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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA CRUZ

**OPEN PIT; A STORY ABOUT MOROCOCHA AND EXTRACTIVISM IN THE
AMÉRICAS**

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

LITERATURE

with an emphasis in CRITICAL RACE AND ETHNIC STUDIES

by

Jose Antonio Villarán

September 2022

The dissertation of Jose Antonio Villarán is
approved:

Professor Micah Perks, chair

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Professor Christopher Chen

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Abstract: *Open Pit; A Story about Morococha and Extractivism in the Américas*

Jose Antonio Villarán

The *Open Pit; A Story About Morococha and Extractivism in the Américas*, is a response to the invitation set forth by literary and environmental scholar Rob Nixon in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, for writers to imagine new ways “to devise arresting stories, images, and symbols adequate to the pervasive but elusive violence of delayed effects”¹. It is framed by environmental historian and historical geographer James Moore’s paradigm of a world ecology that considers human activity as part of the web of life itself, as a “flow within flows,”² in the form of a tri-lingual (English/Spanish/Quechua) cross-genre literature project that weaves together elements of documentary poetry, memoir, and field research. This “weaving” attempts to represent humanity’s inter-connectedness with the rest of nature and embody the chaotic complexity of the subject matter at hand. The *Open Pit* puts Indigenous Knowledges³ and worldviews in conversation with the work of scholars such as Moore and Nixon, in order to imagine the ways in which the literary arts can comment and expand upon this understanding of human activity as part of the web of life. The project explores the role of extraction under the current capitalist

¹ Nixon, Moore. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013.

² Moore, James. *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*. Verso Books. London & New York. 2015

³ In *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage*, Battiste and Henderson provide an encompassing study of Indigenous Knowledges around the world, that serves as an important point of reference for this project. Battiste, Marie Ann, and James (Sa’ke’j) Youngblood Henderson. 2016. *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge*. British Columbia, UBC Press.

accumulation model, through the specific story of the town of Morococha, located in the central Peruvian Andes, and the ways in which extraction permeates most aspects of human activity in the Americas, as in the rest of the world. The project is conceived as an assemblage of collective enunciations and woven through a letter to my six-year-old son, in an attempt not only to connect the world of mining and extraction to everyday life in the industrialized north, but also to my own personal history growing up in Lima, Perú, and my current experiences as a graduate student in the humanities and as a co-parent living in California.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank the people of Morococha for being kind of enough to share their stories with me⁴. I hope this book does justice to your generosity, and I also hope it speaks to you somehow, as your stories have so intimately spoken to me. Thank you. This project also began as a letter to my son Miquel; thank you for filling my life with the joy of parenting, this is for you mijo. I would also like to thank the rest of my family for always being there: Mom, Viejo, Susi, Kiko, Jaime, Isabela, Katerina, Makena, Lindsay. Thank you for believing in me, even when I don't.

The *Open Pit: A Story about Morococha and Extractivism in the Américas* has received considerable institutional support throughout the years, which has allowed me to take ample time to work on this project. I would like to thank the following institutions for their financial support: The Friends of the International Center (UCSD), The Humanities Institute (UCSC), The Idstrom Family Prize for Creative Writing (UCSC), and the University of California Dissertation Fellowship Program.

I would also like to thank the MFA in Writing Program at the University of California San Diego for their support while I was a student there. And perhaps more specifically to Cristina Rivera-Garza, Rae Armantrout, Ben and Sandra Doller, Anna-Joy Springer, Curtis Marez, Tania Mayer and John Granger for their invaluable

⁴ The passages in italics throughout the *open pit* correspond to the testimonies of the residents of Morococha, whom I talked to between 2014 and 2019, these conversations were in Spanish. I have translated their testimonies into English in the last section of the text, titled "testimonios".

comments and guidance. Similarly, I would like to thank the PhD in Literature Program at the University of California Santa Cruz, and the Creative-Critical concentration within that program. I am extremely grateful for the generous advice and support I received from Micah Perks, Ronaldo Wilson, Juan Poblete, Chris Chen, Karen Tei Yamashita, Eric Porter, and Larry Andrews. I would also like to thank my colleagues at both UCSD and UCSC, whose input throughout the years has been instrumental for the completion of this project: Kendall Grady, Brett Zehner, Ben Segal, Omar Pimienta, Pepe Rojo, Ethan Sparks, Gabe Kalmuss-Katz, Cathy Thomas, Whitney DeVos, Gabriela Ramírez, Eric Sneathen, Jared Harvey, Nicholas Wittington, Stephen Richter, and Jackson Kroopf.

And to the folks in Peru who have supported this project in concrete and immaterial ways: Giancarlo Huapaya, Mariel García, Marisol de la Cadena, Eloy Neira, Víctor Vich, Luciana Córdova, Carlos Contreras, Jorge Runcie Tanaka, and many more I'm probably forgetting at this moment. I would also like to thank Arturo Higa Taira from *Álbum del Universo Bakterial* for his continuous support throughout the years, and likewise to Rafael Espinosa for his mentorship. Sections of this book have been published in the following literary journals: *The Hostos Review*, *Entropy*, *Free State Review*, *Flag + Void*, and *The Florida Review* at UCF. I would like to thank the editors of these journals for believing in this project.

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Critical Introduction

Jose Antonio Villarán

Prof. Micah Perks

University of California Santa Cruz

Somewhere within the *Open Pit*

There was this kid I used to play with when I was around 5 or 6 years old. He was the son of the man that overlooked the construction of our house, the house my parents built in Villa La Encantada, in Chorrillos, in Lima, in Perú, in the Global South. My family is white, although some people in this country tell me I'm not white. The kid's family was mestizo/indigenous. They lived in a wooden shanty that was right next to the construction site. I can't picture him anymore, but I know I played with him every time we visited the construction site, which was quite often. We were renting a house nearby, within the same little neighborhood by the sea, within the same community whose gate with security guards acted as a racial and socioeconomic border. Next to the swamplands, which were also a natural reserve, and the country club, and all the other neighborhoods outside of the gated community that were certainly not as fortunate as we were. I remember biting his finger, not once or twice, I remember biting his finger several times. I even have this image of him sticking his hand through the fence, in between those tall wooden poles that separated the shanty from the construction site where we used to play. And I remember asking him to stick his hand through the fence, so that I could bite his finger. I remember feeling and knowing that I could do this. I remember him crying. I remember his mom holding him and trying to console him and apologizing to me. I remember feeling something

about the nature of human relations that I couldn't quite figure out then; something that I still can't quite figure out now. I think about this kid all the time. I wonder what life brought to him. I wonder if he still lives in Lima. I wonder if he still likes hawks. I wonder if he thought of me as a friend, or as some abusive, privileged brat, or perhaps both.

I think about him all the time.

35 years later I write about extractivism, I write about Morococha, I write about a small mining town in the Peruvian Central Andes, in Junín, that was forcibly relocated by the Chinalco mining company in collusion with the Peruvian government because of its proximity to a large copper deposit and after decades of privilege I feel the need to ask: do I have a right to tell their story?

Do I have a right to tell the story of Morococha?

Do I have a right to tell the story of Morococha?

Do I have a right to tell the story of Morococha?

*

The term “traditional extractivism” can be understood from a broad historical perspective and considered as a mode of accumulation that was established centuries

ago during the colonial period, and which played an integral part in the development of capitalism as a world system (Acosta, 2013: 62; Veltmeyer and Petras, 2014: 3). It might be useful to recall that one of the reasons the Spanish and Portuguese empires wanted to expand their territories into the newly uncovered American continent, was precisely to extract their precious minerals; the mine of Potosí¹ is perhaps, and sadly, the most emblematic image of colonial extractivism. Historically speaking, “extractivism is a mode of accumulation that started to be established on a massive scale 500 years ago. The world economy –the capitalist system—began to be structured with the conquest and colonization of the Americas, Africa, and Asia.” (Acosta, 62).

Extractivism can also be understood as large scale mineral extraction by private transnational or state-owned companies, protected by the state from local accountability to the impacted populations. However, it also includes other activities beyond mining, such as the extraction and exploitation of fossil fuels, hydrocarbons, large-scale monocrop agriculture, and others. It’s useful then to consider that in practice, extractivism is not only a method of accumulation, it is also the foundation on which most nations in Latin America structure their economic development models (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 129). We can think of extractivism as “a

¹ “Of all the mining districts of Latin America, Potosí remains the archetype. It yielded a river of silver in colonial times. Basing his calculations on mining tax data contained in colonial treasury records, John TePaske concludes that the Cerro de Pasco and mines in the surrounding countryside officially produced 22,695 metric tons of fine silver between 1545 and 1823” (Brown, 37).

development strategy based on private-driven, export oriented (mineral) extraction, and one that has been aggressively promoted in Latin America since the 1990s, as part of the region's shift to neoliberalism.” (Andreucci, 1).

Morococha as part of a long history of extractive violence in Latin America.

The uneven distribution of harm and benefits.

The interpretation of nature as resources.

Who does the earth think it is?

“These are the roads to take when you think of your country and interested bring down the maps again.”²

*

In 2012, the Peruvian government and the Chinese mining company Chinalco began the relocation of the residents of Morococha to the town of Nueva Morococha (Carhuacoto), located 7 kilometers to the east. Several families resisted at first, and there were protests. The Peruvian government declared a state of emergency in Morococha in 2013, which allowed it to close down the schools and health centers, leaving the families resisting the relocation process with very few choices.

² Rukeyser, 61.

“What does it mean to mean?

To mean is to fall, to dive from a harmonizing codification.”³

The *Open Pit* as a falling

a dive from meaning.

*

There’s this strange triangulation that occurred in my life: I became a parent, a graduate student, and an indebted subject, all at the same time. The writing of this dissertation is intimately informed by this triangulation, in ways I have yet to fully comprehend.

*

The *Open Pit: A Story About Morococha and Extractivism in the Américas*, is a response to the invitation set forth by literary and environmental scholar Rob Nixon in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, for writers to imagine new ways “to devise arresting stories, images, and symbols adequate to the pervasive but elusive violence of delayed effects.” (Nixon, 3). It is framed by environmental historian and historical geographer James Moore’s paradigm of a world ecology that considers human activity as part of the web of life itself, as a “flow within flows,” (Moore, 14) in the form of a bi-lingual (English/Spanish) cross-genre literature

³ García Manríquez, 75.

project that weaves together elements of documentary poetry, memoir, and field research. This “weaving” attempts to represent humanity’s inter-connectedness with the rest of nature and embody the chaotic complexity of the subject matter at hand. The *Open Pit* puts Indigenous Knowledges⁴ and worldviews in conversation with the work of scholars such as Moore and Nixon, in order to imagine the ways in which the literary arts can comment and expand upon this understanding of human activity as part of the web of life. The project explores the role of extraction under the current capitalist accumulation model, through the specific story of the town of Morococha, located in the central Peruvian Andes, and the ways in which extraction permeates most aspects of human activity in the Americas, as in the rest of the world. The project is conceived as an assemblage of collective enunciations and woven through a letter to my seven-year-old son, in an attempt not only to connect the world of mining and extraction to everyday life in the industrialized north, but also to my own personal history growing up in Lima, Perú, and my current experiences as a graduate student in the humanities and as a co-parent living in California.

A poetic study on extractivism.

An assemblage of collective enunciations.

A letter to my son.

⁴ In *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage*, Battiste and Henderson provide an encompassing study of Indigenous Knowledges around the world, that serves as an important point of reference for this project. Battiste, Marie Ann, and James (Sa’ke’j) Youngblood Henderson. 2016. *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge*. British Columbia, UBC Press.

“A collective weaving oriented to the sources of water in the mountains.”⁵

*

Percy and I were born in the same year, in the same month, in the same country. I met him through my friend Álvaro Cano, an expert in water basin management who had worked with Percy some years ago when he was hired to conduct an environmental impact assessment for the Toromocho mine site, located right next to the town of Morococha. Percy is a third generation *Morocochano* and a miner, like most men in that region. He’s also a labor activist. Percy is short and stocky, eyes slightly slanted, and he’s always wearing a baseball cap. We met at the Javier Prado bus terminal in Lima. I was there doing research for the *Open Pit*, and he was literally stopping by for a handful of hours to visit relatives before heading to Moquegua, in southern Peru. I felt an immediate connection with Percy, like I knew him from before somehow. I had already been studying extractivism for several years by that point, I had already talked to several experts and had visited numerous mine sites and mining towns around the country, including Morococha. However, that first conversation with Percy opened my eyes about the reality of the people living in mining towns along the Peruvian Central Andes.

⁵ Vicuña, 27.

Percy had told me about Victor Baldeón during our second conversation, in el Mega Plaza Lima Norte. *El minero de los Andes*, that's his stage name. Percy told me about the songs Victor Baldeón used to put out in the nineties and early 2000s, songs about the reality of Peruvian mining workers. Percy told me he was a kind of folk hero, a rock star activist and agitator who had found a way to acquire a piece of land 20 kilometers inwards from Morococha, where the central Andes seem inhospitable, almost out of this world, a beauty you can feel deep within your body. That's where I met Victor Baldeón, in his quarry; *Victor Baldeón y sus lentes noventeros*. Because it's not the same to say: The miner from the Andes, or the Andean miner, Victor Baldeón and his nineties looking sunglasses. It's just not the same.

Victor Baldeón y sus lentes noventeros.

Victor Baldeón y sus lentes noventeros, Percy and Dinior, and Santiago (Victor's friend and employee), the five of us standing there in his quarry, in this sunny august afternoon, sunny but cold, typical *sierra* weather. I start recording on my phone, I take out the small notebook, the one with the cut-up stickers. This is important for them too, they're taking time out of their day to talk to this white boy from Lima that comes from a university in California, because they want to share their stories, they want to share their stories.

They want to share their stories.

“¿Qué nos queda?

Llorar no más...”⁶

I can feel the debt pulsating through my body.

*

The loss of my daughter Ramona right before she was actually born, and the sudden loss of my older brother Kiko while he was playing football in Vietnam happened during the same month, in November 2018. These two events have done something to my writing. I’m not sure how to describe it really, but I feel like I don’t give a fuck anymore. I don’t give a fuck anymore, somewhere within the *Open Pit*.

I feel like I don’t give a fuck anymore
somewhere within the *Open Pit*.

*

Why am I writing about Morocochoa in 2022?

Francisco Barrick Pizarro.

⁶ Victor Baldeón, during our conversation in his quarry in the outskirts of Morocochoa, August 2018. (Translation: “What’s left for us? Crying, nothing else”)

Because it's still happening. It's different, the times have changed, the technologies have changed, certain mechanisms have changed, the names and the borders have changed. It's still happening. Francisco Barrick Pizarro.

*

Sarita's *salchipapas*⁷ joint on Main Street⁸, which is called Main and is also the main street in town. Carlos' hostel, Percy's friend, where I stayed during my last visit, and which had an internet *cabina* where a handful of teens would gather in the evenings to play Call of Duty. La Olla de Barro, where I would eat breakfast every day and watch all the miners chat it up and get ready for work, before loading up their decked-out SUVs. The candlelight vigil to raise awareness about the next strike, the persistent, biting dryness in the air, the coldness that seeps deep into your bones, the perpetual *soroche* headache that bullied me every night because of my damn coastal blood. Those 4 kids playing on the street next to the municipality, oblivious to the public hearing taking place inside. The way in which the mountains stretch abruptly towards the sky, as if they were trying to embrace the clouds, or perhaps trying to escape from the rotten smell of the tailings' deposits.

*

⁷ A very popular Peruvian dish, comprised of French fries and sliced hot dogs, usually accompanied with large quantities of ketchup, mayonnaise and *aji*.

⁸ In Spanish, *La Avenida Principal*.

“The aim is to build sustainable economies, meaning diversified economies with a range of products and markets that are industrialised and service-oriented, with the capacity to create good quality employment, equitable, and respectful of cultures and Nature. On this point, it is advisable to take forward a re-encounter with indigenous worldviews in which human beings not only coexist in harmony with Nature but form a part of it.” (Acosta, 80-81).

Living well = *Sumac Kawsay* = El Buen Vivir

The Andean practice of *Sumac Kawsay*, or Living Well, revolves around the idea of a profound sense of interconnectedness between all species on this planet. And although there isn't an exact outline or set of principles defining what this alternative consists of, there are numerous interpretations of *Sumac Kawsay* in the Andean and Amazon regions, as well as in other indigenous communities around the world (Acosta, Martinez, 2018: 132-133). It goes beyond the notion of humans merely coexisting with nature and asserts our intricate and intimate bonds with all other species on this planet. *Sumaq Kawsay* is not to be understood as a different alternative within the framework of western and industrialized development models, championed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It is rather a radical alternative to the concept of development itself, seeking to recenter economic and political decisions around humanity's interconnectedness with Nature. This would entail a transition from anthropocentric visions of the future towards more socio-

biocentric ones, which in turn would inevitably require a profound questioning and reorientation of contemporary global consumer practices.

*

I overheard two professors talking in the hallway the other day. They said that when Castor and Pollux invaded Attica to liberate their sister Helen, who had been forcibly taken by King Theseus, they threatened to destroy the city of Athens. In order to avoid this, Academus told Castor and Pollux where Helen was hidden, and for this he was revered as a hero. Years later, when the Lacedemonians invaded Attica they spared his land because of this reason. Academus was buried in his land, his burial site was adorned with olive plants and became an important place for Greeks. Plato taught his students in this garden, which later came to be known as Academia.

In other words, the English term Academic derives from a guy who was snitch, a narc, a rat, an opportunist who cashed in, somebody who didn't really want to get his hands dirty, but rather just tell everyone where things are located. Helen, in this case.

*

Books such as *Coal Mountain Elementary*, by Mark Nowak, and *The Book of the Dead*, by Muriel Rukeyser, greatly informed the writing of this project. Nowak's

book combines testimonies from the Sago mine disaster in West Virginia⁹, with the American Coal Foundation's "Lessons Plans" (elementary school curriculum) and newspaper accounts of mining disasters throughout China. It also incorporates photography by renowned journalist Ian Teh and Nowak himself, resulting in a work of literature that defies genre classification. The Hawk's Nest Tunnel Tragedy in West Virginia, one of the worst industrial disasters in the United States, had such an impact on Rukeyser as an award-winning young poet, that she decided to embark on a road trip with her friend and photographer Nancy Naumberg to conduct their own investigation into the incident. "Their trip would form the foundation of Rukeyser's poem cycle *The Book of Dead*, included in her groundbreaking 1938 collection of documentary poems of witness, *US.I.*" (Rukeyser, 10). Both of these books serve as important points of reference for this project because they work through official accounts in order to re-record the history of these mining and industrial disasters. They attempt to provide a voice to the underrepresented and oppressed, as well as to provide an alternative history that stands in stark contrast to the obvious allegiance of the "official" account with the interests of capital. Both authors use poetry as a method of re-inscription. In a similar way, the *Open Pit* presents the verbatim testimonies of the residents of Morococha, gathered during my last two visits: in August 2014 and September 2018, in the attempt to create a different story in opposition to the official account.

⁹ On January 2nd, 2006, an explosion in a coal mine in the town of Sago, West Virginia, trapped 13 miners for almost two days. Only 1 miner survived.

*

Do I have a right to speak for the people of Morococha? Have I talked to sufficient people in Morococha and Carhuacoto? Am I representing their voices in a way that makes sense and feels good to them? Am I being rigorous enough? What am I missing? Am I re-inscribing my own privilege into this book? Jose Antonio Villarán González-Ortega. Am I colonizing their story for artistic profit?

“Whiteness is not something I would limit to white people. We all have to begin to understand, as writers, as artists, as academics, nurses, doctors, engineers, IT people, and anybody making an algorithm, that if we are not careful, we are reinstating the tenets of whiteness.” (Blight, 16).

Do I have a right to tell the story of Morococha?

*

Whether it's fracking natural gas in North Dakota, or informal gold mining in Madre de Dios, extractivism has a direct impact on the inhabitants of this planet. The current capitalist accumulation model depends on the relentless exploitation of natural resources and usage of fossil fuels, creating a situation in which the impact of human activity is triggering climate related changes on a global scale, putting a large number

of species in real danger of extinction. At the same time, the violence of extraction and fossil capital is often not seen or perceived by those enjoying the benefits; it is “dispersed across time and space”, perpetrating “a slow violence” (Nixon, 2) usually exerted on the less privileged peoples of the world, a violence which is challenging to represent. It is difficult to convey a sense of urgency about the current situation because the consequences of our actions are not immediately visible or perceivable.

“The story that cannot be told,
yet must be told.”¹⁰

*

I talk to the people, I study and visit the places, I listen to the experts, and I understand less and less in terms of what to do about extractivism. I understand less about what to do in a town like Morococha, in a country like Peru. I feel more knowledgeable on the subject, and at the same time, I feel more confused, more discouraged, and angrier.

Because in the end, does it actually matter all that much?

Things keep moving at the same hectic pace; LeBron James didn’t make the playoffs for the first time since he was like 13 and there will be a new iphone coming out in a

¹⁰ Philip, 198.

few weeks, as well as another Marvel superhero movie. The people of Morococha, the town of Morococha, are part of this transaction. Some of us just don't quite understand the underlying mechanisms, or perhaps we pretend to ignore them. Because in the end, do you really want to know how it feels at 4,540 meters above sea level?

Do you really?

(Francisco Barrick Pizarro)

*

I have been working on this project for the last 9 years. I don't know how to let go. I'm confused and angry. I know enough about the reality of places such as Morococha to understand my complicity in all of this. I'm a part of a transaction involving Marvel superhero movies and iPhones. I'm not sure what to do about it, but I think it starts with *Sumaq Kawsay*. I think this is the only real option. And something happened to my writing. The loss of my baby-daughter and older brother have done something to my writing. I feel like I don't give a fuck anymore. I feel like I don't give a fuck anymore, somewhere within the *open pit*. But do I even have a right to tell their story? Do I have a right to tell the story of Morococha? How can I create something that manages to convey the urgency of their struggle? Does anyone even care about this anyways? Does anyone really care to understand the connections

between our way of life in contemporary post-industrialized societies and the extraction of natural resources happening around the world?

What is left for us to do?

The *Open Pit* is an exploration of this question. As a writer, as a parent, as an instructor and student in the 21st century public university and living in northern California; what is left for us to do?

“¿Qué nos queda?”

Llorar no más...

¿Qué nos queda?”

*

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The violence of extractivism in the work of Rukeyser, Nowak,
and García-Manriquez

The violence of extractivism and fossil capital is often not seen or perceived by those enjoying the benefits; it is “dispersed across time and space”, perpetrating “a slow violence” (Nixon, 2) which is challenging to represent because the consequences are not immediately perceivable. This essay seeks to explore the presence of extractivism in *The Book of the Dead* by Muriel Rukeyser, *Coal Mountain Elementary* by Mark Nowak, and *ANTI-HUMBOLDT* by Hugo García Manríquez; as works of poetry that seek to question the world economic order and its reliance on the extraction of natural resources, by paying close attention to the impact extractive activities have on the lives of less privileged and marginalized populations. These works of poetry seek to investigate specific instances of extractive violence, such as the Hawk’s Nest Tunnel tragedy, the Sago Mine disaster, or the North American Trade Agreement between Mexico, Canada and the United States, and at the same time they also attempt to question the broader economic structures and motivations which enable such violence. In this manner, these authors are also critiquing the decision to place extractivism as the cornerstone of a nation’s economic model.

Although these three works of poetry speak to both the individual and structural dimensions associated with the violence of extraction, the *Book of the Dead*

and *Coal Mountain Elementary* focus more heavily on the personal tragedies caused by this type of violence. On the other hand, *ANTI-HUMBOLDT* focuses on the functioning of world economic systems, in an attempt to critique 21st century capitalism and its relation to the extraction and commodification of natural resources. However, the objective of this essay is to articulate these works of poetry as literary representations of extractive violence, by presenting specific instances in which the violence of extraction is visible within the texts. Furthermore, this essay will also draw upon contemporary scholarship on extractivism as a way to contextualize and expand upon the poetry of Rukeyser, Nowak and García-Manríquez.

The term “traditional extractivism” can be understood from a broad historical perspective and considered as a mode of accumulation that was established centuries ago during the colonial period, and which played an integral part in the development of capitalism as a world system (Acosta, 2013: 62; Veltmeyer and Petras, 2014: 3). It might be useful to recall that one of the reasons the Spanish and Portuguese empires wanted to expand their territories into the newly uncovered American continent, was precisely to extract their precious minerals; the mine of Potosí¹¹ is perhaps, and sadly, the most emblematic image of Latin American colonial extractivism. Historically speaking, “extractivism is a mode of accumulation that started to be established on a massive scale 500 years ago. The world economy –the capitalist system—began to be

¹¹ “Of all the mining districts of Latin America, Potosí remains the archetype. It yielded a river of silver in colonial times. Basing his calculations on mining tax data contained in colonial treasury records, John TePaske concludes that the Cerro de Pasco and mines in the surrounding countryside officially produced 22,695 metric tons of fine silver between 1545 and 1823” (Brown, 37).

structured with the conquest and colonization of the Americas, Africa, and Asia.” (Acosta, 62).

However, for the purposes of this essay, extractivism can be understood as large-scale mineral extraction by private transnational or state-owned companies, protected by the state from local accountability to the impacted populations. It also includes other activities beyond mining, such as the extraction and exploitation of fossil fuels, hydrocarbons, large-scale monocrop agriculture, and others (Andreucci, 2011: 1). Furthermore, given the long-term and large-scale nature of extractive projects, which often places them in remote locations, the impact of their activities might not be readily or immediately visible.

ANTI-HUMBOLDT: A Reading of the North American Free Trade Agreement by Hugo García Manríquez, is a bilingual (English/Spanish) work of erasure poetics. It was first published in 2015 collaboratively between Litmus Press, located in Brooklyn, and Aldus Editorial from Mexico City. The text engages with the North American Free Trade Agreement as a source document, erasing, juxtaposing, and crossfading large portions of the text in order to eviscerate the document’s original language. For instance, on page 47, García Manríquez “highlights” the following words against the section covering Article 724, which addresses the definition for Annex 703.2 of NAFTA, Market Access. The author also leaves the text of the trade agreement itself in the background, offering multiple reading pathways.

“investment means: / equity / of an enter
or / where the original

does not include / original
filia / less / own
the owner / on dissolution”¹²

The book brings attention to the legal language used by national governments to negotiate on behalf of its citizens. As so, these multilateral trade agreements, such as NAFTA, have a direct and tangible impact on the lives of groups living within their territories. However, there’s a notable absence in the language of the agreement, which is only made more evident through García Manríquez’s textual intervention. NAFTA provides an exhaustive list of resources, services, goods, rules of origins, and more, but fails to mention the folks producing those goods and providing those services. These individuals have disappeared from the legal language of the trade agreement.

The Hawk’s Nest Tunnel Tragedy in West Virginia, one of the worst industrial disasters in the United States, had such an impact on Rukeyser as an award-winning young poet, that she decided to embark on a road trip with her friend and photographer Nancy Naumberg to conduct their own investigation into the incident. “Their trip would form the foundation of Rukeyser’s poem cycle *The Book of Dead*, included in her groundbreaking 1938 collection of documentary poems of witness, *US.I.*” (Rukeyser, 10). Rukeyser pays close attention to the stories and words of the inhabitants directly impacted by The Hawk’s Nest Tunnel tragedy. Rukeyser spoke with several people when she traveled to West Virginia in 1936, incorporating these

¹² García Manríquez, 47.

conversations as inputs to create her groundbreaking work of poetry. The book also focuses on the economic motivations underlying the decisions that led to the industrial disaster, connecting in that manner the microcosm of the mining town with the overarching economic structures that govern the world. For instance, in the poem titled “Statement: Philippa Allen” on page 66, Rukeyser writes:

“The contractors
knowing pure silica
30 years’ experience
must have known danger for every man
neglected to provide the workmen with any safety device...”¹³

Rukeyser is denouncing the negligent actions of the specific companies in charge, namely, Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation, and its contractor, Rinehart & Dennis Company. Yet this poem also speaks more broadly to the notion of corporate corruption and greed, which has been historically connected to the violence of extraction. Rukeyser’s poems address the notion of corporate greed and its ability to corrupt individuals into making decisions that will directly harm others and the environment in their pursuit of profit. In *Coal Mountain Elementary*, Mark Nowak also explores the recurrent theme of corruption and corporate greed and its connection to extractivism. For instance, on page 39, Nowak writes:

“Owners of a coal mine in Shanxi played down the death toll from an explosion two weeks ago by hiding or sending to neighbouring Inner

¹³ Rukeyser, 66.

Mongolia at least 17 bodies. The cover-up was revealed yesterday by the State Administration for Work Safety on its website."¹⁴

Even though Rukeyser writes about a mining disaster in West Virginia in 1935, and Nowak writes about mining disasters in China and West Virginia in the early 2000s, namely, in different geographic locations and time periods, the topic of greed, and perhaps more specifically corporate or structural greed, appears to hold a relevant place in their poetic projects. In other words, in their representation of extractive violence, both works of poetry felt the necessity to emphasize the issue of corporate greed, and its deadly impact on less privileged folks. It's also relevant to mention the fact that Rukeyser includes a stock market ticker for Union Carbide on page 108, perhaps as a way to highlight the connection between extractivism and corporate greed.

Mark Nowak weaves three distinct elements together in his book, which was published in 2009. First, testimonies from the Sago mine disaster in West Virginia; on January 2nd 2006, an explosion in a coal mine in the town of Sago trapped 13 miners for almost two days. Only 1 miner survived. Secondly, the American Coal Foundation's "Lessons Plans", intended for elementary school students in coal mining towns across the United States. And thirdly, newspaper accounts of coal mining disasters throughout China in the early 2000s. The book also incorporates photography by renowned journalist Ian Teh and Nowak himself, resulting in a work of literature that defies genre classification.

¹⁴ Nowak, 39.

Nowak (and Rukeyser) focuses on the individual stories of the folks affected by these industrial tragedies. He incorporates verbatim testimonies from the victims of these mining disasters, creating a space for the reader to witness their struggles. And by doing so, the author provides a voice to the unheard and often silenced, allowing them to speak in their own words about their experiences. For instance, in page 55, under the section titled, “First Lesson” Nowak writes Xiao Ying, the wife of a trapped miner;

“It wasn’t my husband’s turn to go down the pit, but the boss said there were not enough people and forced him to work. Now he will never come back... The boss said they couldn’t work in the day time, but night time was available.”¹⁵

Nowak and Rukeyser’s poetry works through official accounts in order to re-record the history of these mining and industrial disasters. They attempt to provide a voice to the underrepresented and oppressed, as well as to provide an alternative history that stands in stark contrast to the obvious allegiance of the “official” account with the interests of capital. In the poem titled “Mearl Blankenship” on page 77, Rukeyser writes:

“I wake up choking, and my wife
rolls me over on my left side;
then I’m asleep in the dream I always see:
the tunnel choked
the dark wall coughing dust.”¹⁶

¹⁵ Nowak, 55.

¹⁶ Rukeyser, 77.

Both authors focus on certain individuals not only to share their specific struggles and plights, but also, as a way to convey a more generalized and pervasive sense of violence, which is experienced by different folks across time and space, the violence of extraction. In that sense, *The Book of the Dead* and *Coal Mountain Elementary* serve not only as a window into a particular industrial disaster within the United States or China, they also allow the reader to visualize this violence playing itself out in different locations around the world. Furthermore, they confront the reader with the concrete ways in which this violence affects less privileged and marginalized communities.

For instance, in the poem titled “George Robinson: Blues”, Rukeyser writes about an African-American mining worker, who reflects on the whiteness of the dust resulting from the drilling activities, and which covers everybody when exiting the tunnel after a day’s work, effectively making all the workers look alike. The poem also describes Gauley Bridge as a good place for someone like him, because black and brown folks were allowed to “stand / around on the sidewalks” (Rukeyser, 85). It’s relevant to note that the great majority of workers at that site were African-American folks who were brought in from other cities and towns in the South. As Katherine Noble recounts in her introduction to Rukeyser’s *Book of the Dead*; “Three-quarters of the workers were migratory blacks from the South who lived in temporary work camps, with no local connections or advocates. Turnover on the job was rapid.” (Rukeyser, 6). In other words, most of the workers at the Gauley Bridge Tragedy were African American folks from out of state, who were brought in to carry

out extremely unsafe work, while receiving low wages and living in precarious conditions.

In a similar fashion, several of the testimonies recorded in *Coal Mountain Elementary* seem to be from folks who are struggling to make ends meet, but who end up working in extractive projects out of necessity. On page 10, Nowak writes about Li Li¹⁷, whose husband was one of the 244 workers missing after a gas explosion at the Sunjiawan colliery, in the Liaoning province city of Fuxin. Ms. Li's husband used to work as a security guard, but had become a miner two years ago in the attempt to earn more money and cover their daughter's school tuition fees. "Even though miners in China are considered to be one of the lower social classes." (Nowak, 43). Similarly on page 24, Nowak writes about Dai Longcao, whose husband passed away in the Sanhuiyi Coal Mine explosion. During her testimony, she expressed concerns about her family's future, given that her "*husband's meagre salary provides for the whole family.*" (Nowak, 24). I believe this recurrent theme throughout Rukeyser and Nowak's books, speaks to the fact that extractivism affects indigenous, black, brown, and low-income folks disproportionately. Both works of poetry focus on the lives of folks impacted by their proximity and connection to extractive activities. Furthermore, these folks belong to marginalized communities at a much higher rate; whether in West Virginia or China, they decide to work on extractive sites out of economic necessity and desperation.

¹⁷ She declined to use her real name out of fear of getting into trouble with the Chinese authorities (Nowak, 10).

In *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, literary and environmental scholar Rob Nixon defines the concept of “slow violence” as a violence that takes place gradually and beyond the awareness of most people (especially in the industrialized parts of the world), a violence that occurs in remote and distant locations, a violence that occurs under different time frames because extractive projects often last for decades. In other words, a type of violence that is difficult to perceive, hence, not regarded as violence at all (Nixon, 2013: 2). Furthermore, in order to connect the concept of slow violence to the concrete ways in which extractivism affects humanity, Nixon writes about “the environmentalism of the poor” as a complementary concept. “...for it is those people lacking resources who are the principal casualties of slow violence. Their unseen poverty is compounded by the invisibility of the slow violence that permeates so many of their lives.” (Nixon, 6).

Nixon’s concept of the “environmentalism of the poor” brings attention to the fact that marginalized communities and low-income folks are disproportionately affected by extractivism, which, as this essay has shown in previous pages, is echoed in the poetry of Rukeyser and Nowak. Hence, in order to fully understand the impact of extractive activities, it is crucial to realize that extractivism is intricately connected to the dynamics of global capitalism. For the purposes of this essay, it would be useful to contextualize the individual stories of folks affected by extractivism, as Rukeyser and Nowak so eloquently do, with a basic understanding of the ways in which the world economic system depends on extractivism “...understanding

extractivism mainly as a national development strategy lacks consistency because ‘it focuses on the social formations where these activities are carried out, omitting and disregarding the world system, the rules governing the rate and rhythm of extraction, the uses of these resources and the technology applied’” (Engels, Dietz, 25).

In *ANTI-HUMBOLDT*, García Manríquez focuses on the functioning of world economic systems, in an attempt to critique the voracious and perverse nature of 21st century capitalism. On page 49 for example, in the section of the trade agreement which covers Annex 702.1: Incorporation of Trade Provisions, García Manriquez writes:

“material means...
a specified quantity
that exceed that quantity
poses of this incorporation
by virtue...
and those rights”

In this particular section, the original text, which is visible in the background, stipulates the different rules and requirements for counterpart nations to export goods and raw materials. Trading mechanisms and international platforms, such as The Harmonized System¹⁸ (HS) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade¹⁹ (GATT), both of which are part of the original text of the agreement, were created to

¹⁸ “The HS is a standardized numerical method of classifying traded products. It is used by custom authorities around the world to identify products when assessing duties and taxes for gathering statistics.” <https://www.trade.gov/harmonized-system-hs-codes>

¹⁹ The GATT covers international trade in goods. The workings of the GATT agreement are the responsibility of the Council for Trade in Goods, which is made up of representatives from all WTO member countries. https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gatt_e/gatt_e.htm

facilitate and expedite the global trade of raw materials and natural resources.

Transnational extractive corporations take advantage of this situation, exploiting these trading mechanisms for their benefit.

The global economic framework is built upon the extraction and commoditization of natural resources, which in turn necessitates relentless extraction across the planet in order fuel an economic model predicated on continuous growth. Under this lens, extractivism is quite literally the fuel on which the world's economic engine runs. Hence, by paying close attention to the broader structures and systems governing the world economy, García Manríquez invites the reader to consider not only the pervasive nature of such structures (which stretch their tentacles into the most intimate of human experiences), but also perhaps to question our own participation and complicity as citizens-consumers. For instance, in page 64, the author writes;

“that putting / of a sound / on the market
a norm / the sound
shall make it:
a criminal
signal without / law / such signal”²⁰

While Rukeyser and Nowak focus on the personal and individual stories of folks impacted by extractivism, García Manríquez engages with a document, namely

²⁰ These lines are highlighted against the section covering Article 1706 and 1707, which address issues related to “Sound Recordings” and the “Protection of Encrypted Program Carrying Satellite Signals”.

a multilateral trade agreement, that can be thought of as a tool of the world economic system. This document dictates how products and services are traded between counterpart nations yet fails to mention the individuals producing such goods. This absence is relevant, as it seems to benefit the interests of transnational corporations over that of individual citizens. By subverting the language of this official trade agreement, the poems in *ANTI-HUMBOLDT* bring attention to the absence of individuals producing the goods described in the text, while at the same time making evident the allegiance of the document itself with the interests of capital. Furthermore, García Manriquez's poetic interrogation of the North American Free Trade Agreement invites readers to consider who benefits from the way in which the world economic system is structured.

Alberto Acosta is an Ecuadorean economist affiliated with the Latin American Social Sciences Faculty (FLACSO), and one of the most prominent scholars conducting research on the economic impact of extractivism. His work questions common assumptions regarding the alleged economic benefits of extractivism, specially for countries in the Global South which rely on the extraction and commodification of natural resources to finance their governmental programs. Acosta brings attention to the distribution of benefits and liabilities stemming from extractive activities, and how they relate to hierarchies of power between nations. "As in the past, the lion's share of the benefits of this economic orientation goes to the rich countries, the importers of Nature, which profit still further by processing and selling it in the form of finished products. Meanwhile, the countries that export primary

commodities only receive a tiny percentage of the revenue from mining or oil, but they are the ones who must bear the burden of the environmental and social costs.” (Acosta, 74).

Even though Acosta is speaking about the distinction between countries in the industrialized North and the Global South, I believe Acosta’s argument, if considered in conjunction with Nixon’s “environmentalism of the poor”, allows us to understand the ways in which extractivism contributes to the reconcentration of wealth in the world. The environmental (and social) damage and the economic benefits associated with extractive activities are not evenly distributed within a single nation, nor globally between different nations, creating relations of dominance and subordination at a national and international level. In that sense, both Nixon and Acosta speak to the global dynamics of extractivism, and the uneven distribution of its harm and benefits. *ANTI-HUMBOLDT* by García Manríquez offers a similar critique of the world economic system, albeit from a different register of language, that of poetry.

The main objective of this essay is to explore the presence of extractivism in *The Book of the Dead* by Muriel Rukeyser, *Coal Mountain Elementary* by Mark Nowak, and *ANTI-HUMBOLDT* by Hugo García Manríquez; and to articulate these works of poetry as literary representations of extractive violence. Furthermore, this essay also engages with contemporary scholarship on extractivism as a way to contextualize and expand upon the poetry of Rukeyser, Nowak and García Manríquez. In that manner, I would like to offer some tentative concluding remarks, in the attempt to think through the key arguments of this essay.

In the first place, and as I mentioned during the introduction, these works of poetry speak to the individual and structural dimensions associated with the violence of extraction. However, while the *Book of the Dead* and *Coal Mountain Elementary* focus more heavily on the individual stories of people affected by extractivism, *ANTI-HUMBOLDT* focuses on the functioning of the world economic system at large. By focusing on the personal tragedies, Rukeyser and Nowak allow the reader to visualize this type of violence taking place in different locations around the world. In other words, these works of poetry speak to the fact that this violence has occurred (and continues to occur) in different geographical locations and across time periods.

Secondly, the issue of corruption and greed, and perhaps more specifically corporate or structural greed, appears to be closely related to the violence of extractivism. Whether in West Virginia or China, as Rukeyser and Nowak so eloquently demonstrate, these large-scale industrial disasters seem to be amplified by corrupt mine owners and operators. In other words, in their representation of extractive violence, both authors felt the necessity to emphasize the issue of corruption and corporate greed, and its deadly impact on less privileged folks. Furthermore, I believe García Manríquez's critique of the North American Free Trade Agreement, is a way of arguing that the issue of corruption and corporate greed extends to the world economic system as well.

In third place, after a close reading of these works of poetry, it becomes clear that in order to fully understand the impact of extractive activities, it is crucial to realize that extractivism is intricately connected to the dynamics of global capitalism.

Scholars such as Alberto Acosta, argue (quite successfully in my opinion) that the distribution of economic benefits and liabilities stemming from extractive activities are not evenly distributed within a single nation, nor globally between different nations. This in turn creates a situation that only perpetuates the concentration of wealth among the more industrialized nations, and only furthers the marginalization of certain groups of people.

And lastly, the poetry of Rukeyser, Nowak, and García Manríquez, as well as Nixon's concept of the "environmentalism of the poor", brings attention to the fact that marginalized communities and low-income folks are disproportionately affected by extractivism. Whether in West Virginia or China, the individual stories of struggle highlighted in these works of poetry speak to the reality of the violence of extractivism, and its impact on the lives of the less privileged peoples on this planet, who are affected due to their proximity and connection to highly valued natural resources. These individuals, regardless of their geographical location, decide to work on extractive sites out of economic necessity and desperation. Furthermore, most extractive sites are in remote locations, and away from the public eye and awareness, contributing to the further marginalization and precarization of these people.

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Neo-extractivism in Morococha; A historical and conceptual
analysis of extractivism in Latin America

This essay seeks to provide a historical and conceptual analysis of extractivism as a development model in Latin America, and more specifically, of the form extractivism has adopted in recent years, which has been termed by several scholars as the “new extractivism” or “neo-extractivism”. The objective of this historical and conceptual analysis is to situate the Peruvian national context in this broader regional history, in order to understand and describe the recent events that have transpired in the mining town of Morococha, located in the central Andes of Peru, and where the mega copper project Toromocho (owned by the Chinese mining company Chinalco) has started its open pit mining operations since 2012. After years of research and interviews, it has become apparent that my dissertation project²¹ needs to have historical clarity, as a way to understand what’s new and different in Morococha (ruptures), and what remains the same (continuities), in relation to the history of extractivist practices in Latin America. I need to understand the history of Morococha, as well the economic history of Perú and Latin America, and how all of this connects with the history of capitalism as a world system. This essay is an exercise to achieve such understanding and clarity.

²¹ Titled: *Open Pit, a Story about Morococha and Extractivism in the Américas*.

In the first section I will provide an overview of the economic history of Latin America since the early 19th century until the early 2000s (1a), as well as a history of extractivism in the region, its different forms and time-periods (1b), and in juxtaposition with specific information from the Peruvian national context (1c). Some of the questions that drive this section forward are as follows: What are the key moments in the economic history of Latin America and Peru, and how does Morococha fit into this story? In the second section of the essay I will define extractivism and new extractivism: what is extractivism, and how does it differ from the term neo-extractivism? Are there different types or time periods for neo-extractivism? What is “new” or “different” about neo-extractivism?

In the third section, and as a conclusion for this essay, I will use the information in the previous two sections, as a lens to analyze the specific case of the town of Morococha (3). I will provide some historical information about Morococha in an attempt to address the following questions: How can the recent events in Morococha be situated along a long history of violence and violations? What type of new extractivism is operating in the Peruvian context, and how can this allow us to understand the circumstances that give way to the recent events that unfolded in the town of Morococha? In what ways can the Peruvian state be described/defined as a new extractivist state? How is Peru’s new extractivism different to other countries in the region?

1a. A Brief Economic History of Latin America:

Before entering into the economic history of Latin America since the early 19th century, the period in which most countries gained their independences, it becomes imperative to first arrive at a general definition for the term extractivism. In subsequent sections of this essay, I will revisit and expand upon this definition. Extractivism can be understood as large scale mineral extraction by private transnational or state-owned companies, protected by the state from local accountability to the impacted populations. However, it also includes other activities beyond mining, as well as the economic structures created by these extractive activities. For purposes of this essay we will focus on extractivism as mineral extraction, given its particular relevance to the region as a whole, and more importantly, to the specific case of Peru.

It's nearly impossible to speak of Latin America's history in a monolithic and generalized manner, due to the heterogeneity and diversity of the countries that constitute it as a region. And even within individual countries, the socio-economic contrast and inequality between citizens is extremely pronounced. Nonetheless, as many scholars have previously attempted, I will provide a brief economic history of Latin America as a region, in the attempt to situate and understand the recent events that have transpired in the town of Morococha, Peru, in subsequent sections of this essay.

The economic history of a country, or a region for that matter, is intricately related to the different development models²² used to promote its economy. The difference between the specific economic models and measures each country adopts is a relevant issue because they establish the patterns for the social fabric of the nation; they can produce inequality or try to mitigate it, they can create a certain type of labor force, as well as certain forms of wealth accumulation and poverty. In other words, the adoption and implementation of a nation's development model exerts concrete social and economic consequences on the people inhabiting its territory. One of the objectives of this essay is to investigate the ways in which the region's economic history informs the current conditions described by some scholars as “neo-extractivism”; and as so, it is necessary to understand the different development models Latin American governments have adopted since the early 19th century.

(i) Export Led Growth (1880s – 1940s).

During this time period, the integration of Latin America into the world economy occurred through commodity exports and capital imports. This meant that Latin America as a region was considered as part of the “periphery” and a provider of raw materials to feed the industrial growth of the “metropole” nations in the north. “For most of the first century after independence, all republics in Latin America followed a policy of export led growth based on primary product exports” (Bulner

²² We can think of a development model as “a particular articulation of a regime of accumulation, mode of regulation, and technological paradigm” (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 134).

Thomas, 17). However, primary products are not homogenous, hence each economy had a different set of variables to promote their own national development. The term “Commodity Lottery” refers precisely to the differences between commodities; because coffee and copper are not valued at the same price.

(ii) Inward Looking Development (1940s – 1970s).

Latin America suffered two external shocks at the beginning of the 20th century, namely, World War I, and the 1929 Great Depression, which prompted several countries in the region to consider other alternatives beyond the export-led growth model that had prevailed in the previous decades, and shift towards an inward looking development model based on Import Substituting Industrialization (ISI) and the exploitation of the unlimited supplies or rural surplus labor generated by the capitalist accumulation process (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 232). Under this model, the State protects the economy from external shocks and focuses on developing the domestic market. As a result of this tendency towards inward-looking development, a growing sense of economic nationalism swept the region, and World War II cemented this transition even further. In this context, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL in Spanish) was created in 1948 and exercised great influence in the region for several decades to come (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 257; Thorp, 1998: 178-179).

In 1947, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was established, bringing about a renewed sense of hope among Latin American

economies that perhaps this mechanism would balance out trade relations in their favor. “The failure of the GATT to address the problems of international trade in primary commodities served to stiffen the resolve of those Latin American republics that were committed to inward looking development. The largest economies in LA had lost faith in the international marketplace’s ability to provide growth and development” (Bulner-Thomas, 261). By the beginning of the next decade, countries in the region were faced with a clear choice: to opt explicitly for an inward looking model of development that would reduce their vulnerability to external shocks or to press ahead with export led growth on the basis of some combination of export intensification and export diversification. As a result of this, and in order to attract multinational corporations, Latin American economies were obliged (reluctantly) to revise their legislations on direct foreign investment (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 271). For CEPAL, which at this point exerted tremendous influence over the region, the path forward was through Regional Integration (RI). Latin America pushed towards Regional Integration in the 1960s. However, by the mid 1960s RI in South America had not brought the expected gains, CEPAL’s prestige declined, and Latin American economies started exploring alternative ideas on trade and development (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 313; Thorp, 1995: 152).

The main driving force in an export-led growth economy is the export of commodities, which are by nature labor intensive, but require cheap, unskilled labor. This type of economy produces an affluent class who controls the exports, as well as the laborers. The shift to Import Substituting Industrialization (ISI) and an inward-

looking economic model required in contrast a much more specialized, educated and skilled labor force. In the countries where this economic model was implemented (somewhat successfully), due in part to the large size of the countries themselves, there's the emergence and expansion of a strong middle class, made possible by the massification of educational institutions. Such is the case in Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, and perhaps to a lesser degree Colombia, but not in Peru. (Thorp, 1995: 197).

(iii) Debt-Led Development (1970s – 1980s)

By the second half of the 1960s, several countries in the region began to reconsider their options and shifted away from inward looking development and toward a different type of integration into the world economy, one based on non-traditional exports and the development of their domestic industrial sector (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 17). Export pessimism was undermined even further due to the increase in commodity prices in the 1970s. The collapse of the Bretton Woods system brought an end to the system of fixed exchange rates (1971), which in conjunction with the US budget deficits needed to finance the Vietnam War, created a situation in which primary commodities reached record prices, and the net barter terms of trade (NBTT) for many Latin American countries improved sharply during the 1970s (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 315; Thorp, 1995: 205).

Latin American governments reacted by implementing three different export strategies: export promotion, export substitution, and primary-export development. It should be noted that none of these models were particularly successful, and as a result

Latin America became increasingly dependent on foreign borrowing to balance their budgets. As a capital scarce region, Latin America was expected to borrow from abroad to supplement the domestic savings needed to finance capital accumulation (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 347). Lending to sovereign nations, previously dismissed as too risky, was now regarded as highly profitable. “The combination of syndicated lending, flexible interest rates, and large premiums made lending to sovereign countries – previously dismissed as too risky – highly profitable. Citicorp’s lending to Brazil alone accounted for 13% of its total profits by 1976” (Bulner Thomas, 347). The growth of Latin America’s export earnings slowed down sharply after the second oil crisis in 1980, at which point it became clear that debt-led growth was no longer sustainable. However, the banks and creditors continued to lend even after the second oil crisis. In 1982, the Mexican government announced it was no longer able to pay its foreign debt, ushering a period of financial crisis for several countries in the region (Thorp, 1995: 215; Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 352).

(iv) Trade Liberalization, Privatization, Neoliberalism (1980s – 2000s)

The Debt Crisis gave way to an unprecedented agreement among international financial institutions, academics and governments in developed countries in favor of free markets, trade and financial liberalization, and the privatization of public enterprises. “This orthodoxy, despite its fragile theoretical and empirical underpinnings, overwhelmed the remaining Latin American voices that supported inward-looking policies and an interventionist state” (Bulner Thomas, 354). The

intellectual climate in Latin America turned sharply in favor of free market economics. The emergence of a new growth model transformed most areas of economic policy. Trade was liberalized, financial markets were deregulated, and public enterprises began to be offered for sale to the private sector. In this context, we see the emergence of The Washington Consensus in the 1980s, which focused on fiscal orthodoxy, liberalization and reducing the role of the state. (Thorp, 1995: 226, Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 354-355).

However, by the 1990s a major shift of language had occurred. “Now the talk was all not about liberalization but about reform, and structural reform at that” (Thorp, 227). The neoliberal elements that gradually became more common were trade liberalization and privatization. Both appeared as lifelines to governments desperate to stabilize and to gain access to foreign credit. As a result of this, financial liberalization became almost universal. (Thorp, 1995: 223). The politics behind the neoliberal shift reflected an increase in the weight of private sector business interests. But during the 1990s, there was certainly a growing preoccupation with social issues across much of the political spectrum, assisted by the move to democratic government, itself a partial product of the debt crisis. There was also growing skepticism that growth alone would solve social problems, given that “history had already shown that in Latin America, inequality could be perfectly compatible with growth, and even functional to growth” (Thorp, 238).

1b. A History of Extractivism in Latin America:

The previous section provided a brief and generalized economic history of Latin America since the early 19th century, when most countries in the region gained their independence, as a way to underscore the prevalence of primary commodity extraction in the region's economy. This section will now focus on the history of extractivism in Latin America, as well as provide a definition for the term "traditional extractivism", which will become necessary to contextualize the next section of this essay.

The term "traditional extractivism" can be understood from a broader historical perspective and considered as a mode of accumulation that was established centuries ago during the colonial period, and which played an integral part in the development of capitalism as a world system (Acosta, 2013: 62; Veltmeyer and Petras, 2014: 3). It might be useful to recall that one of the reasons the Spanish and Portuguese empires wanted to expand their territories into the newly uncovered American continent, was precisely to extract their precious minerals; the mine of Potosí²³ is perhaps, and sadly, the most emblematic image of colonial extractivism. "Extractivism is a mode of accumulation that started to be established on a massive scale 500 years ago. The world economy – the capitalist system – began to be structured with the conquest and colonization of the Americas, Africa and Asia. This

²³ "Of all the mining districts of Latin America, Potosí remains the archetype. It yielded a river of silver in colonial times. Basing his calculations on mining tax data contained in colonial treasury records, John TePaske concludes that the Cerro de Pasco and mines in the surrounding countryside officially produced 22,695 metric tons of fine silver between 1545 and 1823" (Brown, 37).

extractivist mode of accumulation has been determined ever since by the demands of the metropolitan centres of nascent capitalism” (Acosta, 62).

The history of Latin America since its encounter with Europe has been directly informed and impacted by the extraction of raw materials. We could even go as far as to say that in each point in its history, the specific forms of nature appropriation determined, or perhaps even constituted the modes of socio-economic reproduction within the region (Acosta, 2013: 62-63; Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 129). As so, it’s possible to identify different types of extractivism in Latin America’s history, each corresponding to their respective historical phases and specific circumstances: “...we distinguish four historical phases: colonial extractivism, extractivism of liberal capitalism of the 19th century, peripheral-Fordist extractivism, and the current phase of neo-extractivism” (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 139).

The colonial extractivism of the 16th to 18th centuries, extends from the arrival of the Europeans to the Americas to the period of independence (early 19th century), and entails the establishment of a specific colonial system of domination. During this time, Latin America was the world’s number one supplier of the raw materials that were used to industrialize and modernize Europe. In many ways, colonial extractivism represents the sinister underbelly of Western civilization’s idea of progress and accumulation (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 137). It also established a global division of labor, which although in mutated forms, still exists even today. In political terms, the colonies depended completely on Europe, which regarded itself as the center. There was rampant racism against indigenous and black peoples in the

colonies, there was also slavery and different forms of indentured labor, such as the colonial *mita* and *las encomiendas*. The Catholic Church had a strong role in the colonies as well (Brown, 2012: 61).

The extractivism of liberal capitalism of the 19th century coincides with the period of national independences (1810-1830) in Latin America, and the “Pax Brittanica” world order or British Imperialism, which spans from 1810 to mid 19th century. From a strictly macro-economic perspective, Latin America was a prosperous region under this neo-colonial order, which reinforced and promoted the extraction of raw materials in the colonies. The region became an importer of capital goods for the first time in its history, and this influx of capital goods helped to modernize the extractive sector (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 138). This period saw the emergence of the so-called comprador bourgeoisie in some countries, as exemplified by Bolivia’s tin barons and large landowning families throughout the region. It’s also relevant to note that the newly independent nations adopted export-led development as their national economic models, and that the system of raw materials was dominated by free trade (Thorp, 1995: 72).

The period of national independences constitutes an important landmark in the history of Latin America; the newly formed nations went from being governed by the white European men born in the old continent, to being governed by the white European men born in the Americas. In other words, although there were significant changes, much remained the same, particularly for indigenous and black people, who continued to live in abusive and oppressive conditions, and who furthermore

constituted the majority of the mining labor force during that period. “Independence may have revolutionized the political landscape in Latin America, but it did little to change conditions of mining labor for most of nineteenth century. Conditions in the mines and mills remained abysmal.” (Brown, 137).

The Peripheral-Fordist extractivism of the early 20th century spans from 1930 to about 1970. As stated in the previous section of this essay, the 1929 Depression and World War II prompted Latin American governments to consider other development alternatives beyond an export-led model. This period also marked the decline of the neo-colonial order, spearheaded by the British Empire (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 139). A peripheral Fordist development model, based on the mass production and consumption of goods, emerged in Latin America after the Second World War, and a strong wave of economic nationalism took over the region, favoring an inward-looking development model. This period also saw the emergence of “the Pax Americana” or U.S. Imperialism, and of the overwhelming influence of the United States on its southern counterparts.

A tendency towards indebtedness appeared as early as the 1950s, in part as a way to finance the industrialization process and shift away from exporting raw materials and a dependence on imports (debt-led industrialization). As a result, the state intervened more strongly in the economy, and several nations in the region stopped following the liberal free trade policies that characterized the 19th century (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 347). These circumstances saw the emergence of the Latin American development state, or *desarrollismo*, where: “the state established

protective tariffs, transferred income from exports to domestic-market-oriented sectors, integrated the interests of the urban middle and upper classes and those of the working classes (at least initially) alike, and often worked against the agrarian oligarchy” (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 139). The orientation of the Latin American development state was clearly towards economic growth and social progress. In other words, the societal-nature relations based on the dominance of humans over the natural world remained the same, and there was no real break with the development model of the previous phase, which was based on the exploitation of raw materials.

As the next section of the essay will cover in greater detail, several scholars agree on the emergence of a new form of extractivism in Latin America in recent decades, which has been described as neo-extractivism. There are certain similarities between the peripheral-Fordist phase and the current neo-extractivist development model, such as the presence of a strong state that supposedly acts as an entrepreneur, mediator and guarantor for raw material extraction and profit accumulation (Acosta, 2012: 72; Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 141). Two different phases can be identified within neo-extractivism: (i) a neoliberal phase, between 1970 and 2000, (ii) and a reprimarization phase, spanning from the year 2000 to the current day. Argentinian scholar Maristella Svampa describes the recent turn in Latin American extractivism as the age of a global “Commodity Consensus”, in reference to the Washington Consensus of the 1980s.

Neoliberal economic and social policies gained traction in the late 1970s and were firmly established by the mid 1980s, when Ronald Reagan was president of the

United States and Margaret Thatcher prime minister of the United Kingdom. This situation saw the emergence of a new world market-oriented development model, which through debt service and structural adjustments, led to the partial reprimarization of Latin America. The importance and participation of multinational corporations in extractive projects throughout the region also became more pronounced during this period (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 142; Thorp, 1995: 225).

The second wave of reprimarization began around the year 2000; its beginnings can be traced to the rising global demand for mineral products. This exponential increase in prices was due in part because of the changing structure of the world market, “characterized by an intensification of fossil fuel based, industrial production and modes of living in the capital centers themselves” (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 142). The rise of emerging markets, spearheaded by China and the rest of the BRIC countries, also played a decisive role in the reprimarization of Latin America. These emerging markets, and China in particular, are developing a strong middle and upper-middle class with resource intensive consumption patterns (Brandt, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 143). Also, raw materials have become attractive to financial capital as objects of real or speculative investment, which has a direct impact on price developments. And although there was a significant drop in international mineral prices from 2011 to 2014, as China’s economy slowed down, and despite overwhelming evidence regarding the dire consequences of climate change, the extractivist form of nature appropriation remains the dominant global dynamic (Gudynas, 2009: 187; Acosta, 2015: 72).

1c. The Peruvian National Context.

The first two sections of this essay provided, albeit in very broad and general terms, a brief economic history of Latin America as a region, as well as a history of extractivism in Latin America. It becomes relevant at this juncture then, to have an understanding of some of the key moments in Peru's economic history. Furthermore, this section will focus on Peru's recent history, and more specifically, from Alan García's first government (1980 to 1985), until Ollanta Humala's government (2011 to 2016). The objective of this section is to contextualize specific information about the Peruvian national context, in contrast and against the broader development trends in Latin America, in an attempt to further investigate the following questions: What are some of the key moments in the economic history of Peru? How have the actions of certain governments (Fujimori's in particular) established a legal framework that has strongly favored an extractive-led development agenda in subsequent years?

Throughout its young history as a modern nation state, Peru has been "blessed" (perhaps "cursed" would be more accurate in the context of this essay) in terms of the commodity lottery. For example, there's the guano era during the mid 19th century under the leadership of president Ramon Castilla²⁴, followed shortly by the nitrate boom (*salitre*), and then of course the rubber boom towards the end of the 19th century and well into the first decade of the 20th century (Quiroz, 2014:167-168, 246-247). And more recently, the high prices of minerals in the international market, fueled primarily by China's voracious hunger towards infrastructure development. It

²⁴ Considered by many Peruvians and scholars alike as the most successful president in Peru's history.

wouldn't be that difficult then to argue that perhaps there's something about this abundance of natural resources, which has frequently tempted Peruvian governments to adopt an extractivist approach towards development.

For several decades following its independence, Peru, like most countries in the region, adopted an export-led development model based on primary commodities extraction, and its growth potential looked promising. However, by the turn of the 19th century things had soured for the Andean country; "In the 1890s, the collapse of silver brought the same relative price stimulus that it did to Mexico, while the prior effect of the guano boom had been to eliminate many sources of revenue" (Thorp, 74). In other words, despite enjoying several decades of economic prosperity, thanks mainly to a surplus of fiscal revenue due to all of those commodity booms mentioned above, Perú entered the 20th century in a somewhat precarious situation. The aftermath of the First World War, the Great Depression and ultimately the Second World War, represented external shocks to Latin American nations which would have a profound impact on the development path of the region as a whole (Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 232; Thorp, 1995: 74-75).

As we have noted in the previous section of the essay, most countries in Latin America that had reached the initial stages of industrialization adopted an inward-looking development model after World War II. Peru was no exception, although it switched back to an export-led growth model with enthusiasm after the military coup of 1948, led by General Manuel Odría (Quiroz, 2014: 405-406; Bulner-Thomas, 2003: 269). What's important to highlight, is that unlike other countries in the region

such as Argentina and Colombia, Peru only had a brief period following an inward-led development model, and then quickly reverted back to an export-led economy a few years after World War II. “The inward-looking model was adopted by nearly all republics in which the first stages of industrialization had been completed. Peru, however, its industrial dynamism undermined by inappropriate policies throughout most of the first half of the twentieth century, opted for export led growth after 1948 despite the existence of a modest industrial capacity” (Bulner Thomas, 270). It might be relevant to also note that inward-led development in Latin America was implemented through an Import Substituting Industrialization (ISI) strategy, which required a more skilled labor force, and did eventually, in some countries at least, lead to the creation of a strong middle class, such as in Argentina and Mexico. This did not occur in Peru, for a number of reasons; but the role of the elite and wealthy (and of corruption) in steering the country towards export-led development strategies cannot be overstated.

During the late 1960’s and for most of the 1970s, Peru endured two military dictatorships. In 1968, General Juan Velasco Alvarado led a group of Army officers in a successful coup against democratically elected Fernando Belaunde Terry, and established himself as president of the dictatorship under the “Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces²⁵”. Velasco’s government had clear leftist and nationalist tendencies and implemented a series of reforms that had a great impact on the country’s socio-economic development. He nationalized and expropriated all oil

²⁵ Or “El Gobierno Revolucionario de la Fuerza Armada”, as it was coined in Spanish.

deposits, carried out an agrarian reform (which redistributed land from the oligarchy to the hands of the worker-peasants), and a nationwide educational reform, among others (Quiroz, 2014: 475-476). However, in 1975, amidst generalized social unrest, and after a police strike that brought about several riots and looting in Lima, General Francisco Morales Bermudez seized power and became the new president of the military dictatorship. Unlike his predecessor, Morales Bermúdez was very much aligned with the IMF and attempted to revert most of the previous government's policies. In 1978 the government called for a General Assembly and passed a new Constitution in 1979, and called for presidential elections in 1980, thus putting an end to the "docenio militar" (Quiroz, 2014: 616-617). Fernando Belaunde Terry was elected president of Peru in the democratic elections of 1980, and this time around, was actually allowed to finish his term.

I was in first grade in 1985 when Alan García was elected as the youngest president in Peruvian history, he was 36 years old. It's nearly impossible, in my opinion, not to recognize the calamitous socioeconomic impact of García's first presidential term. Perú plunged into hyper-inflation levels, the state carried out unsuccessful monetary interventions and manipulated exchange rates, and there were extra-judicial killings, such as the one in El Fronton prison (Contreras, Cueto, 2018: 374; Quiroz, 2014: 495-496). I remember standing in different lines at the supermarket with my mother and siblings, the four of us spread out to see who would actually reach the end before the milk and bread ran out, before there were no more beans or rice or oil or candles; and we were the fortunate ones. García's first

presidential term also exacerbated a deep-rooted social, racial and economic wound in Peru's soul as a nation, and it's no coincidence in my opinion, that the guerrilla movements of Sendero Luminoso and the MRTA²⁶ gained traction during these years, terrorizing the countryside regions and eventually reaching the capital city of Lima in the late eighties. Peru was a country in turmoil entering the 1990s (Contreras, Cueto 2018: 375).

I also remember the 1990 election between Mario Vargas-Llosa²⁷ and Alberto Fujimori, an obscure figure until then in Peruvian politics, as well as the underdog who just so happened to walk away with the victory. This started a very dark period in Peru's recent history, Fujimori not only changed the constitution into an imperialist neoliberal's dream, he dissolved Congress in 1992, and stayed in power for a second consecutive term²⁸, which was unconstitutional prior to Fujimori's government. (Contreras, Cueto, 2018: 381, 398). It's relevant to note how much Fujimori's ten-year presidential term affected the socioeconomic fabric of Peru in years to come, opening up the legal framework in such a manner as to constitute an open invitation for foreign (imperial) capital to plunder our natural resources. "Two decades ago in Peru a legal and regulatory framework (the Constitution of 1993) was created to enable transnational capital to extract the minerals they badly needed in the global north and in China... These conditions, the rising price and demand for minerals and

²⁶ The Shining Path and MRTA were Marxist-Maoist guerrillas.

²⁷ The Nobel prize winning author was considered as the certain winner of the 1990 election, his defeat was a huge surprise for most of the country.

²⁸ Fujimori won the 1995 presidential elections against Javier Perez de Cuellar, a former UN Secretary General.

the defeat of the Peruvian guerrillas in the 1990s can be considered as key factors that contributed to an increase in investments in the Peruvian mining sector” (Veltmeyer, Petras, 192).

After Fujimori was forced to resign, he was already in Japan when he did so, nonetheless, Peru returned to a democracy in 2001 and elected Alejandro Toledo, the first indigenous president in its history. Toledo was born to a large family and grew up in humble circumstances; he graduated as an economist from Stanford University, and was working as a professor in ESAN before running for president (Contreras, Cueto, 2018: 411). Toledo’s government continued with a clear neoliberal agenda and established Proinversión: the Peruvian Agency to Promote Investments, which was basically in charge of selling the country’s resources and assets to foreign capital. Most of the country was so relieved to not have Fujimori and Montesinos²⁹ in power, that we would’ve accepted almost anything (Quiroz, 2018: 572). Toledo’s government had a “business as usual” attitude, and certainly made sure the whole world knew that Peru was open for business.

Then the unimaginable happened, and Alan García was reelected as president of Peru in 2006. His second presidential term was quite different though; from a macro-economic perspective, the country enjoyed relative stability and growth, yet his tenure was also marked by deep social unrest. García seemed bent on making sure indigenous lands around the country had individual titles, and in this manner

²⁹ Vladimiro Montesino was Fujimori’s advisor and henchman. He recorded videos and audios (the famous “Vladi-videos”) of the payoffs he made to different politicians and businesspeople. Montesinos is currently serving a life sentence in prison.

facilitating their sale to international extractive capital (Contreras y Cueto, 2018: 416; Bebbington, 2009: 12). This brought about massive protests in opposition to García's extractive agenda. "El Baguazo"³⁰, was perhaps the most tragic and emblematic of these protests. The Bagua Massacre of 2009 left at least 34 dead, as indigenous peoples from the Amazon protested against Afrodita mining company's plans to occupy a legally protected area and clashed with military forces (Contreras y Cueto, 2018: 425; Bebbington, 2009: 13).

Perhaps García's attitude towards the socio-environmental protests led by indigenous peoples throughout the country can best be summarized in the statement he made to the press right before violence erupted in Bagua: "Enough is enough. These peoples are not monarchy, they are not first-class citizens. Who are 400,000 natives to tell 28 million Peruvians that you have no right to come here?" (Bebbington, 13). García's government also signed the Free Trade Agreement with China in 2008 (Veltmeyer, Petras, 18, 2014: 207-208). The mega copper project Toromocho, located in the town of Morococha³¹, was used to close the deal with their Asian counterparts, which generated international outrage given that it was sold at a very low price, with buyers from other countries offering considerably higher prices (England and France). García's second presidential term also coincided with an exponential increase in the international prices of minerals, which as we have seen in

³⁰ Bebbington, p.1; and: <https://rpp.pe/peru/actualidad/que-fue-el-baguazo-causas-y-consecuencias-de-una-matanza-noticia-996965?ref=rpp>.

³¹ My dissertation project is centered around the recent history of Morococha.

the previous section, was one of the factors driving foreign investment in Peru's mining sector.

This leads us to the government of Ollanta Humala, and "...the ambiguous case of a state that is neither strictly neoliberal nor post-neoliberal in its approach to extractive capital and national development" (Veltmeyer, Petras, 18). Humala was elected president in 2011 in an extremely close race with Keiko Fujimori, Alberto Fujimori's daughter (Contreras y Cueto, 2018: 434). Social tensions continued from the previous government, and there were several high-profile protests related to extractive projects that received national media coverage, such as the protest against the Conga mining project in Cajamarca. Humala's response was similar to Garcia's: a refusal to recognize the claims of its citizens, and widespread repression through military force (Veltmeyer, Petras, 2014: 211).

The governments of Fujimori, Toledo and García all favored mining capital; Ollanta Humala was no different. Although the development model that Humala's government tried to implement could be thought of as neoliberalism with social inclusion and state intervention, in favor of capital of course, as opposed to his predecessors, which were much more inclined to follow a more traditional neoliberal agenda (Veltmeyer, Petras, 18, 2014: 208-209). Humala favored strongly an extractivist development model to finance the government's social programs. "The governments of Fujimori, Toledo and García pursued clear neoliberal policies. The current regime of Ollanta Humala can be viewed as a government that tries to overcome the failures of the neoliberal experience of the last two decades by

increasing its social expenditure. The resources obtained by the activities of the extractive industries – tax income – are crucial for financing the government’s social programs and infrastructure projects” (Veltmeyer, Petras, 208).

It’s relevant to note that Fujimori was sentenced to 25 years in prison in 2009, on charges of embezzlement, bribery, and crimes against humanity, and subsequent trials have added several years to that sentence. Toledo was arrested in California in 2019 and is awaiting extradition, he faces corruption charges³². García committed suicide in April of 2019, as the police stormed his house in Lima in order to arrest him; he was facing multiple corruption charges³³. Ollanta Humala is under house arrest and faces corruption charges. He’s still awaiting his trial, although the prosecutor’s sentence request has been in the range of 20 to 26 years³⁴. In other words, all of the presidents from 1990 to 2016, are either in prison, dead because they didn’t want to get arrested, or accused of corruption charges and pending trial. It’s impossible not to recognize the role and impact of corruption in Peru’s recent history (Quiroz, 2018: 623-624), and the way in which it has played out in relation to the country’s tendency towards adopting an extractivist development agenda.

2. (Extractivism and) Neo-extractivism:

³² <https://www.cnn.com/2019/07/17/us/peru-former-president-arrested-us/index.html>

³³ <https://www.economist.com/the-americas/2019/04/27/making-sense-of-the-suicide-of-alan-garcia-a-former-president-of-peru>

³⁴ <https://www.peruviantimes.com/09/ex-president-humala-and-nadine-heredia-go-to-trial-face-sentences-of-over-20-years/31336/>

As noted in the previous section, extractivism can be understood from a broad historical perspective as a mode of accumulation that was established centuries ago during the colonial period. As I have also noted, there have been different forms of extractivism in Latin America, each corresponding to their respective historical periods and specific socio-economic circumstances; until we arrive at the current moment, which some scholars describe as neo-extractivism in the age of a global commodity consensus (Svampa, 2015). This section will focus on the differences and similarities between extractivism and neo-extractivism as development models, in an effort to further investigate the following questions: How does extractivism differ from neo-extractivism? What remains the same and what has changed? Are there different types or time-periods for neo-extractivism? And is it actually possible for the State to manage concessions in a transparent manner and with other underlying (socioeconomic) transformative purposes?

We can think of extractivism as “a development strategy based on private-driven, export oriented mineral extraction, and one that has been aggressively promoted in Latin America since the 1990s, as part of the region’s shift to neoliberalism”³⁵. Extractivism can be understood as large scale mineral extraction by private transnational or state-owned companies, protected by the state from local accountability to the impacted populations. However, it also includes other activities beyond mining, such as the extraction and exploitation of fossil fuels, hydrocarbons,

³⁵ Andreucci, Diego. “Towards a Political Ecology of the Subsoil; Extractivism, Development and Conflict in Latin America”. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Presentation Poster.

large-scale monocrop agriculture, and others. It's useful then to consider that in practice, extractivism is not only a method of accumulation, it's also the foundation on which most nations in Latin America structure their economic development models (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 129).

One of the ways in which scholars draw a distinction between extractivism and neo-extractivism is by focusing on the fiscal revenue generated by the extractive activities themselves, as well as the different uses and allocations prescribed for such revenue. "Some authors use the concept of extractivism to refer to the predominance of extractive activities that are primarily based on resource extraction and nature valorization without distributive politics" (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 129). In other words, under this definition of extractivism, the surplus value generated by the extractive activities is not allocated to fund social or poverty eradication programs, rather, the financial benefits are enjoyed mostly by the foreign mining companies themselves, and to a lesser degree, by the national governments and capital.

In contrast, the term neo-extractivism refers to those "national governments that use the surplus value from extractive activities to fight poverty and enhance the wellbeing of the masses" (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 129). This provides us with a distinction between extractivism and neo-extractivism in terms of their distributive politics. Historically speaking, and more specifically since the 1980s and 1990s, Latin American countries that follow a more traditional extractivist economic agenda, do not use the fiscal revenue generated by extractive activities to fund social or poverty eradication programs, or to a lesser degree. Rather, this feature comes about as part of

a reaction to neoliberalism and under the context of a “post-neoliberal” state, in which Latin American governments were exploring different alternatives to those offered by the Washington Consensus (Acosta, 2015: 71-72; Svampa, 2015: 65, Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 128-129).

In the attempt to further clarify and situate this essay within the existing literature on the subject, it would be useful to shift the distinction between extractivism and neo-extractivism, to a distinction between the two separate phases within the extractivism of the last decades in Latin America. We already have a historical understanding of traditional extractivism from the early 19th century to the late 20th century, and as we have seen in the previous sections; scholars tend to agree we are now experiencing a new type of extractivism, or as it has been coined, a neo-extractivism. Furthermore, that there are two phases within this neo-extractivism as a development model in Latin America: a neoliberal phase, between 1970 and 2000, and a reprimarization phase, spanning roughly from the year 2000 to the current day (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 136-137, Acosta, 2015: 72). This distinction in terms of the distributive politics of extractive activities is also one of the main differences between the two phases of neo-extractivism. In other words, although scholars might use slightly different terms, the distinction in terms of its distributive politics remains extremely relevant.

Another way to think about the distinction between the two different phases within neo-extractivism (or, according to some scholars, between extractivism and neo-extractivism more broadly) is in terms of the state’s role and presence. In the

1980s and 1990s the state played a much more limited role, governments would grant permits and licenses to access any particular resource, and the ultimate goal was for the multinational corporations³⁶ (MNCs) to export those resources to the world market. Latin American governments would not dispute ownership of the resources themselves, but rather would only grant access. During the second phase of neo-extractivism, roughly since the early 2000s, and which coincides with an increase in global commodity prices, the state plays a much more active role, making direct and indirect interventions. Governments increasingly tend to adopt a discourse of globalization and competitiveness, they don't really question the commercial architecture itself, rather they request more global trade liberalization. Furthermore, as we have noted previously, Latin America continues to remain in a position of subalternity with regards to the global market (Gudynas, 2010: 188-189; Acosta, 2015: 72-73; Veltmeyer, Petras, 2014: 26-27; Svampa, 2015: 67).

However, as we have also noted in our brief outline of Latin America's economic history, the region's heterogeneous nature makes it nearly impossible to make sweeping generalizations, in the same way that it's also necessary to distinguish between different types of neo-extractivism within its most recent reprimarization phase. In other words, it's important to describe and establish distinctions between the forms of neo-extractivism practiced by different national governments in recent years, because as most would probably agree, Evo Morales in Bolivia is not the same as

³⁶ The MNCs represent the interests of imperial foreign capital.

Ollanta Humala in Peru³⁷ (Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 130). “The Latin American setting illustrates the coupling not only of neodevelopmentalist extractivism and neoliberalism, as seen in the paradigmatic cases of Peru, Colombia, and Mexico, but also of neodevelopmentalist extractivism and progressivism, complicating the current problematic even more. The most paradoxical scenarios of the commodities consensus are those presented by Bolivia and Ecuador” (Svampa, 67).

Svampa defines this neo-developmentalism, or neo-extractivist development (she uses the terms interchangeably), “as the pattern of accumulation based on the overexploitation of generally nonrenewable natural resources, as well as the expansion of capital’s frontiers toward territories previously considered non-productive” (Svampa, 66). She provides this definition as a way to further interrogate the nuances between the different types of neo-extractivism currently at work in Latin America. It then becomes possible to say that on one hand, we have countries such as Colombia and Mexico, and Peru (although in a more hybrid form), that practice a type of neoliberal neodevelopmentalist extractivism (in Svampa’s terminology). And on the other hand, we have countries such as Bolivia and Ecuador, where we find a more progressive type of neo-developmental extractivism, and where governments use the extractive revenue to promote equity and social justice as well as poverty reduction programs (Svampa, 2015: 67-68; Veltmeyer, Petras: 11). In other words, the governments of Colombia and Mexico do not use the revenue from extractive

³⁷ “The distinction between extractivism and neo-extractivism lies at the level of concrete countries in specific historical moments” (Brand, Dietz, Lang: 130).

activities to fund social and poverty eradication programs, or at least to a much lesser degree than the governments of Bolivia and Ecuador. This is another way to understand the distinction between the different types of neo-extractivism in its most recent phase: a progressive neo-developmentalism, such as in Bolivia and Ecuador, and a more neoliberal neo-developmentalism, such as in Colombia and Mexico. As we noted in the previous section on the Peruvian National Context, Humala's government is somewhere in between these two poles, although certainly leaning more towards the neoliberal side (Veltmeyer, Petras, 18, 2014: 208-209).

There are some continuities between the Commodity Consensus and the Washington Consensus, such as the fact that Latin America is still integrated into the world economy in a subordinated position. However, there are also substantial changes; capital valorization is not carried out via privatization, Foreign Direct Investment, or structural adjustment programs, but rather via resource extractivism at high mineral prices (Acosta, 2015: 72; Brand, Dietz, Lang, 2015: 144). Another point to take into account, is the massive scale of the projects, which has increased exponentially from previous decades. "Developmentalist neo-extractivism is characterized by large scale enterprises, (and) a focus on exportation" (Svampa, 66). This means it is capital intensive, but not necessarily labor intensive. Generally speaking, contemporary large-scale extractive projects don't generate much direct or indirect employment in comparison with the size of their investments. This in turn means that the generation of wealth is concentrated on the capital side, while the labor side, the majority of people near the site of extraction, receives almost nothing.

Furthermore, as many scholars tend to agree, this neo-extractivism (or neo-developmental extractivism) practiced by progressive governments in Latin America, which combines old features from classical extractivism with altogether new components, does not present any relevant changes to the overall structure of accumulation. In other words, and echoing the export led growth period of the early 20th century, Latin America is still the provider of raw materials to the north, and still in a position of subalternity and subordination to extractive and imperial capital (Gudynas, 2009: 196; Acosta, 2015: 73-74). “In short, the evolution of these primary export economies is characterized by the fact that their production is subordinated to and motivated by external demand. When all is said and done, neo-extractivism maintains and reproduces key elements of the extractivism that dates back to colonial times” (Acosta, 73). Even when national governments in Latin America use the revenue from extractive activities to finance social programs and fight poverty, they are still participating in a global capitalist marketplace, and by doing so reinforcing its hegemonic power, and making it ever more difficult to seek out other alternatives to neo-extractivism as a development model.

And despite the fact that extractive companies and governments like to claim their industry’s impact on the environment and the surrounding communities is minimal, such claims are not supported by what’s happening on the ground. As indigenous and social movements protesting against extractive projects throughout the region can attest, the social and environmental impacts have gotten worse in recent years, perhaps magnified by the exponential increase in the scale of the

extractive projects themselves (Svampa, 2015: 68; Veltmeyer, Petras, 242-243). “In neo-extractivism the social and environmental impacts remain the same, and in some cases, have gotten worse, and the actions to face and solve them are still ineffective, and in occasions have been weakened” (Gudynas, 20). The technology might be getting more effective and cleaner, and the world at large might be more aware of the implications of following an extractivist agenda, however, that doesn’t change the fact that the negative environmental impacts are actually worse now, and that the rate of extractivist projects worldwide is actually increasing³⁸.

Lastly, in neo-extractivism in the reprimarization phase, as in previous phases, the social and environmental impacts are externalized, yet the financial benefits are still concentrated in the hands of a few agents: foreign capital (MNCs), national governments, and to a lesser extent, local capital. However, the true cost is much higher than reported by the extractive companies. If the environmental impact assessments (EIA) took into account the actual damage done to our planet, we would have a vastly different understanding of the cost-benefit analysis of the industry at large (Petras, Veltmeyer, 2014: 236-237). “Clearly, if the economic costs of the social, environmental and production-related impacts of the extraction of oil and minerals are calculated, many of the economic benefits of these activities vanish” (Acosta, 74). And although the state seems to have a much more active role in the extractive process, and more specifically, in the distribution of the profits, Latin

³⁸ The demand for primary fossil fuels will rise by almost 45% by 2030 (Dietz, 143).

American economies are required to play by the rules of global capitalism, which still follows an extractivist agenda.

In other words, most of the literature on the subject seems to either explicitly or implicitly state that neo-extractivism, in any of its new iterations and recent forms, is utterly unable to enact positive socioeconomic transformations, given that it's a mode of development that is intrinsically against the wellbeing of this planet and its inhabitants (Svampa, 2015: 71). There is no way to use the funds stemming from an already crippling and debilitating activity to somehow effect any type of social or economic change, because ultimately, it's already a direct attack against our natural environment, and it does not change the current global structure of accumulation. Neo-extractivism does not offer Latin America a viable alternative towards a post-extractivist development model, rather, it only further entrenches an extractivist agenda as the nation's main economic engine and reinforces the region's position of subalternity in the global order as a provider of raw materials to the more industrialized north (Acosta: 2015: 72-73 ; Gudynas, 2009: 218, Veltmeyer, Petras, 2014: 226).

3. The town of Morococha, in the Central Andes of Peru:

The town of Morococha is located in the province of Yauli, in the Region of Junín, high in the Peruvian Central Andes at 4540 meters above sea level. It's about 147 kilometers east from the city of Lima, but the highway is very jagged and steep,

which makes transportation difficult. The vast majority of the people of Morococha are indigenous or of indigenous descent. According to the state-owned Cerro de Pasco Corporation's archives, mining exploitation dates back to 1763. However, the pre-Hispanic cultures of Peru were expert metallurgical workers, as demonstrated by the numerous archaeological artifacts that have been found. The earliest evidence for metallurgy takes place around the fall of the Wari Empire (around 1000 CE) which also happens to coincide with the process of decentralization of certain local populations. It seems that copper and copper alloys were the focus of smelting practices during that time period, given that earth scientists have been able to find considerable increases of zinc and copper in relation to lead (Cooke CA, Abbott MB, Wolfe AP, Kittleson, 2007: 8).

Extractivism has a long and complicated history in Peru and Morococha. For instance, the Cerro de Pasco Corporation, a mining company founded in 1902 by United States investors, such as J.P. Morgan, was a dominant force in Peruvian mining during the first half of the twentieth century. It owned most of the mining concessions in Cerro de Pasco and Morococha. It was also associated with some of the worst environmental disasters in Peruvian history, as is the case with the city of La Oroya, one of the most polluted places on earth (Krujit, Vellinga, 14). In 1928, the Cerro de Pasco Corporation sunk the Morococha lagoon during its mining activities, effectively killing more than 30 workers. The company offered S/.50 Soles (about \$16) as compensation for the families of the mining workers who died in such incident.

In 1976, the state-owned mining company Centromin took control of the Toromocho concession. It wasn't until 2004 that we see a change in mine operators, with Minera Copper S.A. taking over. The governments of China and Peru signed a Free Trade Agreement in 2008, which opened the doors for the Chinalco Mining Company to acquire the concession in 2010. Through geological exploration, Chinalco's operators have found a reserve of 1,526 million metric tons of ore with an average grade of copper of 0.48 percent, an average grade of molybdenum of 0.02 percent, and silver of 6.88 grams per ton; making it one of the largest copper mines in the world.

Open pit mining operations in Morococha began in 2012, during the government of President Ollanta Humala, who as we have seen previously seen, enacted policies that weren't strictly neoliberal nor post-neoliberal (Veltmeyer, Petras, 18). The Peruvian government and the Chinese mining company Chinalco began the relocation of the residents of Morococha to the town of Nueva Morococha (Carhuacoto), located 7 kilometers to the east, during 2012 as well. Several families resisted at first, and there were protests. The Peruvian government declared a state of emergency in Morococha in 2013, which allowed it to close down the schools and health centers, leaving the families resisting the relocation process with very few choices.

As I have attempted to demonstrate throughout this essay, the violence of extraction has a long history in Latin America. The town of Morococha, unfortunately, is a part of this history of extractive violence. The fact that the

Peruvian government and the Chinalco Mining Company were able to declare a state of emergency in Morococha, without any legal justification, and effectively force its residents to relocate to another town, should serve as a clear reminder of the historical recurrence of extractive violence. Humala's government can be labeled as neo-extractivist it favored an extractivist development model to finance the government's social programs. In other words, Humala's government could be thought of as neoliberalism with social inclusion and state intervention, in favor of capital of course, as opposed to his predecessors, which were much more inclined to follow a more traditional neoliberal agenda (Veltmeyer, Petras, 18, 2014: 208-209). However, Peru's neo-extractivism differs from that of other countries in Latin America, as it has persistently used force and violence to silence any detractors to its extractivist agenda. Furthermore, as proven by the recent events which have taken place in Morococha, the Peruvian government refused to recognize the claims of its own citizens and opted to use repression and military force instead (Veltmeyer, Petras, 2014: 211).

As I mentioned in the introduction, this essay seeks to provide a historical and conceptual analysis of extractivism as a development model in Latin America, and more specifically, of the form extractivism has adopted in recent years, which has been termed by several scholars as the "new extractivism" or "neo-extractivism". The objective of this historical and conceptual analysis was to situate the Peruvian national context in this broader regional history, in order to understand and describe the recent events that have transpired in the mining town of Morococha. Furthermore,

as this essay has attempted to demonstrate, even though there are clear historical ruptures, for instance Humala's focus on social inclusion and state intervention with regards to extractive activities, there are also historical continuities. By closing down schools and traumatizing the children, the Peruvian government situated Morococha along a long history of extractive violence and violations.

And perhaps as concluding remarks for this essay, I would like to bring attention to the Andean practice of *Sumac Kawsay*, or Living Well, which revolves around the idea of a profound sense of interconnectedness between all species on this planet. And although there isn't an exact outline or set of principles defining what this alternative consists of, there are numerous interpretations of *Sumac Kawsay* in the Andean and Amazon regions, as well as in other indigenous communities around the world (Acosta, Martinez, 2018: 132-133). It goes beyond the notion of humans merely coexisting with nature and asserts our intricate and intimate bonds with all other species on this planet. *Sumaq Kawsay* is not to be understood as a different alternative within the framework of western and industrialized development models, championed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It is rather a radical alternative to the concept of development itself, seeking to recenter economic and political decisions around humanity's interconnectedness with Nature. This would entail a transition from anthropocentric visions of the future towards more socio-biocentric ones, which in turn would inevitably require a profound questioning and reorientation of contemporary global consumer practices.

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open pit

a story about morococha and extractivism in the américas

jose antonio villarán

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what happens

if the way in which we study reality

is confusing, chaotic?

to inform about the encounter

to write

to show the inconsistency of reality

eloy neira

topographical map

(actants)

the parent writer (0)

the people (0.5in; 1.27cm)

capital (1in; 2.54cm)

the extra-human (1.5in; 3.81cm)

government (2in; 5.08cm)

the actant that's not one of the actants

that forms part of the body of the open pit

(2.5in; 6.35cm)

staging directions:

at least 6 people/actants

2 tables: 1 long, 1 small

6 chairs

the actants can be embodied by folks of any gender, sexuality, race, or age.

the body of the open pit; capital, the people, government, the extra-human, and the parent writer, sits together at the longer table. the actant that's not one of the actants that forms part of the body of the open pit sits alone at the small table. each actant should stand up when reading, unless indicated otherwise.

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a question of displacement

a chinese company

buys a large mining site in peru

copper

molybdenum

and silver deposits run through

the mountain

there's a town on the mountain

a bull with no horns

in order to reach the deposits

the people must go

as must the mountain

all goes round again

the company claims it won't force

anyone to leave

the craters will reach the town

in eight years

the story i want

rob nixon to write

instructions:

the extra-human world exists as background noise and reads slowly and at a slightly lower volume than the other two actants, the text is also meant to be read as a closed loop: the extra-human world returns to the beginning when reaching the end. both the parent and the extra-human actants start reading at the same time. the text ends when the actant that's not one of the actants that forms part of the body of the open pit reads their last line.

*

it starts they start that's their main problem
the notion of a beginning or an end it starts
for them for him we stare at ourselves (a body
without orphans) we're here it starts for them
for him a story always a story all they care for
their own little stories their own little stories
little stories a beginning something to grasp

on no sense of apposition the undercommons

always already it starts for them for him they
want to know things they want to control things
they start drilling we feel it they start drilling
and we feel it they start drilling and we feel it
they start drilling and we feel it

they start

drilling

the story i want rob nixon to write would start with a large bank of
cumulus clouds overlooking an open pit mine wedged between a
fractured mountain range, the sun would be setting as a family of
seven guides a small herd of goats towards the nearest water basin.

no, that's not right

a large conference, a crowded auditorium, hundreds of
people, cameras, microphones, a certain thickness to the
air, deloitte's ceo is giving a presentation on the most

important mining trends for the coming year.

i can't stop thinking about the fact that you can now perceive light.

he'll be born in six weeks

it's cool to be a miner again. taken us a long time to get
there. to be in mining: to be in the news every day.

i drove up to see your mother.

the big issues: lumber, copper, food, asia.

her friends and colleagues threw a baby shower for you, it was
monday morning. i was trying to get back to san diego in time for
class, the car broke down, the transmission went crazy, i had to
turn around. it was president's day, i couldn't find a single available
mechanic in davis.

lumber producers are not only selling to internal
markets anymore.

finally: a vietnamese family running a body shop outside of west
sacramento, it would take them at least two days to fix the car.

interesting global trend: the united states is no longer
setting prices.

the oldest son

there were two, and a daughter

was about 7, he found one of my stickers in the car.

yet the united states economy is stronger than what
you see on cnn, fox, and those places.

i told him he could have it, that it glowed in the dark, i don't think he
believed me. his sister kept trying to snatch the sticker, his younger
brother wouldn't stop staring at my t-shirt. i quickly scoured the car

for more stickers but couldn't find any. i found a ticket stub for
einstein on the beach, i smiled. a sense of rapture, perhaps this:

i could almost taste the music, where the end of your nostrils
meets the mouth of your throat. i wanted to cry. the clouds got heavy,

i remembered the sticker. did i really want to cry?

and china isn't going anywhere, they have problems, yes,
severe infrastructure problems, demographic problems,
but they also have demand, a middle class that will
continue to demand things.

they charged me \$387.43.

if communists want to stay in power, they have to give
the people economic hope, economic development.

second attempt: wednesday at 2:13pm. the roadways were fairly empty,
the car was sluggish.

screaming for some water and some edible food

the eternal question: will mining companies make the right
decisions today for the future, or are we going to perpetuate
this boom and bust ideology?

i couldn't stop thinking about the fact that you can now perceive light. it

was sunny. every 10 miles or so, there would be groups of cows grazing peacefully, some close to the highway, others further away, resting under the shade of trees. i thought about those tv commercials: “happy cows come from california,” now i can’t stop thinking about mcdonalds, maybe they own some of these pastures. will you like cows? i liked horses when i was really young, then i was afraid of them. i can’t remember why, or when it happened either.

the chinese are incredibly disciplined buyers. they’re buying on weakness on every single commodity.

all of a sudden, i was afraid of horses.

the world is drawing down on discoveries made in the past 40 years.

i don’t want you to be afraid.

the average grade is dropping significantly in the big copper mines.

this world is made to instill fear.

and copper is the engine of the world, as copper goes
the economy goes. or perhaps the other way around.

gas was almost \$0.11 more expensive on the drive back, i didn't hit
any traffic. i arrived in san diego before 11pm. i couldn't sleep, i
started thinking about us, walking along the ocean beach pier with
your mother. i would be carrying you, it would be sunny, but not
too hot. you would have sunscreen, yes, sunscreen.

every mine in the world has problems. strikes.
operational issues. governmental and environmental
issues. every year we under-supply the world. what is
keeping us in balance:

i want to show you the ocean

n.n.

where are the largest banks located?

where are the largest mines?

the uneven distribution of harm and
benefits

copper mines

versus copper producers

always trace the money

“the linking that redeems all ugliness and vulgarity”³⁹

the sound of a baby crying should be the musical score of the *open pit*

³⁹ *aisthesis*, jaques rancièrè

in the andean cosmovision, the individual is sociocentric, it is never conceived outside of the “we”; it does not disappear within the collective, rather, the individual is always in conjunction with the rest, in conjunction with the environment

how can you compare a cow with an apple?

the town of morococha is located in the province of yauli, in the region of junín. it sits at 4540 meters above sea level, and is 140 kilometers east of the city of lima. according to the cerro de pasco archives, mining exploitation dates back to 1763.

hydroeconomic analysis: water and the economy

how can i live in your reality?

economic value per drop of water

y como yo digo siempre: aun muerta seguiré luchando

chinalco peru operates the toromocho mine site, located in morococha. through geological exploration, the firm's operators have found a reserve of 1,526 million metric tons of ore with an average grade of copper of 0.48 percent, an average grade of molybdenum of 0.02 percent, and silver of 6.88 grams per ton.

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	bank	country
1	1	1	1	1	industrial & commercial bank of china	china
2	2	2	2	2	china construction bank corporation	china
3	3	3	3	3	agricultural bank of china	china
5	4	4	4	4	bank of china ltd.	china
8	5	5	5	5	mitsubishi ufj financial group	japan
4	6	7	7	7	hsbc holdings plc	uk
6	7	6	6	6	jpmorgan & chase co.	us
7	8	8	8	9	bnp pariba sa	france
9	9	9	9	8	bank of america corp.	us
12	10	10	10	10	crédit agricole group	france

2017	2018	mine	country	major owner/operator
1	1	escondida	chile	bhp
6	2	collahuasi	chile	anglo american/glencore
2	3	grasberg	indonesia	freeport mcmoran
5	4	cerro verde	perú	freeport mcmoran
10	5	el teniente	chile	codelco
3	6	morenci	usa	freeport mcmoran
7	7	antamina	perú	bhp/glencore
4	8	buenavista	méxico	southern copper
-	9	kghm polska	poland	kghm
8	10	las bambas	perú	mmg
18	19	toromocho	peru	chinalco

the original infrastructure

of future battlefields

to maintain the fortress metabolic bodies in
constant motion amniotic fluid running through
your nostrils pulsations generating rhythm body
movement without structure leaching ponds laid
out in endless geometric patterns fractured
mountains a network of swollen arteries muscles
stretching the lack of phosphorous a maze
of embryonic tissue the original infrastructure
of future battlefields

let's try that again

instructions on how to maintain the fortress:

shake the necessary number of metabolic bodies
thrust in constant motion

count every single object arriving on time
through a nameless conveyor belt

be more specific, be more...

subversive?

be more effective

be more noneconomic

a network of swollen arteries

tailings pumping mercury into the reservoirs

an insatiable thirst for speed

know this:

or at least

to draw from

instructions

this world

beyond future

within capital(ism)

how?

he likes to stare at walls

let's try that again

to extend the vortex metabolic bodies in tungsten
potions amniotic fluid running through our nostrils
rhythm generating pulsations body movement sit
down further teaching songs played out in endless
geometrical tatters the back is monstrous a trace
of tectonic fissures juridical in stark crutches

how would this translate into spanish?

n.n.

do you think i'm white?

a lot of (white) people in this country

tell me i'm not

things are so different

back home

hace un rato yo le decía

pregunta al uno

pregunta al otro

no te lleves de lo yo no más te digo

llévate del uno

lleváte del otro

y sacas tu conclusión

eso es

how it works

if i were more concerned with material accumulation

you would perhaps have more things

more toys, more books

we could even buy an apartment instead of rent one

do you feel like you have enough?

i don't read the newspapers

because they all have

ugly print

sometimes, i feel like i'm not being intelligent as a parent

and then i remember that view, when i was young, that hill

on the horizon. you could see it clearly from the country club

near our house. how different it looked at night:

glowing embers lined up in endless geometrical patterns

and during the day: dirt roads, no sewage, trash, esteras

for you, for us to have more things

places like this need to exist

i think that's how it works

the world is waiting in line

at target

imagine us in the car sunny day windows down

driving to the beach 88.3 driving and all those cars next to us driving
always in movement the highway is always full because the more
lanes we build the more cars are attracted to the smell of concrete
and white arrows painted over seemingly endless black surfaces:

the original infrastructure of future battlefields

imagine thousands of small highways running inside of you

all those cars driving somewhere taking something someone like us
perhaps to the beach with your mother so we would have the cooler
and the tent the umbrellas and the surfboards imagine all those cars
going somewhere taking something driving someone imagine all that
movement all that continuous movement the displacement dislocation
bodies inside metal vehicles on black surfaces running

imagine thousands of small really really small

a huge conveyor belt a network of swollen arteries imagine an open pit
an open wound the skin rupturing imagine your leg imagine your arm

imagine my leg imagine my arm

a big bag of tendons and ligaments necrotic tissue a bundle of nerve
tissue imagine bags of plastic inside your stomach lining your
intestines and climbing up your esophagus through the larynx
the lack of oxygen

imagine these huge pond type structures with plastic geothermal
liners stretching across the mountains dissecting the mountains
becoming the new mountain the only landscape leaching ponds laid
out in endless geometrical patterns

imagine every single muscle every fiber every synapse every neuron
needed for you to type with your right index finger:

m. m. m.

the letter m

imagine thousands of small highways pulsating inside of you

corazón corazón mal herido

imagine it never stopping

seré tu héroe de amor

thousands of small highways and the cars and the people and the things
and the places they want to take those things to because that's what we
do we go places with things and we use metal vehicles that travel on
seemingly endless black surfaces just imagine all of this happening all
the time all the time happening all the time always

this highway

there's no outside

this open pit

this wound this rupture this crevice inside body this highway all the time
always

what i'm trying to say miqel is:

just imagine thousands of small highways always running inside of you

imagine everything that's needed for this to happen

all the time

always

now imagine an open pit a large open pit in the middle of a valley surrounded by
fractured mountains

i think that's how it works

we have that pit

we keep running: faster faster faster

birds die and their stomachs are filled with plastic

whales die and their stomachs are filled with plastic

the US economy gets a billion-dollar daily shot in its arm

imagine your arm

i'm thinking of mine

we have that pit

and we fill it with these things

we keep running faster always faster

now imagine us at the beach, imagine it being sunny again but not too hot, imagine the sky punctuated by a few curious clouds, your mother would be smiling, she's beautiful when she smiles

it's still happening

i don't know what it is

i'm not sure what to do about it either

but i know it's happening, all the time, always, relentless

we have that pit, it's open, really open

and things are exploding and people breaking and burning and dying

and we're distracted

because we love the sand

the salt in the water

the cool air

n.n.

este hospital me está matando

no sé porque me tienen aquí

la morfina me está matando lento

quiero estar con mis hijos

alguien nos tiene que escuchar

1 ml. morphine hydrochloride

10 mg / ml

injectable solution

intrathecal, epidural

s.c., i.m. o e.v.

r.s. n-ng-1393

digemid

in 2012 the peruvian government and the chinese mining company chinalco began the relocation of the residents of morococha to the town of nueva morococha (carhuacoto), located 7 kilometers to the east. several families resisted at first, and there were protests. the peruvian government declared a state of emergency in morococha in 2013, which allowed it to close down the schools and health centers, leaving the families resisting the relocation process with very few choices.

no tenemos suficiente dinero para tener justicia

lunch in morococha, first day (august 2014)

como alcalde tenía que luchar por su pueblo

pero, muchas veces que el dinero puede

y humillas a los demás

eso es lo que está pasando

antes estábamos mejor que ahora

11° 36' 40.72" S

76° 8' 21.25" W

we were unconventional

from the beginning

your mother and i

weren't together, as a couple

you came unexpected

and we loved you

since before you were born

la oficina del alcalde es una mina

your computer is killing

morococho

instructions:

the actant that's not one of the actants that forms part of the body of the open pit should read as background noise, and at a lower volume, running each sentence against the next, (although not necessarily fast). the text is also meant to be read as a closed loop: the actant returns to the beginning when reaching the end. the actant that's not one of the actants that forms part of the body of the open pit should stop reading and remain silent whenever the parent is reading. the body of the open pit should read somewhat slowly, making an effort to pronounce each word as clearly as possible. both the capital and the actant that's not one of the actants that forms part of the body of the open pit begin reading at the same time.

*

component

monitor

phosphorescent coating

transition

metals

element

compound

zinc sulfide

silver chlorine

europium

copper

yttrium silicate

mineral

source

sulfur and zincite

halite

cuprite and gold

flourite

pyrope

biotite

talc

our fathers went to the same school together. our grandparents knew each other well.

they frequented the same country club, although the differences were quite

noticeable.

crt glass

lead

iron and silicon

galena and quartz

██████████ and i went to the same school our fathers did: an all-boys catholic school with the same group of students from kindergarten to senior year in high school.

plastic

case keyboard

thermo-polypropylene

additive

white pigment

carbon titanium

phosphorus

phosphate

ammonium

gypsum

rutile

limenite

apetite

wavellite

governed first by nuns, then priests, then teachers. you will probably not go to this school miqel. you will probably not hang out with [REDACTED] son or daughter.

liquid crystal

display

thin film

transistors

lead

indium

tin

oxide

daddy how come you're neve around?

i miss you

anglesite

quartz

sphalerite

you will probably not enter tonka heaven. our fathers were not quite friends; they respected each other, but from a certain distance.

metal case

iron

magnetite

limonite

the two families: ██████████ y villarán. now they run the largest gold mine in latin america. your grandaunt was the first elected woman mayor in the history of lima.

printed circuit

boards

silicon chips

silver

aluminum

arsenic

malachite

boronite

azurite

i live in san diego, california, and write about extractivism on a computer made primarily from minerals. you'll be one-year old next week

79 mine/ banner district/ near hayden/ gila county/ arizona
machen quarry/ near caerphilly
east java/ indonesia near the kawah ijen volcano
frongoch mine/ devil's bridge/ ceredigion
sterling mine/ ogdensburg/ sterling hill/ sussex county/ new jersey
the darling ranges of western australia/ the first mine pit was at
the jarrahdale site now known as langford park
the huntly mine is located near dwellingup and was established
in early 1976
the mandla district of madhya pradesh / located 466 km south-
east of bhopal
the hilton mine in westmorland
the beaumont (allenheads) and saint peters mines in
northumberland
the moretown talc mine / located just over the line into fayston
/ this talc mine was not the more famous mine operated by
eastern magnesia talc / located in north moretown up near the
winooski river
merkers mine/ thuringia / Germany
intrepid potash east mine / carlsbad potash district / new
mexico
morenci / greenlee county / Arizona

winsford rock salt mine is britain's oldest working mine / it lies almost 200m under the cheshire countryside

bingham canyon / salt lake city / Utah

broken hill / yancowinna county / new south wales / australia

escondida is a copper mine in the atacama desert / located in the antofagasta region of chile

chingola / about 100km northeast of ndola / is where konkola copper mine / zambia's largest mine / and nchanga / its only open pit mine (both owned by london-listed vedanta resources) are located

parys mountain mines / amlwch / isle of anglesey / wales / the united kingdom

tsumeb mine / otavi-berglund district / oshikoto / Namibia

mission complex / pima county / arizona

monteponi mine / monteponi / sardinia / italy

i like to stare at walls

you were born in davis
in a small inflatable pool
in april

during those first weeks, you would often wake up crying
in the middle of the night. without really knowing how
i would pick you up from the crib, and hold you against
my chest, until you calmed down
and fell asleep again

i liked staying like this for a while
staring at the darkness
that would become the wall

here comes the river
over the flames

n.n.

do i have the right to tell the story of morocochoa?

antes estábamos mejor

cuando teníamos minería a socavón

chinalco es un cáncer

este pueblo debería de estar pujante

alguien tiene que contar nuestra historia

las primeras palabras de mi hijo:

ollanta traidor

the psychological impact of the forceful

relocation process on the children of morocochoa

are we making history

or are we simply running

to an already scheduled appointment?⁴⁰

⁴⁰ dagwami yimer

sendero luminoso stole dynamite sticks from the
mines

who does the earth think they are?

the earth is alive miqel
and screaming

can you hear them?

these songs are a representation of the space we traveled and the time we shared, and
at some point miqel, when i was living in san diego, and driving up to davis to see
you on the weekends, this space/time was our only home, our first refuge, the one
place we could be together on our own terms, and where no one else would bother us;
this was our first home, on the road, driving

the lyrics

a cartography of the territories

the imaginaries we navigated and inhabited

this was our first home

in the car

in the music

on an endless california highway

and a trace of the ubiquitous nature
of 21st century capitalism
capable of penetrating even the most intimate
spaces; the songs are always on shuffle

los trabajadores de chinalco están prohibidos consumir lo que acá vendemos

(flight instructions)

one day in the life

of the social rock

the rock wakes up and smiles / looks around

either from siberia

or from europe

or from east asia or africa

by crossing beringia

the solutrean hypothesis

pedro furada

the rock smiles / looks around / plays with pen

kotosh

3000 to 1800 bce

olmeca

1400 to 400 bce

chavín

900 to 250 bce

maya

2000 bce to 1600 ce

the rock smiles / looks around / plays with pen / twirls

pen on table

mochica

100 to 800 ce

tolteca

800 to 1000 ce

huanca

1000 to 1460

mexicas

1428 to 1519

incas

1438 to 1533

the rock doesn't really smile / looks around confused / kind of
plays with pen / twirls pen on table / taps pen gently on table

spanish colonial period

1500s - 1820s

spanish colonial period

1500s - 1820s

independence

perú: july 28, 1821

independence

méxico: september 27, 1821

the rock doesn't really smile / looks around confused and angry
/ kind of plays with pen / kind of twirls pen on table / taps pen
on table more insistently

delfina godoy y godoy

1859 – 1884

could argue her way out of anything

his grandmother's great grandfather (father's
side)

jesús gonzález ortega

1822 - 1891

governor of zacatecas, general

fought next to benito Juárez

his grandfather's great granduncle (mother's
side)

the rock doesn't smile at all/ looks around in anger / doesn't
play with pen / doesn't twirl pen on table / bangs pen on table
more insistently / harder and harder

district of morococha

founded in 1907

province of yauli

mexican revolution

1910 – 1929

either you pay with your life

although the country was in a state of turmoil

until the end of the 1930s

or you pay dues and homage

1928 - cerro de pasco corporation

sinks morococha lagoon

(more than 30 workers dead)

compensation: 50 soles per family

the rock doesn't smile at all/ looks around in anger / does not
play with pen / does not twirl pen on table / bangs pen on table
violently / harder and harder / louder and louder

centromin corporation

state owned

1976

amelia ramona magdaleno penilla

1917 - 1979

“kidnapped” for love as a teenager

went hungry for weeks with her infant son and daughter

his grandmother (mother’s side)

she died the year he was born

may 17, 1980

shining path’s first act of war

they used to steal dynamite sticks

from the mines

the rock doesn’t smile / looks around in anger / does not play

with pen / does not twirl pen on table / bangs pen on table

violently / harder and harder / louder and louder / almost as if

in a trance

minera copper sa takes over toromocho operation

2004

i graduated from sfsu

and returned to lima

2005

president alan garcía

2006 - 2011

president hu jin-tao

2002 - 2012

free trade agreement

perú and china

2008

rosalía lavallo de morales macedo

founded el hogar de la madre

1903 - 1977

his grandmother's aunt (father's side)

the rock doesn't smile / looks around in anger / does not play

with pen / does not twirl pen on table / bangs pen on table

violently / harder and harder / louder and louder / almost as if
in a trance / pen on table

chinalco and the peruvian government
shut down schools, health centers, businesses
morococha
2012

you were born in davis, california
in a beautiful hospital, in a pool
miqel villarán garcía
2013

they agreed on his name during the 10th hour of
labor

200 families still in morococha
defying chinalco and the peruvian government
2014

i present the *open pit*
as my qualifying examination materials

ucsc, 2017

the rock doesn't smile / looks around in confusion and sadness

/ looks at pen on table

how can we weaponize his privilege?

how can we weaponize his privilege?

jose antonio villarán gonzález-ortega

the rock looks at pen on table

shakes head from side to side:

all they care about

their own little stories

all they care about

their

own

little

stories

n.n.

i met someone miqel

her name is ████████

(i like her a lot)

how does one start at the beginning?

if things happen before they actually happen⁴¹

i'm not sure what i expected miqel, that maybe the people still living in morocochoa and resisting the peruvian government and the chinalco mining company, that maybe the gathering of efforts from that position would be less complicated?

carlos r. pflucker (1830), establishes facilities to refine copper: la hacienda mineral pflucker in morocochoa

i'm not sure what to make of the plurality of voices within the people still living in morocochoa, i'm not sure how to understand it, or how to articulate it

⁴¹ *the hour of the star*, clarice lispector

census 1876:

500 people

antonio raimondi spent a month at the hacienda

pflucker in 1861 and painted a series of now

famous water paintings

are these process notes here

because he doesn't trust readers

or because he trusts them completely?

i can't believe

you can now conjugate verbs

use pronouns

perhaps both

mío

tuyo

nosotros

public health statement

or [REDACTED] is in the almenara hospital

instructions:

the people can imagine reading from a hospital bed on a hot muggy day without air conditioning and a stream of visitors swarming the cramped shared and poorly sterilized spaces. the actant that's not one of the actants that forms the body of the open pit should read as background noise, and at a lower volume, running each sentence against the next, (although not necessarily fast). the text is also meant to be read as a closed loop, the actant returns to the beginning when reaching the end. both the people and the actant that's not one of the actants that forms part of the body of the open pit begin reading at the same time.

*

the use of company or product name(s) is for identification only and does not imply endorsement by the agency for toxic substances and disease registry

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endorsement by the agency for toxic substances
and disease registry

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identification only and does not imply
endorsement by the agency for toxic substances
and disease registry

use of company product name(s) identification
only does not imply endorsement agency toxic
substances disease registry

use company or product identification does not
endorsement the agency toxic disease registry

use company name identification endorsement
agency toxic registry

use name identification agency toxic disease
registry

use name agency toxic registry

name agency toxic

use name

registry

toxic registry

use

use

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use or product identification does not endorsement imply the agency toxic disease registry

use company name identification endorsement agency toxic registry

use name identification agency toxic disease

registry

use name agency toxic registry

use name agency disease

agency disease name

use name registry

disease

use

use

por indignación y de tanto miedo

porque era demasiado abuso

mi distrito estaba lleno de policías

ya no se podía caminar

y no habían respuestas para darles a nuestros hijos

what is copper?

what is gold?

what is mercury?

what is uranium?

what is lead?

air

water

sediment and soil

other media

me acuerdo que llamaron a una reunión

y me paré ante las autoridades y le dije

ya basta de abuso

esto no puedo seguir

what happens to copper when it enters the environment?

what happens to gold when it enters the environment?

what happens to mercury when it enters the environment?

what happens to uranium when it enters the environment?

what happens to lead when it enters the environment?

pharmacokinetic mechanisms

mechanisms of toxicity

animal to human extrapolations

toxicokinetics

other routes of exposure

porque no somos delincuentes

no somos rateros

no hemos violado a nadie

ni mucho menos hemos matado

hagamos fuerza

alguien nos tiene que oír

alguien tiene que saber

how might we be exposed to copper?

how might we be exposed to gold?

how might we be exposed to mercury?

how might we be exposed to uranium?

how might we be exposed to lead?

biomarkers used to identify exposure to copper

biomarkers used to quantify exposure to gold

biomarkers used to identify exposure to mercury

biomarkers used to quantify exposure to uranium

biomarkers used to characterize exposure to arsenic

y a las doce de la noche estábamos partiendo a lima

con nuestros niños

a reclamar

y que nos escuchen

how can copper enter and leave our body?

how can gold enter and leave our body?

how can mercury enter and leave our body?

how can uranium enter and leave our body?

how can lead enter and leave our body?

reducing peak absorption following exposure

reducing body burden

interfering with the mechanism of action for toxic effects

reducing body burden

other routes of exposure

y gracias el haber venido a lima

lo único, no logramos mucho

pero logramos que nuestra zona deje de ser militarizada

i got a bone to pick

how can copper affect my health?

how can gold affect my health?

how can mercury affect my health?

how can uranium affect my health?

how can lead affect my health?

air

water

soil

environmental fate

y desde que me metí a la lucha

he sufrido mucho porque

no es fácil ser mujer y encabezar una marcha

porque, me secuestraron a mi

unos policías luego me asaltaron

how can copper affect children?

how can gold affect children?

how can mercury affect children?

how can uranium affect children?

how can lead affect children?

production

import/export

use

disposal

y mi hijo es, nació allí

por eso la defiendo

por tanta injusticia

tanto miedo

me volví rebelde

y es por eso que lucho

how can families reduce the risk of exposure to copper?

how can families reduce the risk of exposure to gold?

how can families reduce the risk of exposure to mercury?

how can families reduce the risk of exposure to uranium?

how can families reduce the risk of exposure to lead?

transport and partitioning

transformation and degradation

identification of data needs

elimination and excretion

adequacy of the database

más antes no entendía yo tampoco porque luchar

pero cuando esto llegó a mi pueblo

entendí mucho

entendí mucho y le eché ganas a luchar

me metí con todo a esta lucha

is there a test to determine if we have been exposed to copper?

is there a test to determine if we have been exposed to gold?

is there a test to determine if we have been exposed to mercury?

is there a test to determine if we have been exposed to uranium?

is there a test to determine if we have been exposed to lead?

absorption

genotoxicity

oral exposure

dermal exposure

other routes of exposure

y como yo digo siempre

aún muerta seguiré luchando

aún muerta

seguiré luchando

n.n.

your favorite word is potato

potato

cara de choclo

toner in relation to hesitancy

to be in the wandering

looking for a new vocabulary

to document the process

la clave está

en el traspaso

entre peru copper

y la chinalco,

allí está

(la venta de morococha se hizo en las islas caimán)

does the story store stuff for us?

it's also important to tell a story

“the function of poetry has changed so much—
doesn't tell stories, instruct, is not recited as rite,
does not distill the people's wisdom or even prophesy
much. what does it do then?”⁴²

⁴² *disobedience*, alice notley

**an imaginary conversation with [REDACTED]
a journalist from one of the most prestigious newspapers in Perú,
that covered news related to morococha as early as 2008**

q. what was it about the story of morococha that caught your attention?

a.

q. did you ever imagine things would end up like this?

a.

q. what was the response from your editors and colleagues when you insisted in covering the news related to the people of morococha, when most of the country only cared about receiving the mining royalties from the toromocho project?

a.

q. did you get in trouble for helping [REDACTED] pass as one of your cameramen so that he could enter congress and make a statement in front of the whole assembly?

a.

q. i met [REDACTED] a couple of years ago, through a friend in common. we're still in contact, he's helping me out with this project. he's now living in nueva morococha, did you know that?

a.

q. did you ever feel threatened by representatives from the peruvian government or the chinalco mining company?

a.

q. how do you feel at 4,540 meters above sea level?

a.

q. what do you think is going to happen to old morococha?

a.

q. and the people still living there?

a.

q. after my first trip to morococha in 2014, i felt completely defeated and confused, i couldn't shake that feeling, even now. did you ever feel disheartened, discouraged, depleted, when covering the news related to morococha and the toromocho mining project?

a.

q. i often think about you, although i can't really picture you. what do you think i should do with all this work/research? do you think i have a right to talk about morococha? do i have a right to tell their story?

a.

q. after all these years (more than 6 at this point), after talking to different people, after reading all those books, i'm actually more confused, and i feel like i understand less, in terms of what to do about this situation, about what to do in towns like morococha, how to reconcile the plurality of voices, what to do about the role of extractivism, about our relation to the earth (now i'm thinking of my son). after all these years, how do you feel?

a.

q. and what do you think can be done about it?

a.

q. is it worth fighting then?

a.

q. one of the women i talked to in relation to this project, said this to me: "*even dead i'll keep fighting*". what would you say to the president of the chinalco mining company?

a.

q. and to the president of peru?

a.

q. and if you could send a message to the people of morococha, what would it be?

a.

n.n.

my analyst told me
i'm taking to therapy
like a duck in water

what the fuck does that mean?

“when one lives in a world that is collapsing,
constructing a book perhaps may be one of the
few survival tactics”⁴³

how to combine:

the story of morococho
the story of my family

his mom is from the north
his dad is from the south
he's somewhere in between

⁴³ lumpérica, diamela eltit

for a little bit of fame today

for a name in the usa

“seen geographically and understood politically,
the process of extraction is a profound and deep-
rooted ideology of self-entitlement”⁴⁴

⁴⁴ *extraction empire*, ed. pierre bolanger

n.n.

and your mom is together with [REDACTED] and i'm with [REDACTED] and we all love you and we're all one big family kind of and i miss you so much sometimes and it makes me sad to live so far away from you and this sadness somehow becomes guilt i feel guilty guilty for not being there with you i feel guilty and i feel sad that things ended up like this because [REDACTED] has leukemia and needs to stay in philadelphia for his treatment his insurance and i know you like it there which makes me happy and at the same time i feel sad because i'm not there with you i'm not there with you not there and it doesn't matter that it's not my fault or because of something i did the fact is i'm not there with you and all this love all this love i have for you all this love all this love i have for you somehow gets twisted and i feel guilty twisted because i want to be there with you i want i want to be there with you i want i want to be there with you and i'm not

i want to be there with you and i'm not

i want i want to be there with you

and i'm not

a question of indebtedness

i can feel the debt

pulsating through my body

(cada centavo que debo)

i can feel the different interest rates

calculating themselves

with every step i take

i wonder if my dissertation committee wants me to write like this

so direct and obvious and devoid of artifice

and i don't know what i'm doing here but i'm scared because i can feel the debt

pulsating through my body

i can feel the music arriving from somewhere

everything is free now

that's what they say

my son will be six years old next week and i hate the fact that i live so far away from him i hate the fact that the university forces me to compete and professionalize compete and professionalize compete and professionalize and i don't think that's what i want to do with my writing the university is fucked up right now i can feel the debt pulsating through my body the different interest rates each loan calculating itself with every word i write i write in the university not of the university and still in the university and i think fred moten's work is necessary i'm also suspicious of his complicity

i'm suspicious of my own complicity all of us in the university complicit and the millions of students incurring debt everyday billions and trillions of dollars and do you really want to know how it feels at 4,540 meters above sea level?

i'm here, in san francisco

sieged by all this tech money and complaining about the public university in the united states while the people of morococha get screwed by the peruvian government and the chinalco mining company and our indifference

i feel compelled

i feel obliged

their story

i can feel the debt pulsating through my body

it works

in mysterious ways

n.n.

you're going to have a sister miqel

ramona

like abuelita's mom

ramona

her name is ramona

██████████ and i so are happy

the public hearing

instructions:

for 3 actants: capital starts reading first. three seconds later, people starts reading, government starts reading three seconds after people. the actants must stop and wait for three seconds after reading two lines. the actants can also stop for three seconds after reading one line but cannot read three lines in a row without stopping. the thing is done after the actants read every single line.

for 24 actants: the actants are divided into groups of three; capital, people, government, each group is assigned one of the 8 pages. the actants must stop and wait for three seconds after reading two lines, the actants can also stop for three seconds after reading one line, but cannot read three lines in a row without stopping. capital from the first text starts reading first, three seconds later, the people starts reading, government starts reading three seconds after people. capital from the second page starts reading three seconds after people from the first page starts reading. the actants continue this pattern until the 8 pages are done.

i don't want your one stop shops or virtual windows

i don't want your your your massive anti-mining protests

i don't want your windfall profits taxes or previous consultations

i don't want your villages obsstructing our investment plans

i don't want your llamas or vicuñas your alpacas your trout

i don't want your sacred mountain tops or pristine water basins

i don't want your environmental impact assessmentss

i don't want your 5g networks or 2-hour shipping delivery

i don't want your i don't want your your supreme decrees

i don't wwant your leaching ponds near mmy villages

i don't want your i don't want your i don't want your your

i don't want your top regional ranking your development index

i don't want your children thinking they're better than our children

i don't want your social programs to run out of federal funding

i don't want your your massive anti-mining protests

i don't wwant your your antiquated worlddviews

i ddon't want your private cclubs in our beeaches

i don't want your municipal stadiums in your small villages

i don't want your i don't wwant your want i don't wwant

i don't want your old-money families running the country

i don't want your children growing-up without opportunities

i want mmy 5g network my 2-hour shipping delivery
i want my streamlined processes my vertical accountability
i want my exclusive beach resorts my security guards
i want my trips to miami new york london the caribbean
i want my private schools with their international programs
i want my i want my i want my want my mmy mmy my
i want my tax exemptions mmy preferential options

i want my schools in quechua aymara shipibo aguaruna
i want mmy sacred mountain tops our forests our lakes
i want woh work if i work i can educate mmy children
i want mmy healthcare i want mmy mmy social sservices
i want my mayor mmy regional rehreh representatives
i want my ssshade grown cofffee in international markets
i want my mmy i want mmy i want our our i want our

i want my mmy social programs mmy subsidies
i want mmy schools in spanish in english chinese
i want efficiency measures mmy impact assessments
i want mmy i want mmy i want my i want my i
i want my exports arriving to the world's largest ports
i want mmy my billions of dollars in mining taxes
i want my top regional ranking mmy development index

i don't want my remediation plans my environmental liabilities
i ddon't wwant mmy my mmmmy ddd ddon't want dddd don't
i don't wwant my windfall profits taxes or previous consultation
i don't want mmmmy books my private schools in quechua or aymara
i don't want my feasibility studies rejected yourrrr jester politicians
i don't wwant i don't wwaaannt wwaaant want my wwawant my
i don't want my private beach clubs invaded the whole countryside
i don't want mmy i don't wwant my mmy dddon't wwant mmy
i don't want mmy books my schools only in spanish english chinese
i don't wwant my villages mmy villages sieged bbby the police
i don't want our mountains our rivers our water basins polluted
i don't want mmmmy indigenous languages ridiculed in congress
i dddon't want my dddon't want mmy wawawant mmmmy
i don't wwant my crops ttoo ttoo run ouut of wwwater
i don't wwant my social programs to run out of funding
i dddon't want mmy i don't wwawant my don't www
i don't wwant my taxes ttto scare away investments
i don't want mmmmy i ddon't wwwant i ddd ddd don't
i don't want my previous consultation sscare investments
i don't wwant my environmental impact assessments
to ssscure away foreign invvvestments i don't wwant mmy

i want yyyour i wwwant waaaaant your i want yyyour
i want your books your schools in spanish in english chinese
i wwwwant your your your natural ree ree resources yyour
i want yyour ree ree resssentment to fffinally enndd
i wwant your llllaws to mmean ssommesomething i want
i wwwant yyyour sseats in cccon ccconngress i i i
i i wwant your children readdy new gglobal oordder
i wwant your preevious cconsultation ttto meann something
i want your bbooks your sschools also in quechua shipibo aymara
i wwwant your ccontacts your mmmoney yyyour ppowwer
i want yyour chchilddren to pplay with mmy chchilddrenn
i wwwant your ssshopping malls yyour 5g nnnetwork
i want your ccountry clubs your pprivate beaches open public
i wwant your i wwwant i i i i want i wwwant i wwwant your

i wwant your schools in spanish ennglish quechua
i want yyour mmmyaami your nnew york your pparis
i wwwant yyyour i wwwant i want i wwwa wwawa
i want yyour beacchh clubs open ttto the publicc
i want yyyour i want yyyour i want yyyour your
i want your rrresentment your rrrage to enddd
i wwwant yyour cccoffee in llargest tttrade ffair

you ddon't want my ssstrategic pllans you ddon't wwant
you don't want mmy clubs enjoyed bby real owwners
yyou don't wwant my schools engglish frenchh chinese
yyyyou dddon't want ddon't wwant dddon't wwant mmy
you don't wwant my ffamily my tradditions my history
you don't want mmy dddon't wwant mmy ddddon't
yyou don't wwwant wwwant want want don't wwant
you ddon't want my books in qquechua in aymara aguaruna
you don't wwant my lllmmas my alpppacas my guinea pigs
yyou don't want don't wwant mmy don't wwwant mmy
you ddon't want mmy daughters having same opporrtunities
yyou don't wwant to pressserve nnnatureture don't wwant
you dddon't wwwant mmy mmy yyyou don't wwwant
you ddon't wwant my interconnectedness other sspeciess
yyou don't want mmy social programs nno funddding
you dddon't wwant my my mmy you ddon't wwant my
you don't wwant my schools enngglish chhchinese
yyou ddon't want mmy ttaxes mmy ttaxxxs
you don't wwant my pppreevvious consssulttation
youuu ddon't wwant ddon't want yyou yyou yyyou
ddon't wwant yyou dddon't wwant yyou ddon't want

yyou wwant your yyour ssschools your ssschools you wwwant
you want yyyour yyour yyou wwant yyyour pppolice
yyou wwwant yyyour yyyyyour yyyyyour your yyyou
wwwwant yyyyyour yyour awwway invvvestmments
yyou wwwant yyour childddren yyour rrrresentffful
you wwwant yyyour yyou wwawwant yyyour yyou
wwant yyyour ppovverty eraddicccationnn yyou wwwant
yyou wwa wwant yyour ppprivvate ssschools yyou yyou
wwant yyour bbbeach cclubbs yyou wwwant yyour
yyyou wwwant yyour yyou yyyou wwant wwwant
yyou want wwwant yyour yyyou wwant yyyour yyou
wwant yyyour chchch yyou wwant yyour chchilddren
yyou wwant yyyour yyou wwant yyyour yyou
yyyou wwant yyyour yyou wwaant yyou wwwant
yyou want yyour ssschools ennnglishh ffffrench chch
yyyou want yyyour bbeachch cclubbbs yyouu yyou
wwwwant yyyour pppreevvious ccconsssultationn
yyour ennvvironmenntal impact assessmments
yyou wwwant yyour yyou wwwant yyyour
yyou wwant yy your chchildren no oppportttunities
yyou want yyyour tttaxes yyyour tttaxes yyou wwant

yyou ddon't wwant yyour yyour books inn ennglish

yyou don't wwant yyour mmunicipal ssstadiums

yyou don't want your social programs out of funding

you ddon't wwant yyour yyour mmillions in ttaxes

you don't want your yyou ddon't want your you

you ddon't wwant yyour your sseats in ccongress

you don't want your children growing modern country

you don't want your ssschols in kwecha shipibo aguaruna

you ddon't want your laws your laws to actually work

you don't want cclubs your beaches open to the public

yyou don't wwant your you don't wwant your you

you ddon't wwant your envvironmental liabilities

you don't want your old-money families sharing power

you don't want yyour children thinking of uss equals

you don't wwant your social programs nno funding

yyou don't want your schools in spanish english chch

you don't want yyour your mmunicipal stadiumss

you don't wwant your beach clubs open the public

yyou don't want you're your yyou don't wwant your

you ddon't want your your remmediation ppplans

you don't want yyour children growing up opportunities

you want my my private clubs my beaches you want my
you want my millions of dollars in taxes for social programs
you want my schools my shopping malls my golf courses
you want my vacations my miami my new york my caribbean
you want my tax exemptions my preferential options
you want my families my traditions my contacts
you want my investments my strategic vision
you want my shade grown my women grown my altitude my
you want our sacred mountain tops our lakes our rivers
you want my llamas my vicuñas you want my trout
you want my seats you want all of my seats in congress
you want my children to always be your subaltern
you want my previous consultation my social programs
you want my municipal stadiums my medical centers
you want my millions of dollars in taxes
you want my schools in kwecha shipibo aguaruna
you want my concessions my legal loopholes
you want my efficiency measures
you want my ports my preferential tariffs
you want my supreme decrees my congress
you want my highways my hospitals my stadiums

n.n.

it's all coming together miqel

your sister ramona is growing strong

crisrina and i are starting to buy her things

we're going to use your first stroller

do you remember it?

it is strong

and you are tough

it's all coming together miqel

i'm making progress on my dissertation

my therapy is going well

i feel less anxious

it's all coming together mijo

it's all coming together

**10 potential scenarios
for any given conditions**

[instructions: there's usually an exception to the rule]

*

francisco barrick pizarro

a bull with no horns

their own little stories

15 more dead guinea pigs

an endless conveyor belt

new windfall profits taxes

200 families still living in

8,200 tons of copper (2015)

11° 36' 40.72'' s

5 fake supreme decrees

walls without staring positions

a bigger football stadium

the capacity to refuse

kayllam kayllam kayllam

an open pit torn from within

4,540 meters above sea level

nintendo sounding breathers

skarns mantles and veins

walls filled with minerals

an unfinished phd thesis

n.n.

you call me pami sometimes

papi-mami

pami

i love it

how can these two places

exist in the same world?

morococho: forceful relocation process, residents fighting for rights, pollution,
lack of opportunities

whole foods on ocean avenue in san francisco: 1-hour food delivery,
organic avocados for \$3.99 each

no hay que tener miedo vecinos

no hay que temerle a la empresa chinalco

usa el amor

usa el amor como un puente

4540 meters

i talk to the people

and study and visit the sites

and listen to the experts

and i understand less

and less

about what to do

extractivism

i understand less

about what to do

in a town like morococha

i feel more knowledgeable on the subject

and at the same time

more confused and discouraged

because in the end, does it actually matter all that much? things keep moving at the same hectic pace, lebron james didn't make the playoffs for the first time since he was like 13 and there will be a new iphone coming out in a few weeks, as well as another marvel superhero movie. the people of morococha, the town of morococha,

are part of this transaction, some of us just don't quite understand the underlying mechanisms, or we pretend to ignore them, because in the end, do you really want to know how you feel at 4,540 meters above sea level?

do you really?

n.n.

“the re-encounter with nature is another of the priority points on the agenda, and this means doing away with models and practices centered on the exploitation and appropriation of nature”⁴⁵

“who’s playing papi?”

liverpool versus arsenal

who do you want to win?

“both papi, both”

francisco barrick pizarro

⁴⁵ “extractivism and neo-extractivism: two sides of the same curse”; alberto acosta, p.81.

what's left for us?

la voz del pueblo es la voz de dios

ya sabemos ya quienes son los culpables

promesas, son promesas no más

hasta los policías de acá, defienden a la empresa

*muchos jóvenes viven ahora en lima y huancayo, se olvidaron de sus madres y
tierra, no gastan su dinero en morococha*

es lo que hay pues, triste nuestra realidad, tanto abuso, ya no confío en nadie

n.n.

things got fucked miqel

really fucked

there's something wrong

with ramona's brain

i can't believing this is happening

i can't believe this is real

a question of loss

i

once again, the voices, lost, the people, morococha, lost, their own words, once again, become invisible, like a specter that gravitates in the depths, once again, the voices, lost, a loss, an absence, i carry inside, morococha, once again, it's not a surprise, although it's still surprising, the persistence of the loss, the inability of an attempt to recover, once again, we're back at the point of departure

what does it mean to lose?

i was, am there, listening, in the break, the recordings lost, the digital notes, yet their voices live inside of me, and they come out to sing, as i close my eyes, the clouds get heavy, and i can't stop crying, once again, we're back at the point of departure

ii

sarita's *salchipapas* joint on main street, which is called main and is also the main street in town. ■■■■■'s hostel, ■■■■■'s friend, where i stayed during my last visit, and which had an internet *cabina* where a handful of teens would gather in the evenings to play call of duty. la olla de barro, where i would eat breakfast every day and watch all the miners chat it up and get ready for work, before loading up their decked-out suvs. the candlelight vigil to raise awareness about the next strike, the persistent,

biting dryness in the air, the coldness that seeps deep into your bones, the perpetual *soroche* headache that bullied me every night because of my damn coastal blood, those 4 kids playing on the street next to the municipality, oblivious to the public hearing taking place inside, the way in which the mountains stretch abruptly towards the sky, as if they were trying to embrace the clouds, or perhaps trying to escape from the rotten smell of the tailings' deposits

this urgency to write, to remember everything, because the recordings are lost, once again, the notes are lost, once again, the phone's screen cracked, the information inaccessible, the voices of the people lost, trapped within that disabled device

iii

this urgency, to remember the river's murmuring, which wouldn't stop singing, the calmness [REDACTED] conveyed, and his nineties looking sunglasses, in that quarry 20 kilometers inwards from morococha, that is now his

this urgency to write, to not forget anything, because the recordings, lost, and the digital notes, the phone, the screen smashed, the device, disabled

i feel this urgency, this urgency, i feel like i'm going to forget something, because i'm so sad, because my daughter ramona died four weeks ago, during her 6th month in [REDACTED]'s womb, and my older brother kiko died last week, probably from a heart

attack or a stroke, while he was playing football in vietnam, and i never thought i could be this sad, and i don't know why i'm writing this anymore, but i feel, with increasing intensity, that there's something about the story of morococha, that there's something about the story of morococha, that there's something about the story of morococha that i have to understand, that there's something about the story of morococha, that i have to understand

porque el tiempo tiene grietas

porque grietas tiene el alma

that there's something in the story of morococha that i have to understand, that we have to understand, that's why i'm still here, exploring each crevice in this prison cell, while the rain makes music against the ceiling

this urgency, to write, a recurrent feeling

how can i ever find peace?

this urgency to understand, to create a story, or a poem, that is relatable

perhaps, it's not about that, perhaps, it's just, it is what it is, es lo que hay

once again, the voices, lost, morococha, my babydaughter, my brother

¿qué nos queda?

llorar no más



in his quarry

¿qué nos queda?

¿qué nos queda?

n.n.

you were in your mother's womb

when i started writing this book

now you're in kindergarten

learning how to read

i wonder what you'll say

when you read this

if you represent the struggle

then push

n.n.

“what do you do for a living papi?”

i make worlds mijo

i make worlds

with words

supreme decrees

arriba no tenías lo que tienes aquí, pero la gente era feliz

era hermoso como se vivía acá

bingo bingo

lo perdí todo

sunday august 25th, 2013

supreme decree that declares a state of emergency in the district of morococha, in the province of yauli, in the department of junin

supreme decree n° 095-2013-pcm

todos somos hemos sido mineros

considering:

that, the district of morococha, in the province of yauli, in the department of junin, is a mining town, whose exploitation activities date back to 1763, with a population according to the national institute of statistics and informatics, of 4,884 inhabitants, the majority of which are mining workers;

nos han cerrado nuestras escuelas

nos han quitado nuestros servicios

four boys play with their toy guns

right outside the municipality

in nueva morococha

around sunset

because play is necessary

that, according to technical report n° a 6636 geological danger in town
of issued by the mining and metallurgical geological institute -
ingemmet, the area where mentioned town morococha is located
become exposed to mass movement mudslides, falling rocks and
landslides

play is necessary

caused mainly by type material involved, absence vegetable coverage,
excavated slopes, adding to this the intense, the natural seismic, more
so when such a is in an area of, according to the seismic zonification
map of peru, as well as vibrations by the from current mining activities

the more i study and talk to people and experts
the less i understand about the situation in morococha
and extractivism
in Perú
and around the world

as well as existence underground pits underneath the city, all of which,
coupled with quality of, makes location high-risk area

to arrive at a new language

¿qué va a ser de nuestro futuro, de nuestros hijos?

article 1. declaration state of emergency
the district morococha, the province of yauli, in department junin, is
declared a state emergency 60 days, due an imminent danger mass
movements

no es como antes

ya no hay ese sentimiento de barrio ya

como una comunidad

es diferente

acá abajo

or perhaps

a story able to express

and contain

hold

the texture of reality

the lack of consistency

thursday october 24, 2013

the problem between consonants

state of emergency extended in district morococha, province of, in the
department, supreme decree n° 116-2013-pcm

por un plato de lentejas se echan los peruanos

that supreme decree n° 116-2013-pcm, published october 24th, 2013,
the emergency declared in of morococha, in the, by supreme decree n°
095-2013-PCM, extended for 60 days

sin plata no hay justicia

in order for entities involved in such, to continue carry out immediate
necessary response rehabilitation actions as; as well as, as, as well as,
the reduction minimization high risk existing, being, the main one,
relocation population old town morococha

or perhaps

a story that refuses to

friday december 20th, 2013

state emergency extended in of morococha, of of yauli, in the, in the,
in the

a story that refuses too

supreme decree n° 131-2013-pcm

she was so small

as i held her dead body

in the new mission bay hospital

this is not the way it should be

5 decretos supremos han sacado para que nos desaparezcan

5 decretos supremos han sacado para que nos desaparezcan

that, through supreme decree n° 095-2013-PCM published on 25th,
2013, the state of declared, morococha, of the province, in the in the,
in the, for sixty (60) days due imminent danger mass movements

this is not the way it should be

no nos han escuchado, hemos estado en palacio de gobierno

¿cuántas veces hemos comido en la plaza san martín?

hemos comido en cartón, con nuestros hijos

and execution immediate necessary response rehabilitation action,
destined reduce minimize existing high in the; as well as, as, among
other the, in the, relocation people living hazardous

she was so small

the rumor of a possibility

in that small, lifeless body

tuesday, november 4, 2014

supppreme decree approves the regulation article 3 of n° 30081, which
geographical capital of, in the province in the, department in the

porque antes morococha era un pueblo muy hospitalario

my daughter

ramona

supreme decree

n° 016-2014-vivienda

considering:

like the dylan song

like my grandmother

mamameli

that law n° 30081, which geographical location of district morococha,
in of yauli, junín law n° 682 law creation district of

who died while i was

in my mother's womb

a sadness so familiar

¿qué cree señora que la voy a premiar porque se ha quedado?

así me dijo el señor de la chinalco.

my father called me justiniano

when i was a kid

because i would often say

esto no es justo

esto no es justo

determined capital city new morococha, as well as geographical

location geographical coordinates:

this is not fair

this is not just

el detalle es... así directamente, que quiero yo: que este pueblo sea respetado

como tal, estos seres humanos que respiramos el aire, vemos el día y el

anochecer

384054 meters east 8 718 813 m north, utm projection

datum wgs 1984, Z18

and i can't help but wonder

what does that even mean?

in order prevent safeguard the inhabitability residents of such

que seamos respetados como cualquier ser humano en cualquier parte del mundo, que tengan todos sus derechos. Nada más, no queremos otra cosa.

why did a virus infect my baby's brain?

why did my brother kiko die of a heart attack

two weeks later while he was playing football in Vietnam?

how do the people of morococha manage to keep going

even when faced with abuse and neglect and despair?

bingo bingo

lo perdí todo

pero cuando eso no sucede

no voy a ganar así vuelvo a jugar

what is this thing happening all the time always?

prevent safeguard inhabitability residents of such

pero cuando eso no sucede...

or perhaps

yo quiero trabajo

con trabajo

puedo educar a mis hijos

my research

not the books i read

or the notes i take

or the people i talk to

entre peruanos nos hicimos esto

prevent safeguard inhabitability residents of such

my research

what happens inside of me

when i read those books

and take those notes

and talk to those people

¿tú estás con la chinalco?

prevent safeguard inhabitability residents of such

my research

inside of me

all the time

always

i cannot lose it

bingo bingo

¿tú estás con la chinalco?

like ramona

and kiko

¿tú estás con la chinalco?

n.n.

i overheard two professors talking in the hallway the other day, one of them was saying that according to greek mythology, when castor and pollux invaded attica to liberate their sister helen, who had been taken by theseus, they threatened to destroy the city of athens. in order to avoid this, academus told castor and pollux where helen was hidden, and was revered as a hero. when lacedemonians invaded attica they spared his land because of this reason, and in this same land lay his burial site, which was adorned with olive plants. plato used to teach his students in this garden, which came to be known as academia.

in other words, the english term academic comes from a guy who was snitch, a narc, a rat, an opportunist who cashed in, somebody who didn't really want to get his hands dirty, but rather just tell everyone where things were located (helen in this case).

a question of resistance

or the voice of the son, as imagined by the parent writer

i don't do it so they can call me bachelor or master or doctor

i don't do it because i want to listen to all those older white men talk for hours about
their areas of expertise without ever acknowledging their power and their privilege
and their entitlement

i don't do it so i can then turn around and "rightfully" claim my own place in all of this

i don't do it to be a broke-ass graduate student for like a decade

how shall i begin my story

that has no beginning

in these arroyos my great grandfather raised cattle

before the anglos ever came⁴⁶

y como yo digo siempre

aun muerta seguiré luchando

⁴⁶ the opening monologue from the *salt of the earth* (1954); a film written by michael wilson and directed by herbert j. biberman.

i do it because i like to fly

i do it because i want to be freedom

i do it because i believe “study is necessary for liberation”⁴⁷, and at so many levels

i do it because of the people of morococha

i do it because of your tío kiko, i miss him so much

i do it because of ramona

our roots go deep in this place

deeper than the pines

deeper than the mine shafts

this is my village

so it is better to speak

remembering

we were never meant to survive⁴⁸

⁴⁷ i’m pretty sure fred moten said this during a reading at ucsd in 2015, or i might’ve dreamt it. either way, i strongly believe he should be credited for the line.

⁴⁸ *litany for survival*, audre lorde.

i do it because i believe in what happens when people get together

and share

i do it because i believe in the struggle miqel

it's a question of resistance

when i was a child it was called san marcos

the anglos changed the name to zinc town

zinc town, new mexico

u – s – a

this is our home

y como yo digo siempre

aun muerta seguiré luchando

i do it because it's always worth it

even when it seems like it's not, especially when it seems like it's not

i do it because i don't want to compete and professionalize, compete and professionalize, compete and professionalize

i do it because i still believe in the public university, even after they suspended and fired so many of my colleagues and friends just for protesting in favor of a cost-of-living adjustment, even after they brought in the cops, once again, and brutalized the students

i still believe in the public university

and i believe higher education can be done without creating indebted beings

the house is not ours

but the flowers

the flowers our ours

so it is better to speak

remembering

we were never meant to survive

i do it because i don't give a fuck anymore, i don't give a fuck anymore, i do it because i don't give a fuck anymore, somewhere within the open pit

i do it because i'm bookish and i like drugs, convoluted mechanisms of intellection and abstraction, why does the word academic have to be dirtied up in the process?

i do it because i want to change the way i feel towards the word academic

i do it because i like talking to people about the expansiveness of words, like objects, falling

i do it because i'm falling, like words

i do it because i'm bookish and i like drugs

you don't say good luck

you say don't give up

i do it because i don't believe the peruvian government when they said it was necessary to declare a state of emergency in morococha because of the "widespread protests and social unrest" which allowed the authorities to close down the schools and health centers and force the residents of morococha to relocate

i do it because of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and all the residents of morococha that were kind enough to share their stories with me

i do it because i believe in their struggle

i believe in trying to make this world a better place for everyone, and not just for some

my name is esperanza

esperanza quintero

i am a miner's wife

y como yo digo siempre

aun muerta seguiré luchando

i do it because of you mijo

i do it because of you

i do it because i hope you'll want to try too, and struggle, and fight to make this world
a better place for everyone, and not just for some

es injusto no tomar partido

i do it because i hope you'll want to, because it's always a choice

“but what if i don’t want to struggle papi
what if i just want to surrender
and quietly go away?”

i would say that i love you, i love you, and i would say don’t give up, don’t give up,
don’t ever give up, and i love you, i will always be here with you, don’t give up,
because there’s so much love and beauty in the world, and i’d be sad that i wasn’t
able to help you realize that it’s always worth it, the struggle, it’s always worth it
migel, and it’s necessary, it’s necessary, but i would never hold it against you,
because i love you, i love you, don’t give up, i will always be here with you, and it’s a
choice mijo, it’s your choice

it’s the fire
inside you

i do it because i hope you’ll want to make that choice

i do it because i hope you’ll always want to make that choice

so it is better to speak
remembering
we were never meant to survive

flight instructions:

you and me

damon albarn

bread and butter

the roots

six days

dj shadow / mos def

amante bandido

miguel bosé

everything now

arcade fire

here comes the river

patrick watson

you can't stop me now

rza

king kunta

kendrick lamar

citizen cope

fame

everything is free

gillian welch

penny for a thought

saul williams

strange overtones

david byrne

puente

gustavo cerati

el amor acaba

jose jose

push

pharoahe monche

bingo bingo

jimmy whoo

the fire

the roots / john legend

**testimonios (or the passages in italics and in spanish throughout the text,
translated into english)**

and as i always say: even dead i'll keep fighting

*

that's why i was telling you

ask this person

ask that person

don't just rely on what i'm telling you

take from this person

take from that person

and come to your own conclusions

that's it

*

this hospital is killing me...

i don't know why they have me here

the morphine is killing me slowly

i want to be with my children
someone has to listen to us
we don't have enough money to get justice

*

as a mayor he had to fight for his town
money is stronger sometimes
and you humiliate others
look at us now

*

the mayor's office is a mine

*

we were better off before
when we had underground mining
chinalco is a cancer
this town should be thriving
someone has to tell our story

my son's first words:

ollanta traitor

*

chinalco workers are forbidden to buy what we here sell

*

out of indignation and so much fear

because it was too much abuse

my district was filled with police

you couldn't even walk

and there were no answers to give our children

i remember they called for a town meeting

and i stood in front of the authorities and i told them

enough with the abuse

this can't go on

because we're not criminals

we haven't violated anyone

much less killed anyone

let's unite together

someone has to hear us

someone has to know

and at midnight we were already leaving for lima

with our children

to protest

to make sure they hear us

and because we came to lima

the only thing, we didn't achieve much

but we made sure our town was demilitarized

and since i got into the struggle

i have suffered a lot because

it's not easy being a woman and leading a protest

because they kidnapped me

some police then they beat me up

and my son is, was born here

that's why i defend it

because of the injustice

so much fear

i became a rebel

and that's why i fight

before i didn't understand neither why to struggle

but when this arrived to my town

i understood a lot

i understood a lot and i got into the struggle

i put everything into this struggle

and as i always say

even dead i'll keep fighting

even dead

i'll keep fighting

*

don't be afraid neighbors

don't be afraid of the chinalco company

*

the voice of the people is the voice of god

we know who the guilty ones are

promises, nothing but promises

even the cops from here, defend the company

several young men live in lima or huancayo now, they forgot about their

mothers and land, they don't spend their money in morococha

it is what it is, our reality is sad, so much abuse, i don't trust anyone anymore

*

what's left for us?

crying, nothing else

what's left for us?

what's left for us?

*

up top you didn't have what you have here, but people were happy

it was beautiful how we lived here

*

we've all been miners

*

they have closed down our schools

they have closed down our utilities

*

what are we going to do? what's going to happen to our children?

*

it's not like before

there's no more neighborly feeling anymore

community like

it's different

down here

*

peruvians snitch on each other for a plate of lentils

*

without money there's no justice

*

they haven't listened to us, we've been in the government palace

how many times have we eaten in the san martin plaza?

we have eaten on cardboard, with our children

*

because morococha was a hospitable town before

*

what do you think lady that i'm going to award you because you stayed?

that's what the guy from chinalco told me

*

the thing is... what do i want: that this town be respected as such, these human beings that breathe the air, watch the day and the sunset

*

that we be respected like any other human in any other part of the world. That we have all of our rights, nothing else, we don't want something else

*

but when that doesn't happen...

*

but when that doesn't happen...

*

i want work

with work

i can educate my children

*

we did this amongst peruvians

*

are you with la chinalco?

*

are you with la chinalco?

*

are you with la chinalco?

*

and as i always say
even dead i'll keep fighting

*

and as i always say
even dead i'll keep fighting

*

and as i always say
even dead i'll keep fighting

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