



Paper Works: Contested Resource Histories in Peru's Huascarán National Park

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Summary. — Resource histories determine how particular parts of the environment come to be defined as valuable. As elsewhere, protected areas in Latin America link the governance of people, territory, and resources by reinterpreting and reclassifying practices and environments. Set in highland Peru, the article focuses on how such revisions imply contestation of both history and future. It explores particular modes of claiming space through an archeology of the claims to knowledge and legitimacy put forward by a national park and a campesino community, respectively. Claims to space entwine with social struggles about local development where territorial claims are based on different notions of history and interpretations of the esthetic and productive values of the landscape. While the park officials navigate interests of conservation, tourism, and extraction, the campesino community mobilizes a different set of values and interests based on their historical occupation of the territories. These processes of contestation over authority and legitimacy highlight different views on the role of landscapes in the history and progress of local communities. Conservation may not only dispossess people of their land and natural resources, but also of labor and territorial sovereignty. This case shows how an Andean campesino community counters such movements by a wide repertoire of legal and social actions that works simultaneously in legal and extra-legal domains. Paper works mediate claims to territorial sovereignty, people, and resources. These claims involve contestations over interpretations of history which, besides their oral forms, materialize in paperwork such as official communications, community records, and cadastral maps, as well as in visual representations, internal statutes, and deliberate history writing.

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1. INTRODUCTION

On June 18, 2014, a letter arrived at the Peruvian National Park Services' (SERNANP) headquarters in Lima. It was signed by the president of a campesino community [*comunidad campesina*] known as Catac, and demanded “economic compensation and indemnity for territorial infringement, damages and losses” inflicted by a part of the Huascarán National Park in the Cordillera Blanca. If these demands were not met, they would resort to the “corresponding legal as well as social actions”. This promise contains a poorly hidden threat: the history of Catac reveals a series of confrontations between the peasants and different people encroaching on their lands: early colonial settlers, a nineteenth-century priest with a keen interest in mining, landowners in the first half of the twentieth century, and then—following the 1969 agrarian reform—the Huascarán National Park after 1975. While legal actions may not worry the park administration unduly, social actions are far more unsettling. In 2001, Catac gained national fame when community members blocked the entrance to one of the region's primary tourist destinations, the easily accessible glacier at Pastoruri. After lengthy court deliberations, it was agreed that the income generated by the entrance fees to the national park at Carpa would be shared equally between the two parties.

On June 27, 2014 park personnel rebutted Catac's claims in an answering letter. The letter was sent to the SERNANP offices in Lima. Short and in a formal, bureaucratic and matter-of-fact tone, it did not concede any reason to the community claims. From Lima, the formal response was communicated to the community presidency. This article unpacks the exchange of letters between the leadership of Catac and the Huascarán National Park, and shows how the implicit threat of reverting to “corresponding legal and social action” relies on a tradition of politics for claiming space that works simul-

aneously in legal and extra-legal domains. Paper works mediate claims to territorial sovereignty, people, and resources. These claims involve contestations over interpretations of history, which, besides their oral forms, materialize in paperwork such as official communications, community records, and cadastral maps, as well as in visual representations, internal statutes, and deliberate history writing.

In Peru, recent developments have revealed deep tensions both between and within state institutions and campesino communities regarding the course, aims, and means of development (Cameron, 2009, see also, Li, 2015; Rasmussen, 2017; Sosa & Zwartveen, 2012). Ideas about resources and the social relations that constitute these are therefore tied to notions of progress (Rasmussen, 2015, 2016b). This article explores the contested field that emerges from a claim to resources and local landscapes that in some regards works in remarkably similar ways to extraction: conservation. Like extractive industries, conservation makes claims to territories and landscapes based on particular forms of valuation (Buscher & Dressler, 2012). Landscape values are reconfigured as international priorities filter down to countries. When new resources are identified in the process, institutions are reworked to make claims to these resources. Conservation

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encounters therefore not only “dispossess” people or “reclassify” resources, but critically mold and reshape local institutions (see also Rasmussen & Lund in the introduction to this special issue). Enclosure works on multiple levels at once. Institutions are social arrangements that regulate and structure interactions between actors. Local institutions therefore mediate the relationship between individual and collective action, and between actors, who sometimes operate on different scales (Agrawal, 2009). Institutions, however, do not exist in a social and political vacuum: they are personified in social actors who actively pursue a variety of interests and seek to define and enforce rules. Institutions thereby also become political arenas. Successful institutions not only enforce existing rules, but in the process of doing so challenge other institutional arrangements and render them illegitimate (Lund, 2008). In short: Institutions are both provisional orders and contentious fields. This article explores the institutional dynamics communities and park administrations produce as they fight not only over the right to claim and define resources and territories, but—in the process of doing so—also over interpretations of the past and choices for the future.

Conservation through protected areas expresses a particular way of seeing, understanding, and producing nature and culture, or environment and society (Brockington, Duffy, & Igoe, 2008; Brockington & Igoe, 2006; West, Igoe, & Brockington, 2006). Protected areas redefine the relationship between nature and culture in a given locality. In the name of conservation what are perceived as natural resources become re-entangled in webs of domination that connect the reordering of space to the exercise of power (Neumann, 2001). Central in the struggles over livelihoods and the governance of natural resources are the ways in which protected areas produce space, place, and people (Neumann, 1998). Therefore, understanding the impacts of conservation entails an analysis of the origins of the contestation over resource territories, the logics of the institutional arrangements, and the uneven powers thus produced (Peluso, 2003). The new configurations of resource territories are accounted for differently by the different actors. In the case of the Galapagos, for example, it has been argued that an ethical code was “developed and imposed on the local people that defined previously adequate, productive and reasonable activities as reprehensible and disgraceful” (Quiroga, 2009, 124). The point, therefore, is that when an area is designated as worthy of conservation, it happens through a process in which plants, animals, people, practices, and territories are reclassified and given new significance. Governments are not alone in undertaking reclassification; local people and community institutions also work actively to attach meaning to places and resources (see also Bluwstein and Lund, this issue). Unable to fence off territories physically, in the case discussed here both community and park must rely on an alternative set of governmental techniques of enclosure. Paperwork is a central strategy in those efforts to enclose resource territories by classifying, indeed claiming, history.

Historically, enclosure has referred to the privatization of village common lands, and to a process of commodifying new aspects of human life as part of a broader transformation in social organization (Grandia, 2012, 4). Studying conservation in upland Guatemala, Lisa Grandia identifies two parallel processes involved in enclosure movements: first, a physical, legal, or political process by which land and other resources are privatized. Thus, tenure over land and other resources is transferred out of the hands of communities. This transformation into commodities reduces their cultural complexity and social embeddedness. Secondly, a cultural, social, and disciplinary process legitimizes those enclosures (ibid.). In this arti-

cle I outline the first process and discuss how and why the park failed to legitimize its claim to the lands. I do that by building on Himley (2009), who—in discussing conservation projects in Ecuador—argues that the historical landscape claims of the rural communities need to be taken into account alongside their agency and livelihood interests. Like Himley, I underscore the contested nature of the history of such claims and the importance of a skillful narration of this history. The spatiality of resource politics, we discover, is inherently temporal. In claiming space, the past is mobilized and brought into current struggles—for documents are never past, but can be mobilized and recontextualized in new circumstances. Old documents attain - and are given - new lives. Resources, on the other hand, point forward in time by suggesting that particular landscapes have particular potentialities. How elements of the landscape are defined as resources worthy of either extraction or conservation lay out the future horizons. Identifying resources is therefore tied to these double temporal movements, where the institutional debris of the past—understood as documents and practices linked to institutional arrangements—is constitutive of the future.

The literature on co-management emphasizes that communities are not pre-existing units, but instead are continuously shaped by encounters with other actors and institutions (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Brockington, 2004; Brosius, Tsing, & Zerner, 2005). Since communities cannot be defined *a priori*, analysis of the park–people relationship should capture how the community is produced in the present, and its attendant institutions. It has been suggested that, rather than empowering communities, conservation governance serves as a tool for expanding state views of natural resources; but, also, that some communities may effectively use such tools to strengthen their own position (Caruso, 2011). Co-management arrangements are common as a means to buffer an ill-funded national parks system in a Latin American context (Moorman, Peterson, Moore, & Donoso, 2013; Silvius, 2004). But co-management does not necessarily guarantee direct, transparent, and accountable community participation (Adams & Hulme, 2001a, 2001b; Dressler *et al.*, 2010; Steenbergen & Visser, 2016; Tsing, Brosius, & Zerner, 2005). While in Latin America physical displacement may be relatively rare in relation to other regions, the erosion of local economies is a bigger concern (Brockington & Igoe, 2006). In understanding the role of paperwork in claims to territories, resources, and history, I ask two empirical questions. First, how does the presence of the protected areas shape communities and their institutional arrangements for resource governance? Secondly, how do protected areas become part of and partake in territorial dynamics, including resource struggles both within and between communities and other institutions? To pursue answers to my questions, I perform an archeology of the claims to knowledge and legitimacy put forward by the Huascarán National Park (an IUCN Category II Protected Area) and the Catac campesino community of the Ancash highlands of Peru, respectively. These are both territorializing institutional arrangements seeking to gain control over the same space, but they operate with different political repertoires. I show how the enclosure movement relates to the politics of spatial control, exploring the emergence of authority and the capability to draw borders and enforce rules of conduct. Through this analysis I argue that territorial claims are based on different notions of history and interpretations of the esthetic and productive values of the landscape.

The article proceeds as follows. Part 2 outlines the methodological approach. Part 3 reflects on the idea of resource histories. Parts 4–7 constitute the empirical core: (4) a journey

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