regional and national agencies, I believe that the sequences of events at hand demonstrates that this is at the very least a factor worthy of consideration.

Despite this legal and resource-based separation between these two groups that I have described, at certain times, they have joined together, obscuring their divisions into a single group. This has occurred particularly in international fora where this may work to their advantage, and where this has been encouraged by NGOs. Despite this, the two groups continue to work together to a certain extent at the international level, where in 2007 they petitioned the Comisión InterAmericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH) for failures to respect property rights, the territorial integrity of the valley and its natural habitat, and the lack of respect for water rights. They also called attention to the fact that this project, which is facilitated by the bi-national mining treaty set up by Barrick Gold itself, threatens the sovereignty of the nation. At this level the distinction between the two groups has been blurred to such an extent that many activists I spoke with did not realize that there were in fact two distinct groups. It is also surprising that the indigenous peoples who make claims to ethnic identity are speaking in the name of the sovereignty of the nation at the international level. As Barrick's programs developed from 2005 until 2007, they became more and more focused on the work of this group of women (see Annex 5). The process of formation of each of these distinct groups and how they represented themselves to the mining company, and even worked in cooperation with it, plays out along the lines available for recognition, economic support by the state, and access to natural resources.

Up until this point, the Diaguita group, and the women that lead it, have been working hard to bring the group out of the abstraction in which it was formed. The leaders have begun holding ritual ceremonies in the past years, and informing its members of economic opportunities for small businesses and support that are available through CONADI. Some young members of the Diaguitas have already benefited from the government's indigenous scholarship program, but it is too early in the formation of the group for real economic advantages to be witnessed. On the occasion that members of the group have been brought together, it has been mostly for recognition, as was the case with the Diaguita's trip to Santiago. The creation of this ethnic group has inspired some indigenous-peasants who migrated to Chile's northern copper mines where they worked for most of their life, to return to the valley in hope of new recognition, and a peaceful retirement. During my stay in the Huasco Valley, I met Francisco, an indigenous man who had worked as a miner his entire adult life in Chuiquicamata, and at sixty years was beginning to make plans to return to the abandoned acre of land that his parents had once farmed. His decision to return to the land was also made with the knowledge that local

indigenous peoples were now recognized by the government, and that his surname gives him the chance for membership in the Diaguita ethnic group. Francisco's story is part of a larger emerging pattern, where the young and old, who grew up in the northern mining towns were returning to the valley with renewed hope of positive change, inspired by the formation of this new group. The Huascoaltinos are also a part of this process of new hope for the future. With the group's plans for tourist and agricultural development, many young people are imagining a future for themselves in the valley instead of looking for work in cities and mining.

The emergence of the Diaguita identity and the reemergence of the Huascoaltinos were firmly rooted in the context of opposition to the proposed gold mining project, and to a great extent the actions of the state and Barrick Gold have determined the antagonistic relationship that has developed between the two groups, and the ways in which they represent themselves. The legal separation of land and water, and the politic of names, has led to division and competition. And since the Huascoaltinos, and other peoples in the valley, including certain ecologists, understand the process of formation of the Diaguitas as morally corrupted, their actions and representations are considered also mostly corrupt. Thus the Huascoaltinos demonstrate their own values by articulating them differently from the Diaguitas. This kettle of fish is not simply framed by the state or Barrick Gold; it also reveals that narratives of corruption are important in local peoples' understanding of the politics, an idea that is in tune with recent research on corruption in anthropology (Gupta 2005; Lazar 2005; Dracklé 2005; Zinn 2001). Each group also draws on different opportunities for both cultural recognition and economic resources, which coincide with one another (Tsing 2000). With a lack of economic resources, the Diaguitas have turned to the national level politic of recognition for support, and also to avenues of recognition provided by the mining company, even including visibility in the television media and in fairs and festivals. The Huascoaltinos has steered clear of these forms of representation, choosing to focus on a development plan of their own making

5.2 Setting the Boundaries of Corruption: Interpreting Barrick's Role in the Community

As illustrated above, with the case of the Diaguita women, Barrick has carved out a role for itself among local people who have been left out of the processes of mapping and representing themselves underway by community groups, civil society, and the state. Its

programs for development, with its own requirements for inclusion and membership in the groups it forms, have altered the forms of articulation of the community, supporting groups who have been given little chance for participation elsewhere. For those groups who have been left out and for those who have not been in a position to benefit financially from the project, developing relationships with Barrick has become an alternative means of exercising their own agency. However, these groups often lack the moral clout within the community to accept support and resources without falling into moral disgrace. The interpretations made by local people of the different sets of interactions between Barrick and the community, illustrated up until this point, show that where new groups that were formerly excluded within the community seek inclusion, these groups are corrupt. And where groups in a position of relative status in the community seek inclusion with the mining company, they are deemed noble. Then, local conflicts or underlying tensions, play themselves out in the representation of the community to the mining company.

On a very superficial level, Barrick has created an image of itself as an actor leading the way towards the specialization and modernization of life in the province of Huasco. Its programs include: academic excellence scholarships; technological advancement for local livestock breeder; infrastructure for educational programs in technical specialties; entrepreneurial capacity-building; improved sanitation systems in schools; and communication between rural health clinics in the Cordillera and the consultation station, to name a few. And these fit within its six programs: 1) education; 2) productive development and micro-enterprises; 3) infrastructure development; 4) health; 5) culture and tradition; 6) development programs for local providers (Barrick 2006a). Any group or association can ask for financial support for projects that fit into one of these categories. The sorts of programs put into place are very much in response to the fears and hopes of local people. When local people claimed that the jobs will be kept for mining specialists, Barrick has responded with adds explaining that the project will include everyone: "*Una gran obra para el futuro de la region de Atacama*" and community projects that offer specialized training for mining (see Annex 7). The company also began scholarship programs for technical schools preparing students for the mining industry, and Barrick indicates that more and more people want to specialize each day. Barrick has responded to concerns expressed about the danger of mining, which are a part of everyday life in this region, by publicizing its advanced risk prevention strategies. When faced with worries from irrigators about water scarcity and pollution, the company has explained that their environmental policy

focuses on protecting the “quality” and “quantity” of water in the area. They have also oriented their work with the community on the benefits that their use of “avant-garde technological practices” will bring to the community (see Annexes 6-8).

Local people often make sense of the role of the company, and all of its varying initiatives with the community through corruption. Oftentimes, those who become corrupt are those who occupied a social position of relative inferiority before Barrick arrived. Corruption is understood through distinct narratives that turn certain forms of interaction between the company and the local population into moral degeneration, and other forms into moral strength. This is very much in tune with Sian Layan’s study of Bolivia in which she describes that people mobilize around corruption, using it to determine what the proper use of political power should be (2005:212). Emerging work on corruption in anthropology finds that peoples’ understanding of corruption is transmitted through intensive discursive production and narratives that quite often serve to highlight the moral integrity of the person telling the story, more than anything else (Gupta 2005: 174; Lazar 2005:212). As the community has forged narratives of political corruption in the Pascua Lama Project, and the corrupting role of the company in the community and its various groups, local people have formed boundaries around the notion of corruption. Certain forms of bribery are deemed corrupt, whereas others are considered acceptable. For example, when Barrick lied about the use of glaciers, or about placing a chemical water and storage facility near the town of Vallenar, this demonstrated corruption. Local peoples have said that political officials were aware of this and that they accepted money. Barrick’s support of the Diaguita indigenous group is also seen as an example of corruption and conspiring with the state because the Minister of Education was said to have become involved in determining which “surnames” would be included in the list of individuals with the right to join this group. The women leaders of this group, many of whom are landless peasants or wage labourers, do not have the same status in the community as the Huascoaltinos, who own vast tracts of land, and many of whom manage their own farms.

The programs developed with the municipality, however, are clearly beyond the limits of corruption. One irrigator explains:

Question: ...so the municipality has a list of all of the people who have received the gifts?

Juan : Yes, yes, but despite these things I don’t support them (Barrick) either 100 per cent. No. What’s happening is that, this is a question of appreciation, a little. No, the municipality is not compromised, no. That they receive money...they’re

giving, they're giving things, energy support, support of a ton of things, and so be it. This way things rest, and without this, nothing would rest.

Support for energy supplies, much like scholarships, are things that will "remain" in the community, and are given through the official channels. The directors of the JVRH are on the exact opposite side of this spectrum.

The vast majority of Barrick's interactions with local people that are direct rather than through the intermediary of the municipality, have been deemed corrupt. Barrick's famous "capacity building" programs that set out to give people the opportunity to improve their credentials are one example. Activists living in the city of Vallenar informed me that between 2004 and 2007 Barrick held courses with approximately 60 to 70 per cent of the population, which comprises over 50 000 individuals. The company publicized that the content of these courses was to be highly specialized, but in reality I was told that the courses covered basic and general themes, such as the prevention of risk in the workplace, how to prepare a résumé, and how to conduct a job search. A young woman now working as a secretary who had participated in one of the workshops about three years ago explained to me how the process unfolded after the training sessions. Six months after the workshop, she was invited to take a psychological test and an interview. She was asked why she wants to be part of the company, and what pretensions does she have. Three years later, she had still never received a phone call, and this is also the case for those with whom she had taken the workshops. In retrospect, she believes that the entire process was very deceitful, and corrupt. Offering training programs for jobs that do not exist shows the dishonesty of the company.

Many individuals are loath to admit that despite this Barrick still denotes a sense of prestige and status, and becoming associated with the group is sign of social mobility. In the valley, on the other hand, Barrick is a sign of shame and of misplaced ambition and capitalist greed. Local people believe that the directors of the JVRH have profited personally from the project. In speaking with Evelina, and others who have taken courses with Barrick in the past few years, I observed that they were truly embarrassed of having fallen into the trap of the company, and having believed that there really would be opportunities for them. The opposition to the mining company is not just about water and glaciers, it is also about the desire of many to take apart the modernization myth that the company put so much effort and resources into creating over a period of a few years from about 2003 to 2006.

5.3 Conclusion

The changes underway in the form of the community are occurring in relationship with opportunities for inclusion into the process of economic development and modernization set off by the mining project, and also for recognition. The indigenous groups take certain shapes that are influenced by opportunities for access to and recognition by state institutions and civil society, and also the forms of ownership of land and water. Where the irrigators association has focused on water rights for peasants, the indigenous focus on land, even though many of these actors are also peasants. The separation in Chilean laws on natural resource holding between rights to water and right to land has had significant consequences in the forms in which these communities have emerged in their efforts to represent their interests to state agencies and the mining company. Where the Huascoaltinos have organized around claims to land, other peasant-irrigators who do not belong to this group have organized around issues of water distribution. There is nothing natural or to be taken-for-granted in these links, even though indigenous peoples are often tied to claims for land. For even in the pre-Pinochet era, peasant-irrigators organized around claims to land. These contingent processes that are the result of a combination of legal realities, political intervention, civil society involvement, and local responses, have joined together to form of a specific locality that is associated with the mine.

All of the communities to form are very closely tied to this creation of a "locality," centred in the upper Huasco valley, even though certain criteria for membership limits the legal or official way in which one may belong to this geographical area. This explains the frustration of local people of mixed Spanish and indigenous descent at the refusal of the state to grant them status as a member of the Diaguita ethnic group, and also the hurriedness and priority of local people to join a community, rather than join the struggle for their rights with respect to the mine. There has been a difficult union of the claims oriented by "locality" that the civil society groups struggle to construct, with the claims of other emerging "community" associations that draw on land and kinship. For the struggle against the mine has translated, at the local level, into a struggle to join emerging groups that have formed to make demands for new resources, and ultimately to become a part of the process of modernization. As these various groups have become articulated, each has

formed liaisons with different state agencies, the mining company, and civil society groups. Opportunities for inclusion are so few that where these opportunities provide leverages against exclusion and subordination they are seized upon, even when this requires becoming a part of a process one opposes.

6. Melting Glaciers in Mining Nation

6.1 Introduction

In Anna Tsing's analysis of the Bre-X scandal, this author shows how Barrick Gold dramatically performed its presumed discoveries of gold in Indonesia through the global media, in an effort to quickly and efficiently garner up enough financial capital needed to continue with the project (2000). Barrick has affected a similar performance with the Pascua Lama project. The company's dramatic performance of its gold discovery on the Argentine-Chilean frontier zone was very convincing: it described the area as the new gold mining frontier of the world to potential investors and the mining community, and it sensationalized these discoveries by spearheading a successful campaign to create a binational accord between Argentina and Chile to facilitate its rapid installation onto this new zone. Yet, even the monstrous scale of these efforts was not a match for the challenge presented by a rapidly expanding network of civil society actors. Barrick's high drama was upstaged by civil society actors who had another scenario in mind complete with a powerful protagonist: glaciers. Glaciers, and the fresh water that they store, became a powerful symbol that echoed even further in the imagination of Chileans, and people from all over the world.

During the initial environmental impact assessments of the project, the company had planned to displace three glaciers, which are situated at an altitude of about 4600 metres. Since these glaciers feed the watershed system that local farmers use to irrigate their fields, destroying the glaciers could lead to the devastation of this communities' way of life. Even more, activists claimed that the roads built in the construction phase of the mine that began in the mid-1990s, has already caused damage to the glaciers. The issue of water distribution at the local level was then linked to national expressions of dissent through the image of the glaciers. The glaciers, as a symbol of destruction brought on by economic globalization and the mining industry, linked the local area to broader imaginings of the Chilean nation, calling Chilean to question mining as the nation's central route to economic development. Faced with the success of the drama over glaciers, in linking the Pascua Lama project to water monopolies, privatization of water, and water shortages among peasant communities, Barrick conjured up another plan: climate change. The company's efforts to outdo activists by pointing to climate change as the prime mover in the shrinking of glaciers in the area of the mine were synchronized, not so coincidentally, with Al Gore's

international speaking tour on climate change, entitled "An Inconvenient Truth." The sponsor of Gore's talk in Chile, and the environmental conference in which it was to be a part of, was none other than Barrick Gold itself. According to Tsing, the dependence on spectacle has become a regular feature of companies seeking financial capital (2000:118). In the case of Pascua Lama, Barrick's turn to climate change as a means of performing and displacing responsibility for melting glaciers onto causes beyond their control, shows that the company is engaging with the very symbols and discourses exerted by civil society groups and other voices of dissent. The state has been an important actor in this chain of events. By calling attention to certain groups in the community who do not oppose the mine, it has made efforts to alter the construction of the local community presented by civil society. The state has also responded by defending that mining is the framework of economic development in Chile, and particularly in the northern region of Pascua Lama.

6.2 "Don't touch the glaciers"

"Don't touch the glaciers," read a heading in *La Presse*, in an article that highlighted a visit to Canada by a Chilean anthropologist-ecologist, César Padilla, who co-authored a book on Pascua Lama and the Chilean-Argentine binational mining treaty, "*El Exilio del Condor*" (Khan 2005:A35). One year later, the Pascua Lama became a central question at Canada's national roundtables on mining. And the question of melting glaciers even made its way into the Canadian national news at the moment of Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's July 2007 visit to Chile. CBC News' explanation of the situation went straight to the punch: "runoff from the glaciers fuels watersheds in the area, supplying water to many communities" (2007). CBC explained that the General Water Directorship in Chile reported in 2002, that three glaciers diminished by 50 to 70 per cent, and the organization claims that this is a consequence of work effected by Barrick during the exploration and preparation phases of the project, which includes building road through mountains and glaciers, and the use of heavy equipment (*ibid*). The media has also drawn our attention to the fragile water ecosystem of which the glaciers form a fundamental part.

The debate on Pascua Lama at the national level converges around the image of the glaciers in the Andean Cordillera, and the future of water supplies that they represent. Many activists have focused attention on before and after photos of the diminishing glaciers upon which the infrastructure for the Pascua Lama mine is being built (see Annex 10). Civil

society groups in Chile and around the world have been successful in their joint efforts in using the image of the glaciers to link together issues of endangered future water supplies, the overuse of water by mining firms, and the lack of sustainability that is inherent in mining practices. Glaciers were transformed into a symbol of national pride and cultural exoticism. I discovered during the course of my sejour in the Huasco Valley that these three glaciers, Toro 1, Toro 2, and Esperanza, were becoming household names.

The media fervor created by NGOs ushered in a multitude of new research and interest on glaciers in Chile and the Southern Cone more broadly. Research is underway that is attempting to show that the shrinking of the size of glaciers is caused by means other than climate change, in an attempt to counteract Barrick's strongest argument. One article that appeared in a national Chilean newspaper indicated that Chile has over half of the surface area of all South American glaciers (Jacque 2007:1). The title of a recent report by Chilean NGO and Universidad de Chile researcher Roxana Borquez illustrates this trend: "Chilean glaciers: strategic reserves of freshwater."⁵ The study includes information on "Chilean" glaciers in each of the regions of the nation, in terms of quantity and quality. Just as the glaciers take on a decidedly "Chilean" personality in this study, the glaciers also show that it is not just Barrick, but also Chile's state mining company, CODELCO, that has caused damaged to the glaciers of the nation.

The reader should bear in mind that CODELCO has long been a point of struggle over Chile's national sovereignty of its natural resources since Salvador Allende's 1971 constitutional reforms that nationalized copper. Full ownership of all copper mines and copper fields were transferred to CODELCO from the hands of a few multinational corporations mostly located in the United States. This "act of sovereignty," as it has been called, was used as the basis for an international economic boycott that eventually deepened political polarization and to Pinochet 1973 coup d'état. A veritable struggle for the symbol of economic development is unfolding as glaciers are held up against mining in a battle over the symbolic representation of the national community and its economic future.⁶ This struggle is laden with the struggles of Chile's conflictual political history to the

⁵ "Glaciares chilenos: reservas estrategicas de agua dulce"

⁶ Copper has long been a mainstay of the Chilean economy, accounting for almost one third of all foreign trade. Even before Allende's nationalization program, the earliest attempts to make use of copper reserves for national development occurred in 1925 when the government imposed a 6 per cent tax on top of the 6 per cent tax that already existed. The ownership of the copper mines, and others, is an intensely divisive issue, and the attempts to reclaim sovereignty over these resources was the reason for the coup d'état. Following the coup, Pinochet's military government (1973-1990)

extent that one could explain that political ideological struggles in Chile have played out on the copper field. This is also one of the reasons why Chilean NGOs have focused more on water than on the land struggles of the indigenous. By focusing on water, they engage with national-historical struggles in Chile, since the mining industry has had a most direct, or perhaps visible, impact on the nation's water, through water monopolies, privatization and shortages. Focusing on water fits into the terms of the debate as they have been structured at the national level.

As the binational mining treaty has facilitated the entry of mining multinationals in the past ten years, feelings of sovereignty over national resources are resurging, and once again are becoming a vehicle that brings together groups in opposition to neo-liberal policies and unfettered economic globalization. The binational mining treaty, ratified by President Frei in Chile and President Kirchner in Argentina in 2000, lifted restrictions on property ownership and access rights for mining and exploration along most of the border and simplified customs and taxation procedures. CODELCO's plans for a joint mining project with Barrick Gold have added to the confusion and to nationalist sentiments of natural resources sovereignty⁷. OLCA explains that the Pascua Lama project represents an increasing trend of mining projects on the frontier zone, calling our attention to the challenge to Chilean national integrity that such projects pose. It forms part of an economic model of development that dates back to the Pinochet era (Lucio testimony roundtable 2006). These issues have been conjoined with the talk of glaciers by the NGOs fighting against the project, effectively turning the Pascua Lama question into a vehicle for nationwide questions of economic liberalization and its environmental consequences that has led to new a space of imagination on the Chilean nation.

Groups have responded by arguing that agriculture, which also requires significant amounts of water for irrigation, is a better possibility for the future. While it may pay less, it is a less risky way of life, and also ecologically sustainable in the long run. Even more, NGOs claim that mining does not contribute to the Chilean economy as politicians and mining executives would have us believe, and this is indeed supported by evidence. The mining industry does not contribute to the Chilean economy as it once did, largely due to

compensated US companies for their expropriated holdings and sold many state-owned companies, and put into place neoliberal reforms that exist until the present day. The three democratic governments since 1990 have continued privatization, although at a slower pace.

⁷ An agreement was signed between CODELCO and Barrick Gold in 2001 to explore, operate, and possibly develop copper-gold porphyry ore at the Río Hurtado property. This could be CODELCO's first joint venture involving property belonging to third parties.

privatization. An important example is CODELCO, the state mining firm. In the period between the years 1996 and 2000, a law (Law No.19,138) that enabled CODELCO to sell mines out of function to foreign companies led to the effective transferring of over 300 million hectares of mining property to the private sector (Alcayaga 2004:11-12). Throughout the 1990s, as the privatization of the mining sector steadily increased, private companies soared upwards from turning out 13.9 per cent of the nations mining production in the 1990s to over 55 per cent of total production in 2000 (Pizarro in Clark 1995:95). Privatization led inadvertently to the overproduction of copper, and then a decline in world copper prices, which benefited the parent companies of mining firms that purchase exports. Prices dropped from \$1.40 per pound in 1995 to \$0.71 per pound in 1999, on par with the lowest real levels since the 1930s. This has resulted in sharp declines in state revenues. In 1989, the copper industry provided 25 per cent of state revenues, equal to 50 per cent of export value, and by 1999, this industry afforded only 1.3 per cent of state revenues, equal to 5 per cent of export value (Caputo in Clark 1995:95). What's more, even as mineral production tripled during the 1990s, the industry provided fewer and fewer jobs, with total employment falling from 102 000 to 71 000 during this period (Pizarro in Clark 1995:97).

The company has attempted to adopt the language of the irrigators group and activists, in acknowledging that local peoples' have a "right to water," and by speaking about water protection. The physical landscape of "glaciers," in the words of NGO activists, has been transformed into "ice formations," "ice fields" and water communities have been transformed into "downstream communities." Barrick has attempted to turn the issue into a simple, and less imagination-inspiring, technical and scientific problem, claiming that it has addressed the problem of future water supplies. According to one of the company's reports, mine dewatering and process water, "are not expected to adversely affect downstream water users' "right to water" (ERM Group 2006:4). The company has gone even further in indicating that they will assist local water users, in both agricultural activities and for personal consumption, to improve seasonal storage, conveyance, and irrigations systems, such that more water will be conserved that would be diverted by the mining operations. The report also explains that that company has made efforts in communicating with the communities by organizing disclosure meetings in 6 "downstream communities." Discursively altering the irrigators' association to "downstream communities" and what the irrigators saw as empty claims decorated in scientific language did not suffice. Barrick required a strategy of defense that was more spectacular.

Another report prepared by an environmental consulting firm working for Barrick indicates that glaciers in the area of the Pascua Lama project "are steadily melting in recent climates" (ERM Group 2006:4). Climate change was discovered as another actor quest for a different cause-and-effect explanation of diminishing glaciers. "Climate change" soon became the mantra of the company in its defense of the Pascua Lama project as they attempt to engage with the symbolic and political tools of civil society that have proven so effective, and changed the debate with NGOs, which seeks to give community chance to determine its future, to one focused on globally salient and techno-scientific questions of climate change. Barrick's efforts became even more dramatic in 2007 when it decided to sponsor of a conference, "Global Warming and Climate Change: The Moment to Act Has Arrived." The keynote speaker was to be ex-Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, invited to give his famed lecture "An Inconvenient Truth." NGOs immediately took on the issue, putting pressure on Al Gore to back out of the talk, and with his reputation in question, Barrick was removed as official sponsor (OLCA 2007a:1). Al Gore finally backed out of the event (OLCA 2007b:1). His presence would have been a powerful symbol in transmitting a message on climate change.

Anna Tsing points to the spectacle created by Bre-X, and other firms, and the act of conjuring they induced in order to raise the capital necessary for a project resting on very uncertain ground. Tsing explains this behaviour as "spectacular accumulation:" "when investors speculate on a product that may or may not exist." (Tsing 2000:139). This author explains: "In these circumstances, investors are looking for the appearance of success, they cannot afford to find out if the product is solid; by then their chances for profit are gone" (139). In the Pascua Lama project, Barrick Gold's main obstacle to profit was the environmental consequences of the mine that would lead to legal claims by the community, and possibly the state. It became necessary for the company to transform this obstacle into a sort of spectacle that would divert responsibility for these realities elsewhere. They found this spectacle in the international issue of climate change. What local activists deemed to be the destruction of glaciers due to the removal of ice in constructing roads and the dust produced in industrial processes, Barrick blamed on climate change.

NGOs responded by indicating that regardless of what prediction might exist about the future of the region's environment, the community must have the right to determine its own course of action. In this way, they assert that scientific claims to "knowing" the future must not become a justification for destructive mining practices. Are these actors beginning

to expose the political and economic uses of scientific knowledge? While the debate is not yet framed in such explicit terms, suffice it to say that for the moment "expert" knowledge is being questioned, and this, within the specific context of uncertainty over the future. Civil society attempts to discredit expert knowledge have become apparent, by showing how it is developed by profit-seeking firms for their own advantage, and by making visible that it is based on projections into the future that are simply untenable and out of the reach of even the most sophisticated science. In the struggle over symbolic legitimacy, civil society has benefited from the moral tone of water preservation, a discourse which has also created difference with the scientifically-based notions of probability. The dramatic nature of a gold mine to be built on top of glaciers as a stage for NGO action, burgeoning transnational alliance between mining-focused NGOs in Canada and abroad, in parallel to the roundtables, explain why Pascua Lama attracted so much attention.

NGOs pick up on the image of glaciers in northern, deserts Chile, turning the glaciers into a symbol of natural and national pride, and future well-being, and binding national and natural imaginings. This symbol reverberates with international NGOs and transnational civil society insofar as the water question, in the past decade, has become a global environmental concern. This is strikingly true in Canada where abundant fresh water supplies are being sold to the United States, causing alarm bells about the future protection of this precious resource. In fact, this issue has served in linking civil society groups in Canada, through the international and national media, and all the way to local irrigators who farm in the vicinity of the mine. The attention given to the issue globally has made it even more salient at the local level. Thus, the authority of the state to constructing the local, and to maintain a "vertical topography of power," in the words of James Ferguson, where political actors are imagined as coming from below, is called into question (2004:384). This challenge to the state's construction of the local by the symbolic work of the NGOs has drawn the state into civil society's own sites of cultural production.

6.3 State Imaginings of "Mining Nation"

In response to civil society's new forms of national imaginations, the state has evoked the success of mining's past. In one telling example, a government sponsored photo contest in the Atacama region called upon local people to present photos that evoke the memories of Chile's living history as a "mining nation" (see Annex 9). The state's responses

are also closely tied up with those of Barrick Gold and other mining companies. The state has joined on with Barrick saying that climate change may be an issue, and it also argued that water is not viable for agriculture because there is too little, and that it makes more sense to use it for mining. The debate between Barrick and civil society has led to questions about mining's future in Chile, and in contemporary Chile, this future is being challenged as more and more of the population is aware of the environmental and social effects of the industry. Mining has long been highly political and tension-ridden because of the conflictual historical circumstances in which the sector developed. In the period leading up to Chile's 1973 coup, Allende's famous nationalization of the nation's emblematic Chuquicamata copper mine (the largest copper-producing mine in the world), formerly owned by important US and other interests, led to an international economic boycott of the nation. The struggles at Chuquicamata that continue to this day, are in many ways are symptomatic of larger political and economic tensions in the nation. In the current post-Fordist era of flexible accumulation, subcontractor workers in the mine are organizing their own unions in response to the failure of the state mining company's unions to include those working on the margins.

6.3.1 Canada-Chile Environmental Commission

We mentioned the state's turn to mining's past to evoke feelings of national community and belongingness. These efforts were put to the test at a hearing of the Canada-Chile Environmental Commission in Santiago in 2006. The Chilean Commissioner of the Environment opened the session by expressing the importance of this space of debate for the Chilean government and the obligation they have to consult. The activists, local peoples and civil society leaders that were present focused on the discrepancies between environmental impact evaluations in Canada and Chile, and the lack of responsibility of mining firms in cleaning up pollution and taking care of damages at the end of projects. Local people also questioned the real potential for positive social and economic consequences of mining in the Huasco Valley, and throughout all of Chile for that matter. Local people in the Huasco Valley have immigrated to work in Chile's northern copper mines for decades and for many of these individuals the promise of modernization has long ceased to exist. Decades of forced migration, combining mining with agricultural survival strategies, and related problems of family break-up, alcoholism and violence, risk and environmental destruction, has dismantled the illusion of achieving modernity through

mining. One individual argued that agricultural practices may pay less than mining, but they provide permanent jobs that do not require migrating, and far more jobs at that. In the Huasco Valley, there are 6000 permanent jobs in agriculture, and sometimes more when export volumes are high. This is far more than the 1500 jobs that the Pascua Lama project would provide and even then, these jobs would only exist for the twenty year period of operation of the mine.

Many of the testimonies of local people referred back to their discontent with the dominant social and economic framework of the nation, which reduces the worth of their livelihood. As a local farmer explained, the plight of the agricultural community of the Huasco Valley is not about money, but rather about maintaining agriculture as a viable way of life. This way of life is one in which poverty is a reality, but the risks, of course, are nowhere near those involved with working in mining. The 14 deaths that occurred during the construction stages were also brought forth. Water came up again and again: "It's not just an environmental issue, but an issue of values and principles. The theme of water is being discussed all over the world - it's serious." Another farmer expressed: "This is a problem of Chile, it's not Barrick Gold's problem. The ecological problem is not a technical one, but a human one." The Commissioner's response to these claims echoed that of the mining firm by shifting the dilemma to one over the technical details of water contamination, which according to her, will not necessarily occur. Ana Lya Uriarte also evoked images of Chile's past in mining, explaining that Pascua Lama is a question of what Chile wants to do in the future, and what is our capacity in terms of environmental regulation.

The response of the Canadian representative was intriguing. She claimed that so long as Barrick is respecting the laws of Chile, there is nothing that Canada can do. This, of course, contradicts the assertions of the Canadian government within the national roundtables on mining in Canada, in which the government has negated calls from civil society to assist national governments in developing local public institutions. As we will see in the following chapter, the government has made a conscious decision not to support efforts in this vein. Rather, they have chosen to support research on internationally-oriented principles and mechanisms that have much less potential for meaningful application than developing law-making and law-maintaining institutions at the local level. During Harper's 2007 visit to Chile, the Prime Minister was asked about the Pascua Lama affair following his meeting with Barrick Gold's Chilean division directors in Santiago. At a press conference

with President Bachelet, he responded that “Barrick follows Canadian standards of corporate social responsibility,” in reference to ethical guidelines for companies operating abroad (Wood 2007). Just which ethical guidelines was he referring to? Over a year after the National Roundtables on mining, Canada has yet to make a decisive step on these guidelines. At the time of Harper’s visit, there were no standards of corporate responsibility in Canada, other than the voluntary protocols and instruments constructed by industry itself. As we shall see in the following chapter, the national roundtables on mining demonstrate that the relationship between civil society and the state is wrought with conflict.

6.3.2 *Institutional Change*

The national government of Chile has also responded by making significant changes in the public institutions that address environmental issues. In 2007, a Ministry of the Environment was created for the first time ever out of the former Commission of Environment (CONAMA), with Ana Lya Uriarte to become the first Minister of the Environment (El Diario 2007a:11). Uriarte, an environmental lawyer with the Universidad de Chile, was the key government figure who took on the controversy over glaciers, water, and the Pascua Lama project. On top of this, a list of developments was announced the same year of the final approvals of the Pascua Lama mine and of the charade over melting glaciers and climate change. For instance, that same year, Chile created the National Assessment Committee on Climate Change (*Comité Nacional Asesor en Cambio Climático - CCC*); led the Clean Development Initiative (*Mecanismo de Desarrollo Limpio - MDL*) among Latin America nations; participated in the CarbonExpo 2007 in Germany (El Estrella 2007b:9). The Environment Commission also decided to establish a committee to create secondary water norms for the Huasco Valley, where the Pascua Lama project is situated, in order to protect the water ecosystem in the long-term (El Estrella 2007c:4). The Director of the Environmental Commission for the Atacama region, Osvaldo Avila, also indicated that secondary norms should include the institutionalization of future potential of drought, so that mechanisms are developed to prevent these problems before they start. Even more, the Environmental Commission of Atacama has brought the issue of climate change into its own field of inquiry. In an information booklet produced for local people by this commission, the state points to climate change as a future issue that the mining region must begin preparing for (El Diario de Atacama 2007b).

6.3.3 *Recognizing Indigenous Peoples*

The reasons for the state's efforts to recognize indigenous peoples, described in Chapter 4, becomes clear in light of the above discussion of the state's efforts to engage with the cultural production of civil society. The subtle shift of the question from inequitable and neoliberal water policies, to one of recognition of indigenous peoples, has been effective to a considerable extent. Chilean President Michele Bachelet's constitutional reform project seeks to include official recognition of the multicultural character of the nation. These planned reforms will do so by increasing the participation of aboriginal peoples in the social and political sphere; the recognition and development of their rights; the creation of policies for urban indigenous peoples; and ameliorating the situation of indigenous women, education, and culture (Nacional 2005: 3). Bachelet has expressed that Chile has a debt to pay to its original peoples.

6.4 Local Responses to "Mining Nation"

The question of local water politics and the inequitable access to water rights, a result of the Water Code, has become a vehicle for linking the national imaginations around glaciers, to the local level concerns of irrigators described in Chapter 4. By presenting the claims of local irrigators to the National Water Commission in Santiago (*Dirrección General de Aguas - DGA*), which is responsible for approving new water rights, NGOs have linked their construction of glaciers as a national question to the local concerns of irrigators discussed in Chapter 4. The claims that were brought forth to the Natural Resources and Environment Commission of the Chilean House of Commons in Santiago in 2006 focused on protection of the quality of water and government co-financing of the project, rather than the distribution of water among local farmers and between the farming community and the mining industry. For the NGOs, the environmental protection of glaciers was deemed more politically salient than the question of water rights and challenging the underlying structure of the law. They convinced Parliament to establish an independent investigation to address irregularities in the environmental assessment process, in the use of funds given by Barrick to the monitoring group, and financial assistance from government in the infrastructure projects underway in preparation of the mine. They have also highlighted that discrepancies exist between first world and third world

environmental standards that make mining investment in countries like Chile more profitable and appealing for Canadian mining companies than mining in Canada itself. In January 2006 the Chilean parliament adopted a new law that would raise taxation from mining companies, but civil society says that this is still not enough. (Khan 2005:A35).

6.4.1 National Congress of Mining Municipalities

Other contestations to "mining nation" have come from local municipalities, where the daily effects of "mining nation" for mining workers and the communities in which they live are experienced first hand. Municipal counsellors from across Chile in areas where mining is a central economic activity have recently taken on the initiative of grouping together to focus on the main problems faced by their communities and to create a platform for change. Once again, water was a major point of discussion. The municipal leaders expressed that it is unjust that mining firms have access to as much as they want while individuals practicing other economic activities, especially small-scale agriculture, lack water. This is perhaps no more evident than in the municipality of Calama, situated next to the large Chuquicamata mine, and other surrounding municipalities in the Atacama region. They expressed that mining companies operate and make decision without any consideration of the opinions of the community. In terms of calls for change, they indicated that mining companies should be obliged to use sea water for their activities in order to prevent drought and water shortages, and to maintain access to water for farmers. They also called for higher taxes to be put into place in order to compensate for water pollution.

Water has become a point of engagement for local political leaders in their efforts to change the ways in which mining companies operate. Having been left out of broader processes of law-making at the national level, these leaders are calling attention to issues of water in order to gain greater inclusion for local communities in the decisions that affect their lives, and with good reason indeed. Several municipalities in the Atacama region, and in Chile's other northernmost regions, have seen rivers dry up due to the overuse of water by mining companies. The question of water pollution and of acceptable level of copper in the water of the Atacama region is also a controversial issue imbued with the politics of mining at the national and even international level.

6.5 Conclusion

As we have seen, the Pascua Lama question has led the state to engage with both the symbolic and cultural production of civil society, and also to make promises of institutional change. They have done so by joining with industry in pointing to climate change as a cause of glacial diminishment, in attempting to expand its environmental institutions, and even to recognize one of the cultural groups, located in the Huasco Valley, the area that civil society has linked to the mine. The state also responds to the ways in which local communities and civil society groups have constructed locality and the local community, by attempting to integrate these into national constructions of natural resources that focus on mining. The efforts of the state to hold on to national imaginings of mineral wealth, once faced with civil society's and local people's focus on glaciers and water, is telling of the strength of these challenges being posed to the state. In the next chapter, we will examine the National Roundtables on corporate social responsibility, and the efforts of "civil society" to represent and construct the local community in this forum. We shall demonstrate how the complex struggle over local constructions of community that take place around the Pascua Lama mine fashions the possibilities for representation at the global level.

7. "ONE STEP FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK"

7.1 Introduction

"One Step Forward, One Step Back: An Overview and Analysis of the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Sustainability Policy, Performance Standards and Disclosure Policy" was published by the prominent Canadian NGO, Halifax Initiative in view of the National Roundtables on corporate social responsibility in the Canadian mining sector abroad. This consultation process took place in five major cities across Canada in 2006 and brought together industry representatives, government officials, civil society actors, and local representatives from communities in the vicinity of ongoing and imminent mining projects. This report is path-breaking in that while it joins many existing critiques, it examines the myriad efforts of multinational mining firms to assert their own definition of corporate social responsibility as a single entity. It takes together the tools of responsibility presented by mining firms - a dazzling array of "performance standards", "best practices" and "voluntary protocols" - and in 500 pages of minute details demonstrates that they are not useful. That is, they are of little or no use unless they can be practically implemented and unless communities are given a say in determining the outcome of proposed projects.

"One Step Forward, One Step Back," signifies one among many counter-attempts to demonstrate that at their best, these mechanisms feign a legal character, and at their worst, they undermine any potential at all to effect changes in the relationship between mining firms and local communities. The authors of the report, including Karyn Keenan, Andrea Durbin, and other individuals working with the Halifax Initiative and leading Ottawa-based NGOs, suggest that the process has moved "one step forward," insofar as it sets the stage for a discussion over the normative principles that should regulate the activities of multinational mining firms abroad.⁸ At the same time, the process has moved "one step back," because the civil society sector is upholding a framework of discussion imposed by industry that effectively deters from the possibility of balancing the scales of power

⁸ The Halifax Initiative has become a leader among advocacy NGOs operating on Canada's Parliament Hill, gaining direct access to the Canadian government. The group was founded in 1994 with a view to operate as an NGO umbrella group that unites groups with the shared goal of ensuring that the fundamental reform of international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and IMF, be placed at the top of Canada's agenda. In their joint lobbying efforts with the mining sector, the group has joined forces with Mining Watch, and has developed trans-national ties with similar groups in the developing world.

between local peoples and mining multinationals, by continuing its engagement with industry over principles that have no potential for meaningful application for and within local communities. The report represents both a symbol of the NGO's own exasperation with this entire situation and an innovative approach in counteracting the momentum of business leaders across the planet as they rapidly draw government and international institutions into the particular logic of their initiatives.

In this chapter, we shall examine the challenge of representing the interests of the local community associated with the Pascua Lama Project within one international forum, Canada's national roundtables on mining. Articulating the "community" has become both a key strategy and challenge in the efforts of "civil society" actors to transform the parameters of this debate in order to shift the balance of power between community and industry. For the possibilities of representation by civil society actors are greatly enmeshed with the complex process of self-articulation and definition in which the community itself has become absorbed in wake of the arrival of a mining project. At the same time, since the development of trans-national ties with local communities was so crucial in civil society's successful lobbying efforts that led to roundtable initiative in the first place, the status of these actors as a legitimate lobby in Canadian politics is intimately tied up with their capacities to act as a voice for the community and to speak in its name. This challenge is compounded by calls for compromises and interactions with industry as well as with government that have become a necessity in gaining a greater foothold into the formal political decision-making apparatus of the state and advancing their own status as legitimate actors in the Canadian political scene. In this way, I advance the proposition that "civil society" finds itself in a position in which it oscillates between its efforts to gain ground within the established spaces of political decision-making on the one hand and as cultural brokers of community autonomy on the other. In virtue of this dual role, the imaginary potential of "civil society" is at once circumscribed and opened up. This brings to the surface the complex nature of putting the idea of civil society into practice. "Civil society" and "community" are both inventions and both need each other in order to advance their concerns and positions within relevant political structures.

The state also plays a role in inventing "civil society"; by carving out a place for civil society the state may refrain from intervening. Thus, supporting civil society becomes a way of solving social problems without significant action on the part of the state. As one author explains: "NGOs are not necessarily more dependable and often are not as separate

from state interests and personnel as the ideal type implies” (Edelman 2005:27). NGOs often receive support from the state and even industry itself, which generally favours strengthening elite lobby groups as a means of facilitating market-driven approaches to growth and to resolving social conflicts (Edelman 2005:28). This becomes problematic when this contributes to inequalities in wealth and power, without bestowing meaningful structural change.⁹ In the context of the roundtables, “civil society” was indeed separated from industry by the Canadian government as a way of grouping together those actors involved with NGOs and citizen groups, in turn, creating a single and collective point of entry for them into the political debate over regulating Canadian mining multinationals. Throughout the roundtable process, the dynamic between civil society and the state intertwined and overlapped, with the responsibilities of one and the other shifting back and forth. Where government depended on civil society for increasing the legitimacy of the process, civil society depended on government for the point of entry into the political system that the process itself provided them with. This group has oscillated between professionalizing and moving further into the political structure, and maintaining solidarity with community activists and groups that call for sweeping structural change and autonomy from the state.

7.2 The “National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Canadian Extractive Sector in Developing Countries”

Official government information indicates that the roundtables were to be a series of consultations initiated by a call from Parliament and sponsored by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), in order to bring together the members of the public, industry and academia for discussion, debate and presentation of practical solutions useful for directing mining companies on how to conduct their activities in a

⁹ There are two opposite points of view with respect to the place that civil society should occupy within the political structure. Supporters of the first position believe that economic actors, namely markets and firms, should be excluded from civil society, a domain which they tend to conceive of as a part of associative life that exists to defend autonomous collective institutions from the encroachments of both market and state. They also accord greater importance to how social inequality structures the state. Those who support the other position consider it “as a domain outside of and morally superior to the state.” This group is generally made up of supporters of neo-liberal ideology, including industry lobby groups. These groups generally favour strengthening elite lobby groups that focus on social and environmental issues as a means of facilitating market-driven approaches to growth and to resolving social conflicts. (see *Edelman 2005:28*)

socially and environmentally responsible manner. The intended outcome of the process was to produce a set of recommendations, complete with proposals for concrete actions that government could evaluate and use as a tool in developing new legislation on corporate social responsibility. From government's perspective, this required finding ways to strengthen approaches to managing the external impacts of international business activities in such a way that would benefit both businesses and the communities in which they work (Foreign 2006:3). According to a government official involved in directing the process, this is of particular importance in the current international setting in which speaking about "corporate social responsibility" has become a diplomatic necessity.

In the unofficial discourse, civil society played a key role in the creation of this space of discussion through over ten years of lobby work spearheaded by Mining Watch Canada, the Halifax Initiative and several other faith-based, human rights and environmental groups. These years of engagement culminated in a presentation of a group of local community leaders from the Philippines to a Federal Parliament Committee in which they expressed how their lives have become adversely mangled with the activities of mining firms, as well as the social and environmental consequences suffered by their communities. One of the key expectations the government expressed to civil society, in agreeing to finance and organize the roundtables so important to civil society's own agenda, was that they arrange for the participation of local community actors, which has now become a necessary element from government's own point of view in order to gain legitimacy for the process. In fact, the single point of entry into the process for local peoples from communities in the developing world affected by Canadian mining multinationals was also directly through civil society.

Interested members of the general public were directed by government to civil society representatives. Members of the public were given the opportunity to make independent presentations; however, should they wish to make comments on the process as a whole or ask questions, they were to speak with the "National Contact Point for Civil Society." Naturally, the same went for members of industry who were ushered to the "National Contact Point for Industry" and also for government, since, with the participation of bureaucrats from such a broad spectrum of ministries from across the nation, they too were coordinated through the government's own "National Contact Point." Members of civil society, industry and the government formed the Advisory Committee and were to ask questions to presenters throughout the process, and draft the final report to

be handed over to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee would then inform government as to the content of the discussions and make specific recommendations as to the measures that government should make. This committee was formed of representatives from 8 different government ministries and led, quite clearly, by DFAIT. The Policy Division of this same government body funded the preparation of the "Summary Critiques of Standards Relevant to Extractive Industries," the document discussed above, which was used by civil society throughout the roundtables as a point of criticism of industry and government practices.

Each session began with a presentation by a member of government that highlighted the contribution of the Canadian mining sector to the country's economy. For example, the public was made aware that in 2004, the mining and mineral processing industries contributed \$41.8 billion to the Canadian economy, representing 4% of the national gross domestic product, and directly employed 369,000 Canadians and also that Canada's stock exchanges are the world's largest source of equity capital for mining exploration and production both in Canada and abroad (Foreign 2006:3). The official went on to exhort all presenters to orient their presentation in terms of "actionable ideas." That is, practical and realistic ideas that could be implemented within a reasonable period of time, in this case, 3 to 5 years. For industry, actionable ideas translated naturally into the creation of "performance standards", "voluntary protocols" and "best practices," all of which could be formulated rapidly. For this they required consulting firms to put together documents and build upon the plethora of salient existing materials. It also allowed them to draw on the work of many international institutions in this area, such as the United Nation's Global Compact. Despite the fact that this has been a major source of controversy in multiple international fora, it remained a focal point of debate for industry, and a jargon that also became adopted by the Canadian government.

In fact, the discussion paper prepared by government to orient the debate was almost entirely dedicated to "standards" and "best practices." Some other types of solutions in the paper pointed to a lack of financial and institutional capacities within developing nations, and the problem of extraterritorial jurisdiction over companies operating overseas. However, the lack of agreement over the very definition of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the methodology with which to measure CSR performance was framed as the major obstacle in moving forward, and the solution presented was directly tied to creating standards and best practices that would be adopted universally.

Indeed, the report asserted that “a robust, comprehensive and widely supported international regime addressing the full range of social, human rights and environmental issues facing the extractive sector” must be included as a central long-term goal (Halifax 2006:13). From the onset of the process, government’s strong assertion that the debate focuses on actionable ideas, while also putting forth performance standards, confused the question, albeit in a rather implicit way. How could concrete measures be taken in consideration of the fact that most performance standards exist within voluntary codes? As the process continued, civil society attempted to bring to light this contradiction and call into question these very terms in which the debate was being constructed and dominated.

7.2.1 Actionable Ideas and the Performance of Standards

Among the standards criticized in the roundtables and in the “One Step Forward, One Step Back,” were those of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private-sector lending arm of the World Bank, one of the most notable groups to put forward its own set of performance standards, entitled the “IFC Sustainability Policy, Performance Standards, and Disclosure Policy.” The IFC did so in response to criticism for lending significant financial support to companies with negligible commitment to social and environmental responsibility that consistently fail to invest in projects that reduce poverty and increase sustainable development, one of the World Bank’s mandates for lending. The new framework sets out procedures for the social and environmental review of projects, includes a disclosure policy that stipulates what information must be made available to the general public as well as performance standards for eight different issues. Each performance standard defines the roles and responsibilities of IFC client companies for managing their projects, including: environmental and management systems; labour and working conditions; pollution prevention and abatement; community health, safety and security; land acquisition and involuntary resettlement; biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resources management; indigenous peoples; cultural heritage.¹⁰

¹⁰ Canadian NGOs have highlighted the tremendous global significance of the “performance standards” given the IFC’s central role in global finance and development that influences other financial entities. An NGO report describes: “In 2005, the IFC’s committed portfolio reached \$19.3 billion and helped to syndicate a further \$5.3 billion in financing. Many private commercial banks and some export credit agencies have adopted the IFC’s policies through an initiative called the Equator Principles. More than 40 financial institutions, responsible for over 80 percent of global project finance voluntarily apply the IFC’s policies and environmental management system approach to their project finance lending. The Equator Principles Financial Institutions are currently

Even so, the NGOs highlight that regardless of the lengthy content of the standards, it is the lack of mechanisms for follow-up and for real exercise of the law that is most problematic. In fact, HI asserts that the implementation of them relies heavily on the discretion of clients, in "a system based on enhanced flexibility and subjectivity without the counterweight of accountability and transparency." While many commercial banks have adopted these principles, there is nowhere communities might go to follow up on their implementation. This is all part and parcel of a broad trend in which performance standards involve increasing reliance on information coming from IFC client companies and on self-monitoring by the private sector. In response to such criticisms, companies argue that they are required by the IFC to present "action plans" that detail how they will comply with the Performance Standards in the form of project specific actions and mitigation measures. Where IFC clients are found in breach of compliance with these standards, the IFC pledges that it will "work with the client to bring it back into compliance to the extent feasible, and if the client fails to re-establish compliance, exercise remedies when appropriate" (Halifax 2006:7). Faced with these claims that mechanisms exist to invigilate compliance, the NGO representatives reiterate that communities have nowhere to go for follow-up should these action plans not cohere with their own plans for the future; nor are they given the opportunity to review a project specific Action Plan before it becomes finalized by the lending body. Underlying their arguments is the assertion that standards are not useful insofar as they exist in an abstract and discursive space tied to the interests of industry; the only institution with the means of following through on them is the very institution lending the financial resources for the project.

Another attempt to maintain the debate's focus on best practices was the multiple presentations that focused on the Environmental Excellence in Exploration (E3) initiative, an internet-based repertoire of "best practices" with respect to environmental management that was set up by a consortium of leading mining companies that collectively invested 60,000 dollars to design and post the site and is coordinated by the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) (Canadian Civil Society 2006:10). These sorts of proposals have been criticized by NGOs as the "green-washing" of corporate images and "green tokenism", indicating that they exist only in the virtual space of the internet, with the sole goal of improving corporate image and escaping new regulations by local

revising their framework, following introduction of the new Performance Standards." (see *Halifax Initiative* 2006)

bureaucracies without providing a place for the community to lodge complaints¹¹ (Mülhäusler 2006:460). This initiative has nonetheless taken on vast proportions. It was included within the government's document prepared for the roundtables and has now received support from across the mining industry, including the PDAC, the group which is the major representative body of the mining industry to the Canada government, led by Barrick Gold. In all, the sheer quantity and complexities of the standards serve to hide the reality that there is no system of checks and balances housed in any real, physical and accountable legal institution. While companies adopt the language of government officials throughout the roundtable process, NGO actors attempt to broaden the debate by fissuring the relationship between actionable ideas and performance standards that may transform discourse into signifying action; NGOs actors look for actions that would make the entire process more concrete through the creation of real space and time legal bodies.

These goals began to take shape once civil society tabled the motions to create an ombudsman that would be physically situated within a very "concrete" place, specifically, an institution of the Canadian federal government. Questions that seemed to invite the opening of an additional debate around the ombudsman's role, such as - "Which institution would be most appropriate?" "How would the ombudsman's registers fit into the greater legal and political structure?" - open up a whole other set of complex questions, and civil society actors acknowledged that these would have to wait for a later day. Of crucial importance at the moment was changing the very cosmology, the time and space parameters of the discussion itself, in order to bring it to a level where possibilities for "action" are tabled that move beyond the level of discursive, abstract standards that appear to be required to perform the idea of "law" independently.

7.2.2 From Floating Standards to Rooted Testimonies

Another important feature of "civil society" actors' strategies in counteracting the abstract, out-of-space and time performance standards, involves bringing into the process the testimonies of local community actors with whom they develop trans-national partnerships. In the case of the Pascua Lama mine, two representatives were invited to give

¹¹ The underlying objectives of the E3 project were illustrated by an E3 Project manager and mining engineer: "With E3, the collective image of the mining industry can be improved, unrealistic regulations need not be imposed by bureaucrats and access to lands containing valuable mineral deposits should not be further compromised" (See *Simmons* 2004). This point was highlighted by civil society representatives in the documents they prepared for the roundtables proceedings.

testimony. The first was Lucio Cuenca, the director of OLCA, and the other was Luis, a local community leader, peasant and former miner, living in the vicinity of the mine.

The testimony of Luis began with a simple question that sharply caught the attention of his interlocutors: "Why are there so many conflicts if there are so many laws?" His inability to fathom the very form of the debate demonstrated that the entire process lacks pertinence from his own point of view. His implicit claim that the community should be given other ways of negotiating, through parameters and structures that are in tune with their own cultural and political reality, became even more evident as he continued. In order to relay the message that the "community" does not need development assistance or outside intervention, he asserted that the community is in good economic shape. His explanation of the community does not refer to the community groups that have formed, and that were described in Chapter 4. Rather, his description of "community" is more a description of a "locality," in imaginative and geographic terms, than of the reality of local people and the ways in which they have come to represent themselves. While he explains the interactions between the mining company and the community as a cultural struggle, we are left uncertain as to which culture, precisely, he refers. All groups become confounded in the representation of the community. Luis was chosen to travel to Canada to participate in the roundtables because of his relationship with the Chilean environmental NGO, OLCA, a group that has been mostly responsible for bringing the issue of the Pascua Lama mine to national attention within Chile and that gained access to the roundtables through the ties they have developed with the two groups in Canada responsible for pushing the government to put the process together in the first place. Lucio Cuenca also argued for the autonomy of the community without making reference to specific groups. Instead, he brought up the environmental issues at stake, and particularly the potential damage of the watershed system upon which the mine would sit. In their lobbying efforts at the national level and international level, they focus on bringing to attention the holes in Chilean environmental law. The environment was his key strategy in his efforts to render the community present within the debate.

These testimonies demonstrate the challenge of representing groups that have formed because of their association with a mining project. While the creation of "locality," in geographic and imaginative terms, has indeed been an important strategy in drawing attention to the Pascua Lama question within national-level Chilean politics and on the international stage, these forms of representation do not measure in this legal-political

forum. A strong position for the local people around the mine requires a strong form of community organization. Since "indigenous" people are the only form of group in the community that have a claim to rights as a "community" or "ethnic group" in international law, in some situations, civil society actors have turned to these groups to demonstrate that there is a worthy community in place that opposes the mine. However, this sort of representation undermines non-indigenous or mixed peasants who live in the same area.

In the subsequent presentation, Barrick Gold's South American representative, José Antonio Urrutia, challenged the very capacity of civil society to represent the "community". As he called into question the capacity of NGOs to represent the interests of the local community, he argued that it is not the NGOs, but the mining firms, who have been playing a leading role in social responsibility with communities. Urrutia presented propositions that called for reinforcing links between NGOs and mining companies, emphasizing his desire to work in partnership with NGOs that are legitimate and honest. He suggested that the NGOs should cooperate with mining firms themselves should they wish to move further along in the participation in decision-making. This is precisely what happened later on in the process when the time came to write the final set of recommendations for government. He went on to trace the origins of environmental monitoring in Chile to Canadian and US mining firms themselves, indicating that in the 1990s these firms formed CORDURA to push for the first environmental legislation in post-Pinochet Chile precisely because they "did not want to face the uncertainty of operating without them" (Urrutia 2006). As Urrutia's presentation opened up a struggle for control over prestige by evoking the mining industry's early initiatives for environmental improvement in Chile, the NGOs representation of and access to local community leaders became even more important for their own status and legitimacy. He also seemed to be indicating that NGOs should become more professional and institutionalized bodies should they wish to further advance their agenda with the cooperation of industry.

7.3 The Writing of the "Canadian Corporate Social Responsibility Framework"

During the writing of the final report, the tension between civil society representatives' position as cultural brokers of community independence and political lobbyists reached a crucial juncture. At this point in the process, "civil society" was reduced to two key figures: Kate Smith of the Halifax Initiative, and Jane Cowman, an anthropologist

and researcher with Mining Watch. These individuals work within and outside of government in their respective roles in Ottawa-based NGOs. At this point in the process, their claims were also circumscribed by the parameters set by the government Steering Committee, and most specifically, their efforts to advance the community's right to prior consent were mitigated by the necessity of having industry sign on to the recommendations. Then the time arrived to sit down and negotiate which sorts of recommendations would be included in the report, the government opted out of participating in the process, at least in an official manner. Despite the government's multiple reasons for doing so, the government set the stage for these negotiations by organizing the sessions and making suggestions with respect to the feasibility of the items under discussion and the possibilities for their passing at the executive level of government. Thus in order to move forward government had effectively placed civil society in a stifling position where their choices lay between cooperating with industry or accepting that the whole process finish with little or no end results.

By creating a document with industry, "civil society" would gain an even greater opportunity to push forward their own propositions even further into the federal political apparatus, since a document co-signed with industry would lead to the greater legitimacy from the point of view of the government that is mostly concerned with questions of economic feasibility. This also meant, however, that Smith and Cowman were required to make compromises that ultimately limited the breadth and depth of its work. They recognized this dynamic and considered the decision to strike compromises with industry to be a tactical manoeuvre that would help them to gain further ground. What they intended by gaining further ground at this stage involved extending the temporal parameters of the process itself. They hoped that creating a joint document with industry would help lay the groundwork for a much longer and perhaps even permanent space of debate, considering the short horizon of DFAIT's action plan of 3 to 5 years. The important achievements already made could then become the foundation for further constructions. Those actors who were left out of the process, specifically, community groups and militant NGOs, were less certain of the value of making compromises with industry.

Considering the disparities within "civil society" groups themselves, Smith and Cowan were able to bring these groups together once they focused on creating a place for "community" within the recommendations. Turning the "community" into a subject, and one that is capable of independent thought and action, became a moral banner under which

many groups united. This functioned even despite the abstraction of the idea of “community” and the apparent difficulties of gaining juridical status for this sort of a notion. Luis, the local Chilean representative, was less enthusiastic about these efforts, for he had witnessed the influences of the mining company in the ways that community has articulated its position politically.

7.3.1 Changing the Terms of Debate: Of Ombudsmans and Free Consent

As they attempted to articulate a morally-focused approach in staking out a place for “community,” two issues underpinned their strategies. Firstly, the creation of an ombudsman and secondly, the right of communities to free, prior and informed consent before mining projects begin. The proposal to create an ombudsman would involve creating the space for individuals in developing countries affected by Canadian companies to directly lodge complaints to an individual who represents the Canadian government, albeit in an impartial, arms-length manner. The other mandate of the ombudsman would be to assess corporate compliance with standards. While the ombudsman will not exist within the formal Canadian legal framework, NGOs have indicated that they will treat the ombudsman as an official, legitimate entity. Industry seems to recognize this claim since they have warned that it represents an attempt by NGOs to create an “administrative tribunal.” By and large, NGOs have acknowledged that this is a “name and shame” mechanism that would, in theory, change the behaviour of multinationals by formally and publicly drawing to attention their moral discord (letter to author, March 8, 2007). In the end, the ombudsman clause did make its way into the final report. This would offer a direct point of entry into the Canada political structure through which Third World actors affected by the activities of Canadian mining companies could voice their concerns.

Writing a joint set of recommendations with industry – the “Canadian Corporate Social Responsibility Framework” – required making compromises. The second key claim of civil society representatives was to put into place the right to “free, prior and informed consent (FPIC),” the principle that indigenous communities must be given the informed opportunity to refuse the installation of mining projects on their land, and that was the stuff of heated debate and was ultimately rejected by industry.¹² FPIC would turn the current

¹² The principle of “Free, prior and informed consent” (FPIC) is supported by the many lobbying and development agencies in cases involving indigenous peoples, such as the No Dirty Gold Campaign, the World Bank Commission on Dams (2000), the World Bank Group Extractive Industries Review

system on its head, because communities would be consulted *before* social and environmental damages occur. This right also recognizes that local and indigenous peoples have the capacities to identify and to determine their own needs. As it currently stands, the law and the many constitutionalist principles discussed above serve as veritable means of structuring time, and of directing the future such that complaints may only be brought forth *after* damages are caused. Industry's opposition to FPIC was so strong that it was excluded from the official report. Their opposition is particularly telling to the extent that it demonstrates the mining industry's reluctance to allow for the temporal parameters, upon which the existing legal system sits, to be transformed. In this way, the articulation of the future became the locus of mediation between the two camps. In the end, the NGO coalition decided to opt in favour of the political space that the joint report would open instead of insisting on the inclusion of the FPIC recommendation. They also indicated that this remains a priority and that they will reopen the issue back at the next round of debate.

At the same time as they stressed that free, prior and informed consent is their most important recommendation, the coalition did not let go of the question of standards. This time, instead of debating over the details of the standards themselves, they attempted to reframe the debate over standards as "frames of reference" to be applied in connection with new centres of social and environmental improvement. They argued that they could be applied by both the ombudsman in determining his judgments and also as a stepping stone towards the eventual implementation of FPIC. Human rights principles became a basis with which to argue for the importance of FPIC. Although NGOs recognize that "standards" are not really applicable in practice, they also recognize their symbolic connection to universalistic and constitutionalist thinking and thus, they utilized them as an access point from which to open further debate on FPIC. For this group of actors, brought together under the rubric of civil society, lobbying for measures that are "concrete" and "applicable," in the face of an ever-expanding discursive web of performance standards became a uniting umbrella directive that served to conjoin these actors together in a moral community. By advancing their claims jointly, these groups were brought together as "civil society," and came to see themselves as such.

While "civil society" is also an abstraction, and in this case a category imposed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the idea lends itself to a sense of

(2003), United Nations Development Program, the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) and the World Conservation Union. (see *Halifax Initiative* 2006).

being rooted and concrete because it has emerged in direct relationship with the transnational relationships blossoming between civil society actors and local Third World actors. Well before the roundtable process, they were communicating regularly with local actors from communities affected by Canadian mining projects, inviting them to present testimony in conferences. Even more, the roundtable process itself, with the opportunities it offered actors to arrange for a significant number of Third World representatives to present testimony directly to Canadian government officials and business representatives, incited a multitude of new campaigns and cooperative initiatives, which solidified the network. For example, a new coalition of community groups and NGOs assembled to form the "Montreal Mining Coalition" with the specific goal of creating a stronger lobbying front. As well, Ottawa-based Amnesty International Canada and the Catholic Church-funded NGO Development and Peace both decided to orient their 2007 awareness campaigns on the practices of Canada's mining firms. Although government may have invented "civil society" for the purposes of the roundtables, this invention has led to a variety of community groups, religious associations and NGOs to conceive of themselves as a group, and also to strengthen the ties among them to such an extent that they have developed common positions and strategies.

Where civil society maintains one foot outside of government while also engaging in the debate underway in its institutional corridors, it is indeed a tool for the political imagination. In so doing, civil society actors are facing the tough challenge of the "Idea" highlighted by the Comaroffs, that is, of inspiring the social imagination without rendering their signs and forms of belonging so vast and ambitious that it is no longer of any practical use. At the moments that civil society becomes most integrated into government practices, its goals are circumscribed and it may indeed lose some of its inspirational panache. However, these moments are followed by new encounters with local peoples that serve to renew the spirit and inspire novel ways of putting fresh ideas into old structures.

While agreeing to draft the final report with industry limited the scope of recommendations that "civil society" was able to include in the report, these actors were able to make certain compromises with industry, such as including the issue of "free prior and informed consent" in the annex and having industry agree to re-open debate on the issue at the next session. Civil society actors also decided to present another document, this time, entirely independent of government and industry, which would include the full amalgam of their reclamations. These actors grouped themselves together under another

umbrella, the Canadian Network for Corporate Accountability (CNCA), the tag they now carry in their capacity as actors with a foot out of the door of the government.

Perhaps the success of civil society in gaining a foothold into the political system is best illustrated by one of the policy's that industry sought to include in the final document - a "transparency and accountability" clause for civil society itself. This demonstrates the recognition on their part of the professional entry of civil society into the formal corridors of legitimate, political decision-making. Even Michael Small, Assistant Foreign Affairs Minister, expressed that "corporate social responsibility" has become a necessity for international diplomatic relations, in the very least, implicitly recognizing the indispensability of the expertise of NGOs. By laying the stake to a claim that local peoples can determine their own futures, the NGO coalition may be transforming the temporal parameters of the debate to include horizons of the making of local peoples and hones abstract concepts into real time and place. This may in itself be a crucial way of circumventing the power of abstract and expert knowledge upon which the debate on voluntary standards resides.

7.3.2 Where the State Fits In

The particular interests of government posed another challenge for civil society actors insofar as they converge with those of industry, albeit for a somewhat different set of reasons. The bureaucracy explained its reluctance to take a more active role in the process by indicating that they cannot provide the incentives necessary for mechanisms beyond that of "performance standards" and "voluntary protocols" to their efficient implementation, because of the fact that companies, while Canadian in name, may have a "very weak association within Canada" (Foreign 2006: 25). The government can provide limited incentives, depending on the nature of their relationship to a given company, for example, if the company benefits from government financial assistance, which is generally in the form of aid from CIDA for mining projects classified as "development" assistance, or as insurance assistance from Export Development Canada. Secondly, the Canadian bureaucracy claims that it is uncertain and uneasy about the possibilities it has to exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction over Canadian companies operating overseas (ibid). While these may appear to be reasonable claims at first glance, they have been refuted by Canadian legal scholars such as Sarah Seck who indicates that Canada's reluctance to regulate the mining industry has little to do with questions of extraterritorial jurisdiction and a lot to do

with economic self-interest (Seck 2005). Regardless of the reasons for not acting, the government's resort to universalistic quasi-legal principles served as a way of redirecting a complex question of fundamental and structural changes to endless discussions over voluntary standards and protocols.

Nowhere was this clearer than in DFAIT's decision to give the position of consultant and central advisor of the Roundtables, as well as financial support, to John Ruggie, Harvard University Professor and Special Rapporteur on Human Rights on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Related Business Enterprises with regard to Human Rights with the United Nations. As the closing addresser of the Roundtables series, his words became a final, overarching message, intended to orient the multitude of discussions that had taken place. Though implicit, the message was unmistakable: look for global responses and universal frameworks. John Ruggie has in fact replaced Robert Dufresne, the 2005/2006 Research Fellow with Foreign Affairs, who had prepared the initial document that was intended to orient the Roundtables discussions. Taking the opportunity to provide his own testimony at one of the public consultations, Dufresne informed the public that his most important point was removed from the Roundtable document by government, that standards, best practices, and market mechanisms, be they voluntary or not, are problematic. In place of these, he asserted that collaboration with local public institutions should become the focus of the debate on enhancing corporate responsibility. Even John Ruggie himself has emphasized the importance that the proposal for establishing a system of National Contact Points should become part of the OECD Guidelines for Multi-national Enterprises, for the very reason that they call for offices in participating countries to take up specific complaints of non-compliance. This recognition of the inherent flaws within the very form of the debate is nonetheless weakened by the fact that he continues to work on elaborating standards.

The government is seeking to evade making changes by enframing the discussion in universalistic terms disconnected from political and legal institutions. While the goal of the consultations was to find fresh, new solutions to the environmental problem, they directed their focus towards dominant responses. The environmental problem is transformed from one of local practices to a universal problem in which universalizing constitutionalism is made the only possible remedial course of action. Hence the relevance of giving center stage to John Ruggie in directing the search for solutions to the corporate environmental problem, and of leaving out other individuals, who would make local, public institutions

and their capacities the locus of discussion, such as Robert Dufresne. Studies on development highlight that major loans for social and economic development to developing nations do not include measures to encourage the independent monitoring and evaluation of government performance, and particularly state and municipal governments; one author has explained that this lacuna has led to violent manifestations and popular collective action (Fox 2005:310).¹³

7.4 Constructing Transnational Civil Society

As we have seen, the challenges for the group of actors brought together under the rubric of "civil society" are manifold. Counteracting industry's abstract discourses that are reinforced by support from government, while developing a community of individuals from across nation states, a wide variety of backgrounds, and who are motivated by ideals both broad enough to be inclusive and specific enough to be effective, is without a doubt a monumental task. The possibility of these actors in opening up the space of debate depends on their capacity to advance new ways of making decisions about future possibilities, in this case, ones that are determined by local people and local knowledge. This claim to knowledge that emerges through cultural expressions relies upon the moral force of the idea that local peoples should be given the chance to determine their own futures and also on the strength of local peoples' cultural affirmations. In this way, the strength of NGOs as social agents depends to a great extent on the breadth and depth of their trans-national ties with local peoples and capacity to make their "voices" heard, an idea that Appadurai calls to our attention in his examination of challenges of empowering communities to become the movers and the shakers of their own culturally distinct path to development (2004:66-67). The challenge in opening up this space of debate resides in the necessity of developing the depth and extent of trans-national relationships, on the one hand, while also articulating claims that accord with the structures and practices of formal political decision-making in Canada, on the other.

¹³ Jonathan Fox attributes the lack of independent monitoring by the World Bank of local level governing institutions to "violent unrest in Chiapas that resulted in the 1997 Acteal massacre since the Funds were administered by local government structures which were more part of the problem than the solution." He also asserts that anthropology may play an important role here in explaining how nation-states actually operate within communities (see Fox 2000:263 in Fox 2005:310).

In order to maintain a sure and positive relationship with local actors, NGOs must demonstrate to the actors they called upon to participate in the Roundtable process that despite these compromises they have done their best to advance their interests. While they had to make certain compromises with industry, such as the compromise over FPIC illustrated above, they considered it pertinent to demonstrate to their local partners that they did succeed in making headway, with respect to the recommendation for the creation of an ombudsman. Ideally, the ombudsman would provide local actors with a corridor of access to voice their complaints within the existing Canadian political structure. Aside from this point, how they might orient the entire project in a broader sense by frames of reference most pertinent for communities was an important on-going point of debate within the NGO community itself. Particularly during the writing of the final recommendations, when the place of the "community" was often put aside in order that compromises could be made with industry, the success of the entire project seemed doubtful.

Although trans-national relationships lend legitimacy to the work of "civil society" actors, give meaning to their work and encourage the formation of moral community, albeit an abstract one, these associations are put to the test by industry. This is because industry would have civil society become more formal and professional in their operations, which would require them to adhere to parameters of debate that the communities oppose. For the more professional that "civil society" comes in its practices with government, the more the chances of it gaining serious ground within government. However, as the process of institutionalization advances, the organic and inclusive part of these groups, as a space for new associations, new moral community and new dialogue, may be diminishing. The civil society representatives' awareness of this danger was wholly evident in their insistence in putting together a separate set of recommendations aside from those prepared conjointly with industry in order to demonstrate that they have made attempts beyond those included in the joint document. The representatives also underscored the importance of building on these small steps forward in order to develop a long-term process of negotiations in their communication with the wider groups of "civil society" actors, highlighting that this space of discussion marked the beginning of an on-going series of discussions.

7.4.1 A Moral Community in Becoming

The tension in the efforts of the coalition of NGOs to assuage the impacts of mining companies on local communities by asserting that communities can and must be given the right to determine the course of their own future lies in the paradox of this work. This involves articulating and relaying a community's hopes and visions, and local ideas and knowledge about environmental protection and sustainability, when these are very much *in-the-making*, or in the process of *becoming* into being. This challenge is compounded when the moment arrives to convert these processes into the form of a single, coherent, and politically and economically tenable platform for change. Luis, a local leader in the resistance against the mine, has pinpointed that NGOs speak about gaining rights for "community" but miss the complexity of the notion, and the practical difficulties of using this as a legal term. This is not only because of internal complexities, but also because of the growing role that mining corporations are playing in the representation and articulation of the community at the onset of mining projects. It is important to recall that while the roles of mining companies and the state are already in place before a project begins, the "local community" becomes a subject because of the potential presence of the project.

Nonetheless these actors have in a certain measure changed these parameters from one of a technical problem over the definition of standards to a question of recognizing the capacities of local people to know their own communities and determine their own futures, through such mechanisms as "free, prior and informed consent" and the installation of an independent ombudsman that is accessible to Third World actors. These strategies have become a middle road for NGOs as they negotiate with the tenacity of existing political decision-making structures, while advancing propositions for change that rely upon the formation of "community" as a subject capable of political articulation and positioning. There is considerable research on how legal techniques fabricate persons and things (Mundy 2004). Of course, industry's head start into the corridors of political power makes this all the more difficult. This brings up the question of the legal status of "community" itself, which has yet to be fully explored by activists and government. Given the process of self-definition of local communities that tends to occur in the onset of mining projects, and the new forms of inclusion and exclusion by the state and also by industry that result, this question will surely raise an amalgam of legal, economic, sociological and anthropological dilemmas.

The shape that the "community" around the site of the Pascua Lama mine has taken once faced with the necessity of articulating and defining itself in negotiations with state government agencies and firms was not certain or predictable, and will still be subject to change throughout the stages of the mining project. Indigenous association took on a distinctly women-based character because the other association was given rights to land and they were left out. Since inclusion was based on kinship, many excluded from the process turned to environmental groups, and the environmental movement took on great strength. This is not to deny that past forms of community influence current forms. Local mining communities are invented and imagined in particular settings and moments in time, often within the panic of looming, fast-paced modernization and its concomitant changes that would be brought about by the installation of large-scale mining projects. And the specific context of mining projects yields specific forms of local community, forms inscribed by imaginations influenced by engagement with outside groups and institutions, state agencies and corporations, which are readily available to join the struggle or to offer access to resources and the promise of development. They are found competing with actors that offer resources and new opportunities for direct participation in the state, for example, for the women given the opportunity to lead the newly-formed Diaguita ethnic association. Thus it is difficult for civil society to play a determinant role in defining the local community. Of course, this is not necessarily negative. In fact, the pressure put upon government by civil society via the role they play in changing the ways in which local people represent their interests, such as through environmentalism, may have been one of the reasons why government has given more voice and recognition to local ethnic groups in the first place.

The way in which civil society chooses to inscribe "community" into the political debate influences the ways in which communities themselves choose to imagine and articulate their own realities. A dialectic emerges whereby the possibilities for recognition and insertion into a larger political debate of trans-national proportions that these groups offer local community actors, render some aspects of the communities own imaginary space prominent by articulating them in forms that are politically communicable, and at other times these actors spur on wholly new forms of identification that may be readily seized by some and serve to alienate others. It is important to note that the contingent nature of the shape of the community is very much in contrast to the roles and boundaries of the mining firm and relevant state agencies that are mostly prescribed.

As we have seen, the imaginary spaces that have developed in these contexts take the shape of possibilities for inclusion and exclusion in emerging groups or in those groups already in formation. The way in which local communities choose to position themselves draws upon multiple repertoires of meaning in imaginative processes that are combined with opening up possibilities for social and economic improvement. In this case, some individuals have identified themselves with the environmental NGOs, and others have identified themselves with indigenous associations because each group offered them possibilities for inclusion where other groups did not. In this process of self-definition, communities surrounding the mining project employ both traditional and novel strategies of inclusion and exclusion, including rhetoric of land, kinship, myth and cosmology (Ballard 2003:298).

The challenges posed by this sort of articulation are compounded because they lack the compelling allure of scientific discourses for bureaucrats and political actors. In the case of Pascua Lama, one of the main points of contention has been the despoliation and reduction of glacial water supplies in a zone already grappling with diminishing water supplies due to desertification and less accessibility to water for peasants, itself a result of the 1981 Water Code that put in place a system of tradable water shares that favours the use of water reserves for industrial purposes (Bauer 1997). The mining company has responded to the environmental risks of the project by explaining that glaciers are diminishing because of climate change, an example of what Arturo Escobar refers to as “use of physicalist and probabilistic discourse” in the West’s “semiotic conquest of nature,” (Escobar 1995:160). Appadurai’s observation that we tend to conceive of economic actors as those who will inherit the future and cultural actors as bound up with the past is also relevant here. For the challenge then becomes one of gaining value and recognition for alternative possibilities, and different types of knowledge formation about the environment, that focus on a local construction of needs, choices and decisions over risk-taking rather than the scientific assertions of companies. These formulations exist outside of the box of the dominant system of signifiers, which as the Comaroffs underscore, consist of the contemporary hegemony that has taken the form of the capitalist world order.

7.5 Conclusion

The groups working on the Pascua Lama question have entered into a dialectical relationship with local communities insofar as the visibility they have provided these communities has spurred on the expression of cultural voice and affirmation. And these expressions of voice are developing in reciprocal relationship with the community's own positive re-appropriation of their future. As carriers of knowledge about Third World actors, efforts of NGOs to alter the parameters of industry's and government's logic and to orient the debate in a totally different direction have made them a set of actors to reckon with. And in their efforts to create a broad-reaching moral mandate of defending "community" autonomy vis-à-vis multinational mines, the quest for greater legitimacy and new signifiers of meaning has lent itself naturally to constructing trans-national ties.

While "civil society" was given the opportunity to select local "community" representatives from the Third World nations, the debates and presentation sessions themselves were framed with government's own perspectives. Moreover, the very possibility of making recommendations to the Canadian government came with the condition of doing so in conjunction with the representative bodies of the Canadian mining industry, which called for great compromises, and led to divisions between the positions of the most professional actors of "civil society" working closely with government and the more militant ones participating on the sidelines. At the same time, insofar as their knowledge of "community" is their primary *raison d'être* on the political scene, professing this expertise is essential in transforming the parameters of the debate over mining in such a way that might really alter the balance of power between local communities and mining firms, and this, where the articulation of the community as a subject in these contexts tends to be in its nascent stages and also an idea that would be difficult to implement legally. As a dynamic emerged in which "civil society" actors became caught between the necessity of representing local communities and professionalizing within Canadian politics, the very idea of "community" became more and more abstract. The usefulness of the compromises made by "civil society" will perhaps become clear once government decides how it shall apply the recommendations in legislative terms. Until then, it is not certain whether "civil society" was invented to replace a down-sized bureaucracy and excuse government from effecting serious changes, or if the confidence with which they have attempted to obtain autonomy for the community is in fact well-placed

8. CONCLUSION

As the Pascua Lama story continues to unfold, this particular interpretation of its events must come to a close, if arbitrarily. Where our task has been to delineate the process of articulation and positioning of the community in the period leading up to the inauguration of the mining project, a crucial time in which communities must demonstrate their claims and position themselves vis-à-vis the project, we must note that this process is in constant transformation, and will continue to change throughout the existence of the mine. The particular ethnographic regard provide here - in which we have examined the local sphere, first and foremost, and then the national and global sphere - has provided us with the tools to uncover how local symbolic, historical and cultural manifestations present significant challenges to the possibilities of representation for, and the construction of, a local community, in the global sphere of debate over the "corporate social responsibility" of the mining firm involved.

We began by demonstrating that those groups struggling against the mine have closely tied up their work to spiritual feelings of water as a symbol of universal life. Where water is also an important economic resource, and one that multiple groups are vying for in the context of its privatization, we examined the part that the irrigators are playing in the articulation and positioning of the local community. Rather than show clear opposition to the mine, they wish to become included and to stake a place in the decision-making process that is underway and to maintain and improve the relationship of confidence between irrigators and the leaders of the organization.

The strength of groups that have formed as "indigenous," in positioning themselves as veritable members and stakers of claims in the Pascua Lama fiasco is closely linked to their historical connections to the upper Huasco valley, a region that has become imaginatively tied to the mine because it contains the lagunas that directly feed the watershed and that form part of a historical irrigation system. Even though the glaciers are not directly tied to this system of irrigation, local people have connected them to the whole watershed system. The Diaguitas, and the state-imposed politic of names that has determined membership its group, supported by members of particular kin-based clans in the Huasco valley, has caused controversy in the community mostly because it has so clearly carved out a new community out of older ones, with clearly defined and exclusionary criteria for membership. The group has been met with great controversy by those who seek to remain independent of the mining company, and also by members of the

historical, and male-dominated Huascoalino group of whom the female leaders of the Diaguitas have been largely excluded. On the whole, there has been a difficult union of the claims made in local space by civil society groups as they struggle to construct a "community" amongst competing claims of membership that draw on land, water, history, geography and kinship. For the struggle against the mine has translated, at the local level, into a struggle to join emerging groups that have formed to make demands for new resources, and ultimately to become a part of the process of modernization.

The immediacy of the local communities' rush to join one of these groups has come to characterize the changes underway in the community, and also diminish the possibility of civil society to encourage local people to construct a unified and political entity. A tension has emerged between the pressing economic, and sometimes social, necessity of becoming a part of a group, for one, and the long-term goals of the social and cultural struggle against the mine. There are many "myths" of modernization being sold to the community, as well as partial truths, and yet, the chain of events I have described, engendered by the coming presence of the mine, are themselves forms of modernization. For they offer institutional and legal relationships between long forgotten out-of-the-way people, and state development agencies and national level politicians. This somewhat indirect version of "modernization," or perhaps more accurately, social change, demonstrates the presence of a transnational topography of power, to use the words of James Ferguson, in this local sphere of society.

The state has become engaged by the Pascua Lama question through the symbolic and cultural production of local people and civil society, and the demands made upon them by the mining company. They have done so by joining with industry in pointing to climate change as a cause of glacial diminishment, in attempting to expand its environmental institutions, and even to recognize one of the cultural groups, located in the Huasco Valley, the area that civil society has linked to the mine. The state also responds to the ways in which local communities and civil society groups have constructed locality and the local community, by attempting to integrate these into national constructions of natural resources that focus on mining. The efforts of the state to hold on to national imaginings of mineral wealth, once faced with civil society's and local people's focus on glaciers and water, is telling of the strength of these challenges being posed to the state. Finally, in the National Roundtables on corporate social responsibility, and the efforts of "civil society" to represent and construct the local community in this forum we have demonstrated how

complex construction of "community" that takes place in connection to the Pascua Lama mine has significant determinations for the possibilities of representation at the global level.

At the most fundamental level, we have discovered that the process of either becoming involved in the preparations for the mine, or of resisting its installation, calls upon the state and local peoples to render the "local community" legible – a process in which multiple actors and organizations offer their own maps of representation to local communities. That local actors and civil society groups have had such success in stalling the mining project, and that both the state and the mining company, have become so intensely implicated in the symbolic manifestations and struggles of local people, shows that no one actor has maintained a monopoly on the "legibility" of the local community. On the contrary, the reading of the local community continues to change and be called into question. President Bachelet's official recognition of the Diaguita indigenous group, at the precise moment that the conflict over the mine reached a height in local and national media in Chile, shows not only, to the chagrin of many actors, that the state has proven able to play a key role in the articulation of the local community, but also that one local group has become an accomplice with the state in their own positioning with respect to the mining company. Whether this partnership marks a trend toward "neoliberal multiculturalism" in contemporary Chile remains to be seen.

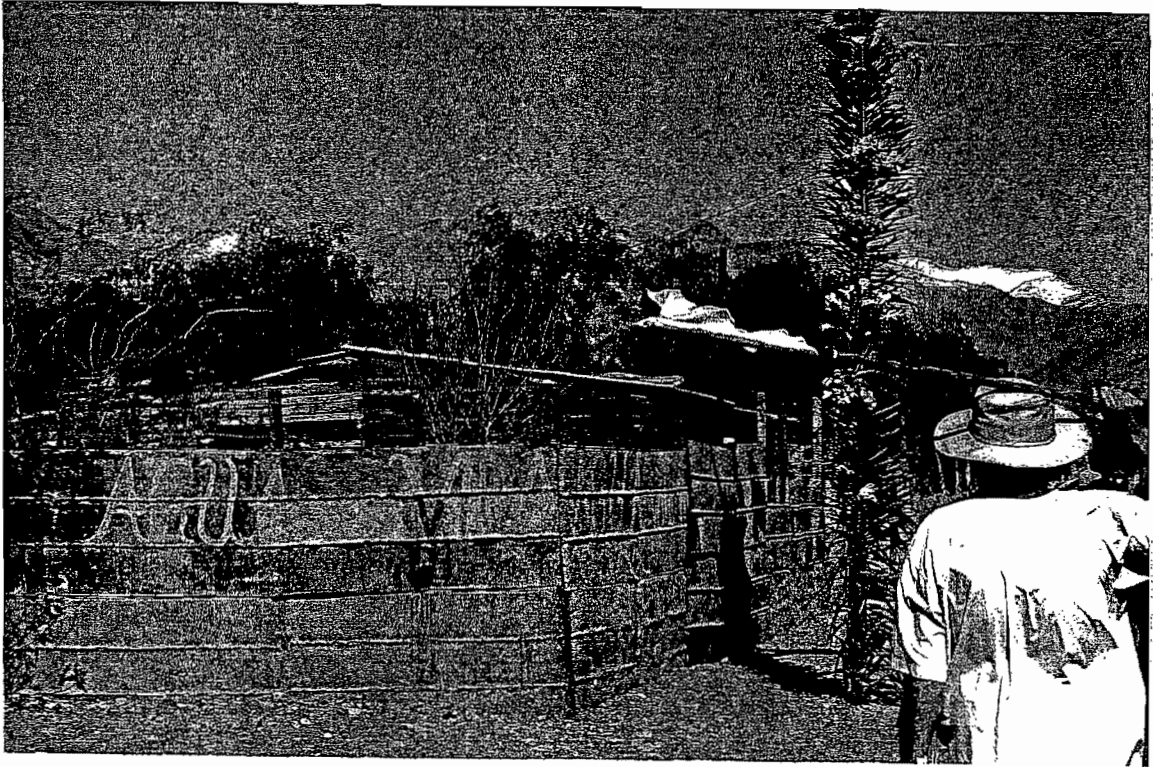
The ethnographic perspective provided here has also brought to light the connections between national and natural imaginings in Chile and Canada. In both nations, mining, as an economic force and a source of the imagination, has played key roles in the construction of these nations. Exactly fifty years have passed since Canadian novelist Pierre Berton first published "The Klondike Gold Rush," a bestseller, and a literary and ethnographic depiction of a defining moment and the most photographed event in the Canadian 19th century. The Chile nation and economy was also founded on mining, an important source of the imagination for Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. Now, as the Chilean government seeks investment and development in mining, and as the large and well-established Canadian mining industry looks for opportunities abroad, these two nations have entered into a partnership that draws on a happy historical coincidence.

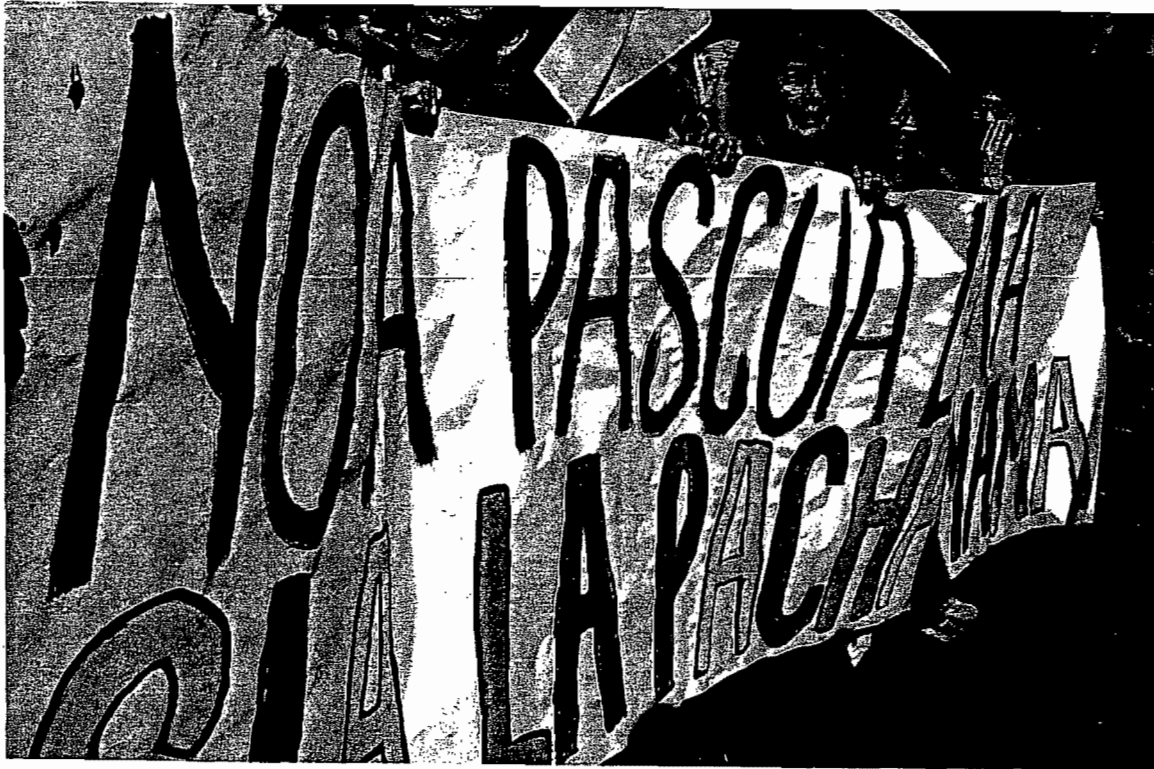
With respect to future research on the theme, I hope to continue by investigating the social experience and meaning of space and place, and its representations in the news media. I became vividly aware of the intense social memory invested in the landscape by the people of the Huasco Valley. While it was out of the scope of this research project to

examine this, I was intrigued by the tales of local irrigators and indigenous peoples about the lagunas in the Cordillera, and began to see them as a foundation of personhood and subjectivity in their lives. There is a social memory and narrative of the water coming from the lagunas, and the damming of the lagunas by indigenous and Spanish peoples as the important moment in time from which irrigation began in the valley. While the Pascua Lama story is in many respects a conflict over a mining project, it also forms part of a larger story about the historical-cultural production of space and landscape. This story is linked to economic constraints and opportunities, and environmental fertility and decline, as these change throughout time.

Should I continue to pursue research in this area, I would explore how the representations and relationships to water have changed over time, as legal frameworks for holding water change. I would then examine how this has influences the character of conflicts over water and the ways in which irrigators understand their possibilities for political participation in its management. I would also explore how the manifestations of nature and the "environment" in the news media work towards forming new publics. In a world in which everything is mediated, most basically through the body and the natural world, I feel that it is deftly important to understand the implications of symbolic and sensuous representations of this natural world in the media. This is particularly interesting in the case of Chile where environmentalism has taken on a distinctly post-Pinochet nation-building and democratizing, that oppose corruption and seeks to develop transparency. Chilean ecologists and environmentalists are also becoming important figures, both consciously and unconsciously, in the creation of a new public and public culture.

ANNEX 1





el valle que queremos? *Este es el valle que queremos?*

**Sábado
2 de junio
PUENTE
calle TALCA
10:30 horas
Vallenar**

Defendamos el agua...

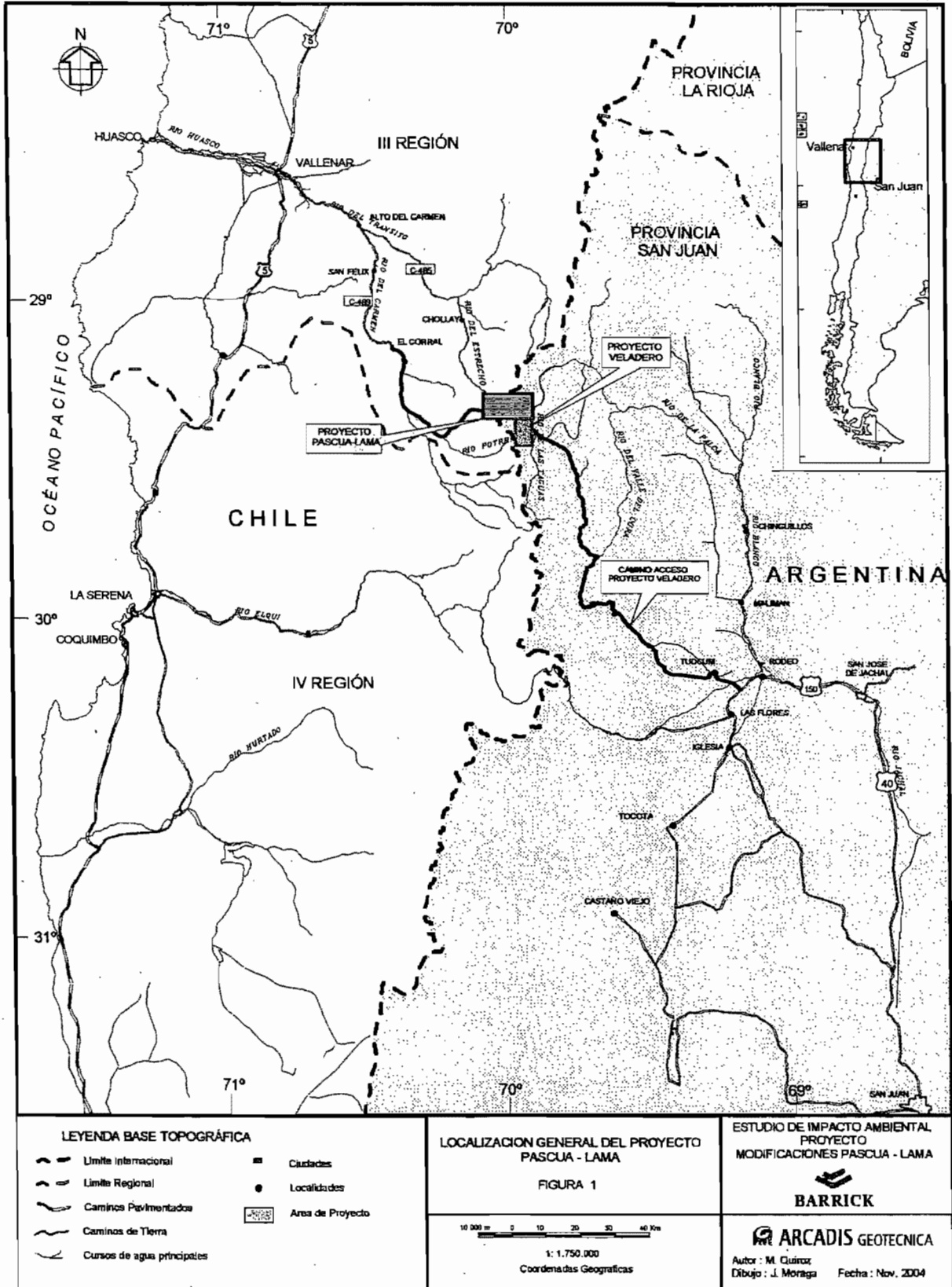
¡FUERA LAS TRANSNACIONALES DEL VALLE! ... ¡FUERA BARRICK!

Las caravanas partirán desde Copay y San Félix a las 8 de la mañana

¡FUERA LAS T DEL VALLE! ..



ANNEX 4



PASCUA-LAMA

INFORMATIVO PROYECTO PASCUA-LAMA

Nº 17 AGOSTO 2006

OPTIMISMO FRENTE AL FUTURO DE HUASCO Y LA REGIÓN

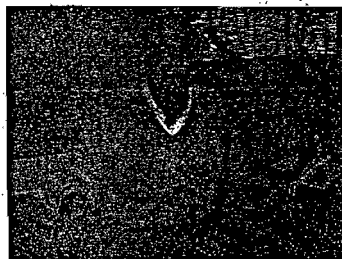
Varias son las visiones que existen respecto al futuro de los habitantes del valle del Huasco. A continuación, algunas de las apreciaciones de autoridades y representantes de la comunidad ante las nuevas inversiones que llegarán a la zona:

Juan Sabando, alcalde de Huasco



"La actividad pública tiene que ser facilitadora de la inversión privada para que exista economía local. En la medida en que los municipios nos ponemos al servicio de las empresas para que se instalen en la zona, vamos a provocar que haya trabajo, riqueza e inversión. El impacto social que se generará con la llegada de estas grandes inversiones será innegable e impulsará a la provincia hacia un desarrollo continuo y autosostenido en el tiempo, donde los pilares de sustentación serán la salud, la educación, el trabajo, y el urbanismo".

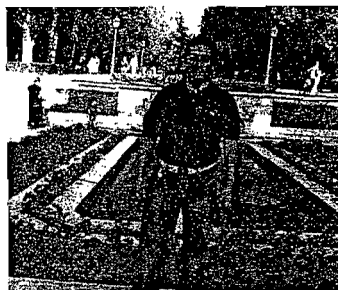
Abdón Baraquí, presidente Cámara de Comercio de Vallenar



"He visto el empuje que ha puesto la empresa (Barrick) y lo que han desarrollado en el aspecto social. La empresa dio todo lo que la Junta de Vigilancia pidió para asegurarnos que no haya contaminación en el valle. Si yo tuviera la mínima opinión de que la empresa va a contaminar, sería el primero en oponerme".

"Quiero que mi gente de la provincia sea la que aproveche este bienestar que viene, no quiero que venga gente de afuera a aprovechar estos beneficios, pues los necesitamos los vallenarinos, lo necesita el valle del Huasco. Y las inversiones que van a venir a Vallenar son tremendas, es decir, hay una apertura del valle y una seguridad".

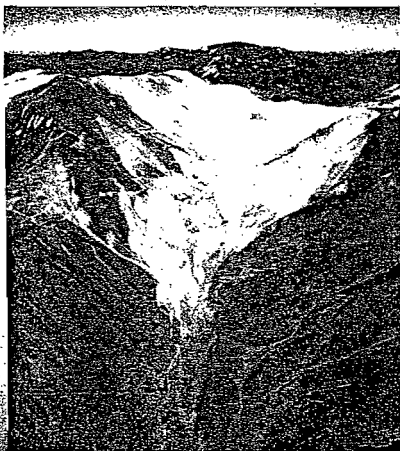
Pablo Ogalde, concejal de Vallenar



"Existen muchos proyectos que vienen y que ayudarán a engrandecer a la provincia de Huasco, poniéndole definitivamente un signo de desarrollo que tanto tiempo hemos estado esperando. Somos una comunidad con letargo en el tema de la cesantía, sobre todo la ciudad de Vallenar, y eso, de alguna forma, habla de que las cosas tienen que cambiar algún día".

"Para el futuro tenemos grandes proyecciones y una gran posibilidad de desarrollo en la provincia de Huasco. Estoy muy contento por ello y con una visión totalmente positiva".

BECAS PARA ESTUDIANTES DE LICEOS INDUSTRIALES



Con el objetivo de apoyar la formación técnica de los jóvenes de la Región de Atacama, la compañía puso a disposición de la comunidad 14 becas para cursar estudios técnicos en la carrera de Mantenimiento Mecánico Equipo Pesado, que imparte el Centro de Formación Técnica Benjamín Teplinsky, dependiente de la Universidad de Atacama.

A los beneficios que entregará la compañía -destinados a siete jóvenes por año durante los ejercicios 2007 y 2008- podrán optar alumnos que se estén especializando en áreas técnicas relacionadas con la minería en liceos o escuelas industriales de las ciudades de Copiapó, Vallenar, Freirina, Huasco, Tierra Amarilla, Caldera, Chañaral y Diego de Almagro.

Los interesados deben postular a través de la página-web de Barrick (www.barrick.cl) e ingresar en la sección "Intégrese a Barrick", donde deberán postular a Becas Barrick-Chile. Las consultas se pueden realizar al teléfono 051-202251, o en las oficinas de la empresa, ubicadas en Ochandía 1460, Vallenar.

BARRICK
Minería Responsable

PASCUA-LAMA

INFORMATIVO PROYECTO PASCUA-LAMA

Nº 12 MARZO 2006

NUEVO CENTRO DE APOYO A MICROEMPRESARIOS DE ALTO DEL CARMEN

Desde febrero, los habitantes de Alto del Carmen cuentan con un centro de apoyo a la gestión microempresarial, cuyo objetivo es acercar la tecnología a los emprendedores y microempresarios de la comuna.

La iniciativa es apoyada por Barrick y busca mejorar las oportunidades de las personas, así como que éstas tengan acceso a capacitaciones en línea, ampliando el mercado existente y aumentando su competitividad y proactividad en la zona.

"Estamos tremendamente contentos y orgullosos de poder contar con este infocentro, sobre todo para nuestros agricultores y microempresarios, pues para ellos es muy difícil acceder a esta nueva era digital por las distancias geográficas. Este proyecto era una necesidad que como municipio no podíamos cumplir, por lo que hicimos una alianza con Barrick", señaló la alcaldesa de Alto del Carmen, Carmen Bou.



El proyecto consta de dos etapas: la implementación de un centro informático con acceso a internet y el inicio de capacitaciones para microempresarios y emprendedores, a cargo del Servicio de Cooperación Técnica, Sercotec.

TALLERES DE CERÁMICA DIAGUITA



"Recuperación de las Técnicas Cerámicas Ancestrales Diaguitas" se denominó el primer taller, de 40 horas, que realizará la artesana Eliana Pallauta para mujeres de las localidades de Chancoquín Grande y La Arena, ambas de la comuna de Alto del Carmen.

La iniciativa, generada por Barrick y certificada por PEUC de Vallenar, busca recuperar las tradiciones ancestrales diaguitas y, en una segunda etapa, potenciar organizaciones comunitarias que puedan comercializar los productos resultantes de estos talleres, haciendo que esta actividad sea sustentable y permita rescatar las técnicas diaguitas.

En un futuro, la iniciativa se extenderá a otras localidades del valle de El Tránsito, agregando a los talleres de cerámica las modalidades de telar y totora.



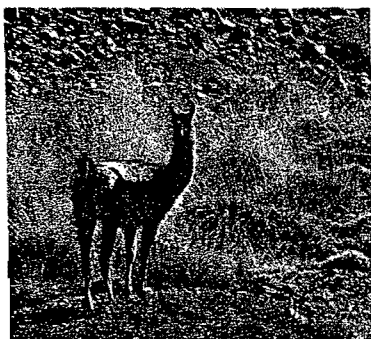
BARRICK
Minería Responsable

Pascua-Lama

BARRICK
Minería Responsable

INFORMATIVO PROYECTO PASCUA-LAMA

Nº 26 MAYO 2007



¿Cómo se protegerá la vegetación que rodea el proyecto Pascua-Lama de los eventuales efectos provocados por la construcción y operación de la mina?

En el marco de su política de Minería Responsable, Barrick ha asumido el compromiso a participar y financiar estudios y/o informes sobre la flora y fauna en el área del proyecto. Además, como resultado de su trabajo conjunto con biólogos, la empresa ha modificado la ubicación donde originalmente tenía planificado efectuar trabajos para así minimizar impactos. Del mismo modo, como parte del programa de monitoreo, la compañía verificará que la flora y fauna no son afectados durante ninguna etapa de esta iniciativa minera.

Para proyecto Pascua-Lama y futuras inversiones: Empieza curso de especialización profesional en Copiapó

Cada día son más las personas que demandan especialización y orientación en diferentes disciplinas. Por eso Barrick implementó en Copiapó un nuevo taller de soldadura que les permitirá aprender esta destreza técnica a doce personas que pasaron por el proceso de evaluación de la empresa.

El curso contempla una duración de 300 horas cronológicas y es ejecutado por el Centro de Formación Técnica Benjamín Teplinsky, que depende de la Universidad de Atacama. La iniciativa, que se desarrollará hasta principios de agosto, tiene como objetivo preparar a los habitantes de Atacama para la materialización del proyecto Pascua-Lama, otras iniciativas similares y futuras inversiones en la región.

Dennis Pastén, alumno del taller, indicó que "el curso es muy bueno, porque es una inversión que la empresa está haciendo en nosotros, en gente de la región. Es importante que estén capacitando gente sin pedir nada a cambio, simplemente asistencia y ganas de aprender y de perfeccionarse".

Los talleres de soldadura se suman a una serie de cursos de especialización que ha promovido la empresa desde 2006 y que han beneficiado a más de 234 personas de la zona. Así, por ejemplo, Barrick ha entregado nivelación de competencias en destrezas técnicas y de oficios, tales como albañilería, enfierradura, carpintería, instalación de cerámicos, montaje industrial y soldadura.



Presidenta Bachelet firmó la ley que la incluye dentro de los pueblos originarios

Histórico día para etnia diaguita

Ayer fue sin duda un día histórico para la etnia diaguita, porque la Presidenta Michelle Bachelet promulgó la ley que la incorpora entre los pueblos originarios de la Ley Indígena.

La ceremonia, en la cual participó la intendenta Julieta Cruz junto a 60 representantes de esta etnia, que viajaron hasta la capital y realizaron un ritual en el Patio de Los Canelos de La Moneda, fue encabezada por la Presidenta Bachelet, quien dijo que "creo que esta ley es fruto del nuevo trato de la sociedad chilena con los pueblos originarios y por eso es que estamos muy contentos".

Con la firma de esta ley, el pueblo diaguita podrá gozar de todos los beneficios que otorga la normativa, como por ejemplo el acceso a becas, la regularización de los derechos de agua y tierra en la región de Atacama.

El proyecto de ley —que fue una moción de los diputados Antonio Leal, Jaime Mulet, Alberto Robles y el ex diputado Carlos Vilches— fue aprobado por la Cámara de Diputados el 15 de julio del año 2004, mientras que el Senado votó favorablemente la ley el 19 de julio de este año.

Tras firmar la ley 20.117, la



Presidenta afirmó que "con la promulgación de una ley, estamos dando un paso para algo que es central que es enriquecer a nuestra patria".

MINISTRA PROVOSTE

En la ceremonia participó también la ministra de Educación, Yasna Provoste, quien pertenece a la etnia diaguita.

"Hoy se está haciendo justicia con la valoración de nuestra etnia, a la cultura de nuestro país, al reconocer los esfuerzos de todos quienes nos identificamos como diaguitas", expresó la ministra Provoste.

PRESIDENTA EN EL HUASCO



La intendenta Julieta Cruz mostró su satisfacción por la promulgación de la ley, y afirmó que la Presidenta Bachelet acogió la invitación que le hiciera, de participar en el acto de celebración de esta importante promulgación en la Provincia del Huasco.

"Hoy siento mucho satisfacción de representará a cada uno de los atacameños en tan importante acto. Nuestra Presidenta viajará hasta la provincia del Huasco para poder compartir prontamente esta alegría con aquellos diaguitas que no pudieron presenciar esta importante ceremonia", afirmó la primera autoridad regional.



Satisfacción en todos los sectores

El diputado Antonio Leal celebró la promulgación de esta ley destacando que el reconocimiento de la etnia tiene que ver con el hecho de que la propia gente se sienta parte de esa cultura y eso es lo que ocurre —dijo— con los descendientes de la etnia diaguita que habitan en la Región de Atacama.

El parlamentario agregó que "no basta estar en la ley, ahora de lo que se trata es de conferir derechos en materia de tierras, en materia de reconocimiento de lenguas, en materia de acceso a la cultura para que los artesanos puedan difundir su cultura en toda la región y en todo el país".

La presidenta cultural diaguita de Huasco bajo, Ana Huanchicay, quien participó del acto desarrollado en La Moneda, afirmó que "si bien costó mucho lograr lo que hoy se promulga, la emoción que sentimos hoy después de caminar un gran trecho nos llena de satisfacción".



La Fundación Sociedad Nacional de Minería invita a participar en el Concurso Nacional de Fotografía Minera 2007:

CHILE, PAÍS MINERO



PUEDEN PARTICIPAR FOTÓGRAFOS PROFESIONALES Y AFICIONADOS EN LAS CATEGORÍAS PERIODÍSTICA Y ARTÍSTICA. LA RECEPCIÓN DE FOTOGRAFÍAS SE REALIZARÁ ENTRE EL 29 DE JUNIO Y EL 31 DE JULIO, EN LA SEDE DE LA SOCIEDAD NACIONAL DE MINERÍA, APOQUINDO 3.000, 5° PISO, LAS CONDES.

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