Arraigos: Experiences of Violence and Belonging in Neoliberal Peru

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Abstract:

What does it mean to "belong" in a place shaped by post-war legacies and recent neoliberal reforms? My doctoral thesis explores the connection between violence and belonging in the Tambo Valley (Islay, Arequipa) of Peru, where a community of small-scale farmers affected by ecological crisis and economic instability also contends with a mining conflict that has produced three prolonged episodes of state violence (in 2011, 2015, and 2019).

My project centres on the Tía María mining conflict, an ongoing eco-territorial dispute between Tambo Valley residents and the Southern Peru Copper Corporation, which in 2009 announced its controversial plans to build two open-pit mines on the plateau rising above the Tambo River. During my fieldwork, the 24,000 people living in the Tambo Valley were contending with—not only the mining conflict—but also the devaluation of their crops due to trade agreements eliminating import taxes on staple crops (2015-2021), and with unstable crop yields due to the expansion of the Pasto Grande dam, which since the 1990s has been altering the flow and chemical composition of the river. The forms of militarized repression, ecological crisis, and precarity experienced by the residents of the Tambo Valley are the result of three decades of state reforms, which began during the dictatorship of Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) in a period of internal armed conflict (1980-2000). Between 2016 and 2019, I conducted 19 months of fieldwork with a group of Valley residents, farmers, market workers, and activists concerned with small-scale agriculture in Arequipa.

Among my interlocutors in Southern Peru, the word *arraigo* is used to describe a kind of rootedness that includes both attachment to a place and to other people. These ethico-material attachments—such as the relationships between farmers and the valley's land and water, or between neighbours and family members who share risks and resources as they live at the

margins of the state—are what I am calling "belonging." Drawing from my ethnographic fieldwork as well as anthropological scholarship on the image and ordinary ethics, I suggest that belonging is not a fixed attachment to a given order of things, but rather, a continuous effort at responding to the ambivalent contradictions and losses that make up a social world.

Paying close attention to the institution of the *pollada*—a Peruvian fundraising practice where the sale of fried or oven-roasted chicken helps a hosting party cover overwhelming expenses—I focus on how the layered forms of violence that intersect at the margins of Peru's neoliberal state are absorbed, refracted, and circulated. In doing so, this thesis produces a theory of belonging that does not eschew conflict or violence, but rather attends to the heterogeneous and often contradictory ways in which people are continuously made and unmade through precarious attachments to uncertain social worlds.

Résumé:

Que signifie "appartenir" à un lieu façonné par les héritages de l'après-guerre et les récentes réformes néolibérales ? Ma thèse de doctorat explore le lien entre la violence et l'appartenance dans la vallée de Tambo (Islay, Arequipa), où une communauté de petits agriculteurs, touchée par une crise écologique et une instabilité économique, doit également faire face à un conflit minier ayant engendré trois épisodes prolongés de violence étatique (en 2011, 2015 et 2019).

Mon projet se concentre sur le conflit minier de Tía María, un litige éco-territorial en cours entre les habitants de la vallée de Tambo et la Southern Peru Copper Corporation, qui a annoncé en 2009 ses projets de construire deux mines à ciel ouvert sur le plateau dominant la rivière Tambo. Au cours de mon travail sur le terrain, en plus du conflit minier, les 24 000 habitants de la vallée de Tambo ont également dû faire face à la baisse des prix de leurs cultures en raison d'accords commerciaux éliminant les taxes à l'importation sur les cultures de base (2015-2021) et à des rendements de cultures instables dus à l'expansion du barrage de Pasto Grande, qui modifie depuis les années 1990 le débit et la composition chimique de la rivière. Les formes de répression militarisée, de crise écologique et de précarité vécues par les habitants de la vallée de Tambo résultent de trois décennies de réformes étatiques, initiées pendant la dictature d'Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) au cours d'une période de conflit armé interne (1980-2000). Entre 2016 et 2019, j'ai mené dix-neuf mois de travail sur le terrain avec un groupe d'habitants de la vallée, d'agriculteurs, de travailleurs du marché et d'activistes s'intéressant à l'agriculture à petite échelle à Arequipa.

Dans le sud du Pérou (parmi mes interlocuteurs dans le sud du Pérou), le mot "arraigo" est utilisé pour décrire une sorte d'enracinement qui inclut à la fois l'attachement à un lieu et aux

autres personnes. Ces attachements éthico-matériels, tels que les relations entre les agriculteurs et la terre et l'eau de la vallée, ou entre voisins et membres de la famille partageant des risques et des ressources tout en vivant en marge de l'État, constituent ce que j'appelle "l'appartenance". En m'appuyant sur mon travail ethnographique ainsi que sur les travaux anthropologiques sur l'image et l'éthique ordinaire, je suggère que l'appartenance n'est pas une fixation à un ordre donné des choses, mais plutôt un effort continu pour répondre aux contradictions ambivalentes et aux pertes qui constituent un monde social. Ma thèse commence par un récit proche de l'expérience des incertitudes qui pèsent sur les difficultés d'appartenance dans la vallée de Tambo à mesure que le conflit de Tía María se poursuit.

Ensuite, en prêtant une attention particulière à l'institution de la pollada, une pratique péruvienne de collecte de fonds où la vente de poulet frit ou rôti au four aide une partie hôte à couvrir des dépenses écrasantes, elle se concentre sur la manière dont les formes superposées de violence qui se croisent aux marges de l'État néolibéral du Pérou sont absorbées, réfractées et circulées. Ce faisant, elle produit une théorie de l'appartenance qui n'évite pas le conflit ou la violence, mais qui s'attache plutôt aux manières hétérogènes et souvent contradictoires dont les gens sont continuellement faits et défaits par des attachements précaires à des mondes sociaux incertains.

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INTRODUCTION

On a Sunday in July 2017, Ismael Huanca and his father, Don Octavio,[i] took me to the river to look for shrimp. It was a clear winter morning during my second stay at their home in the Tambo Valley—a string of towns on the delta of the eponymous river, which runs from the highlands of Peru's southern regions of Puno and Moquegua to the subtropical desert along the coast of the region of Arequipa. After breakfast, we walked down the ravine behind their family's place and then along the banks hedging the small, odd-shaped fields at the bottom of the valley, which were planted mostly with potatoes and wheat. In less than an hour we reached the sandy edge of the shallow water, a beach of braided rivulets where a few pieces of driftwood and large rocks had been left stranded after the summer rains, untouched for maybe three or four months.

Ismael and Don Octavio were wearing flip-flops but moved nimbly down the rubble of the embankment that contains the river so that when it swells it does not ruin the nearby fields. I, on the other hand, moved clumsily, using my hands to hold on to the rocks as I climbed down with my back to the water. At the bottom, I took off my tennis shoes and joined Ismael and his father, who were already ankle deep looking for shrimp. The water, which was clear and not too cold, flowed over round stones covered with algae, making a slippery surface. I moved slowly at first, with my arms stretched out—partly for balance and partly to more easily catch myself should I fall. Ismael laughed and said that unless I was looking for shrimp with my toes, I would have to crouch to find anything at all.

We had not expected a big catch that morning, but soon enough Ismael pulled out a shrimp the length of his palm. It had a faintly translucent shell, tinted coral except for the

intensely blue tips of its pincers and tail. Soon his father found another, and within just a few minutes I was walking over to the edge of the water to get the three plastic bags that Don Octavio had stashed in my backpack that morning before leaving, "just in case" (*por si acaso*). Then, our bags already weighed down by a few fistfuls of shrimp, we climbed from the riverbed to begin looking through the irrigation canals that connect the river to farmers' plots (*pozos*). Sinking our feet into the soft clay of these dug-out tranches, we slipped our hands into stony crevices and under long blooms of algae like long wigs strewn across the mud. At the end of our day trip, we had gathered perhaps 2 kilos of shrimp, which Ismael and his father were excited to turn into chowder (*chupe de camarones*).

Once we returned to the homestead, Don Octavio put the shrimp in a plastic bin and washed them under the water pump in the yard while his wife, Señora Antonia, picked some black mint, or *huacatay*, from the garden behind the bullpen. Then, the four of us sat around the kitchen table to peel potatoes and broad beans, shuck hominy corn, and cube slices of *macre* squash. When we finished, Ismael lightly fried a few handfuls of shrimp in oil until their shells turned a bright orange colour, and the kitchen filled with a smell both briny and sweet. Then, he removed the shrimp from the heat and set them aside, adding some diced onions, garlic, and tomatoes to the pot, plus a small pinch of salt. After the *aderezo* began to caramelize, Ismael dropped a few spoonfuls of *panca* pepper in the pot, which he kept from cooking down by filling the pot halfway with water. Before serving, he added the black mint and the shrimp that he had set aside, pouring evaporated milk into the boiling broth, stirring gently until it turned a light coral colour, with red beads of oil on the surface. Lastly, he turned down the fire on the two-range gas stove and gently cracked a few eggs into the chowder.

We had our meal in the kitchen, sitting around a picnic table with a pink vinyl cloth

decorated with a repeating pattern of roses arranged in circles. Señora Antonia cut thin slices of fresh cheese and laid them on our steaming plates and her husband brought out a few hot peppers from the fridge, which his sister Paula had grown in the town of Pedregal, a two-hour drive north of us on the Pan American Highway. No prayers were said, but as we began to eat, Don Octavio said that he had not expected to find so many shrimp in the river.

Then, Ismael turned to me with a thrill of playful transgression subtly flashing across his face and insisted that the shrimp of Tambo Valley were the best tasting in all the regional valleys because "they come pre-seasoned" (*vienen presazonados*). Ismael's joke referred to the water quality in the valley, which has been in decline since the early 1990s due to changes in the operations of a large-scale infrastructure upstream—the Pasto Grande am in the upstream region of Moquegua (Arenas Figueroa 2018: 246-251). The quality and inconsistent flow of the Tambo River had already been a subject of conversation throughout my visit and so, by then, I had a clear enough picture of the damage the dam had done.

Some of the river's tributaries run through volcanic soils that are highly mineralized and contain particularly elevated levels of boric acid and arsenic. Until 1992, these metalloids were significantly diluted by the fresh water of the Vizcachas River, and their presence near the delta was negligible. However, after the Pasto Grande dam began to capture these waters to broaden irrigation for agriculture in the region of Moquegua, the river and land near the coast had become increasingly toxic. Then, in the 2010s, as the Quellaveco mine (owned by Anglo American) began to take a more prominent role in the management of the dam, the situation downstream quietly grew into an ecological crisis (Orihuela 2022). For farmers like the Huanca family, this has meant trying to mitigate the diminishing yields of their crops through experimental farming practices and dealing with chronic health problems of varying intensities.Therefore, when Ismael

said that the valley's shrimp came "pre-seasoned," he was referring to the higher traces of boric acid and arsenic found in the food produced in the valley. Still testing the ground between us, Ismael mentioned that visitors from the city often complained about the taste of the water. He then picked up the plastic jar from the table and gently swirled it around to show me the small white sediment at the bottom. The joke was barbed, and though surely pointing in more than one direction, it drew my attention to the ambivalent ways in which Ismael knew poison and pleasure to be folded into the very conditions of life in the Valley.

While we had a wonderful morning together fishing for shrimp and preparing a delightful meal, Ismael's remarks served as a reminder that the food on our plates contained some unfathomable degree of harm, which could not be ignored or avoided, so long as they continued to try and make a living from the land. The Huancas, like many other farmers in the Valley, had come to partially imagine this potential for harm while witnessing, over the years, the impact of the river's changing waters on their land, and wondering what it might also be doing to their bodies.

Ismael's joke, while carrying a sharp edge, did not seem accusatory or overly hostile. Instead, in the time since my fieldwork, I have come to interpret it as a gesture expressing the textures of violence and desire that are part of life in the Tambo Valley. Though seemingly ordinary, it reframed nourishment as something that is both poisonous and pleasurable, thus conveying something profound about belonging—not just in the Valley but also at the margins of the state in neoliberal Peru, and elsewhere.

Arraigo is a word used in Southern Peru (at least among my interlocutors there) to describe a kind of rootedness that includes both attachment to a place and to other people. These ethico-material attachments—such as the relationships between farmers and the valley's land and

water, or between neighbours and family members who share risks and resources as they live at the margins of the state—are what I am calling "belonging." Drawing from my ethnographic fieldwork as well as anthropological scholarship on the image and ordinary ethics, I suggest that belonging is not a fixed attachment to a given order of things, but rather, a continuous effort at responding to the ambivalent contradictions and losses that make up a social world. Or, if the language of "social world" feels inappropriate, let me say, the forms of interdependence and estrangement that give rise to a self.

So, when I speak about belonging, what I mean is the way we conjugate the different modes of care that connect us to the people, places, and things that enable our existence. This implies that instead of defining belonging as a matter of recognition, a sense of acceptance, or an inherently harmonious and desirable state, I am thinking of it as the enactment of the many relations that make us matter in particular ways. These forms of connection are enlivening in ways that do not exclude contestation, grief, and loss.

This experience has taught me that to be part of a world entails drinking and breathing its poisons, and whenever possible, finding ways of mitigating their harm. I can imagine that some readers might take this as a pessimistic call for resignation, but it is not. Far from resigning to the slow violence of environmental degradation (Nixon 2011), since 2004, many residents of the Tambo Valley have been working together to reclaim the resources held by the Pasto Grande dam and to advocate for an alternative freshwater source to restore the river (Orihuela 2022). In the meantime, however, even as this deadlocked enclosure profoundly shapes how people live and die in the Valley, life still goes on, and as it does, it needs nourishment. Let me bring us back to the shrimp for a moment, and with it, to the river, and to the metalloids that seep into the land, and to the things that are grown on that land, which are both sold to make a living and eaten to

stay alive. As it stands, what valley residents eat and what they give and receive to stay alive (even after death) includes these forms of poison and pleasure.

So, when I say that to be part of a world is to find a way to drink and breathe its poisons, I am not saying that people have resigned themselves to a life of absorbing boric acid and arsenic and enduring their adverse effects (such as higher risks of anemia and cancer). Rather, I wish to say that, even within deadlocked enclosures, there are things that make life and struggle possible, which are important to pay attention to—for example, the intelligence to survive a killing machine that is larger than the mind, the patience and memory to steer through bitter compromises, and the forms of beauty that can draw us to the world, however minimally, even in the midst of loss. What, then, does it mean to belong in a small agricultural community, where the violence of a mining conflict, long-standing environmental crisis, and intermittent disruptions of economic precarity fray the relations between people and the place in which they live? How is belonging achieved at the margins of the state in neoliberal Peru? And what can an ethnographic account of belonging amid conflict tell us about the politics and ethics of living in troubling times?

INTIMATE POISONS

The environmental crisis produced by the Pasto Grande dam is only one of the many pressures that put the lives and livelihoods of the people living in the Tambo Valley at stake. The Tambo Valley is the site of one of Peru's longest lasting conflicts over the construction of a large-scale mining project. In 2009, the Southern Peru Copper Corporation, a local subsidiary of Grupo Mexico,[ii] announced its plans to invest $1.4 billion USD in a venture that aims to extract

120 thousand tons of copper cathodes per year for 18 years. Government authorities presented the project as essential for the country's economic development, and in turn, the so-called 'Tía María' mining project was also celebrated by Peru's major media outlets.[iii] One of the project's most controversial features are its open-pit mines, which according to the company's plans, will be located at 3 and 7 kms from the Tambo River. However, independent estimates have suggested that according to the company's plans, the nearest crater is projected at 1.2 km from the water's edge (Dunlap 2019, Lapa Romero 2017). For almost fifteen years, environmental activists, most Valley residents, and Peruvians invested in local agriculture and food security have opposed the Tía María project. Critics of the Tía María project have different reasons for opposing its construction. A significant concern for many, however, is its potential impact on the Tambo River itself, which irrigates 15,000 hectares of farmland and provides water to the homes of 24,000 people (Red Muqui 2020).

As the residents of the Tambo Valley confront the Tía María conflict, they are not only dealing with unpredictable crop yields due to changes in the river's chemical composition but also a decrease in the prices of their products in national markets. This combination has pushed many families into debt (Martínez Tuesta 2017). The drop in prices is linked to the Free Trade Agreements that Peru has gradually established with neighbouring countries, a process that began in 1993 with the members of the Andean Community. This trend continued with Peru's inclusion in the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) in 2005, leading to the progressive elimination of import taxes on essential food staples starting in the 2010s.

Lastly, alongside a mounting environmental crisis and intensifying economic precarity, the farmers and townspeople opposing the advent of large-scale extraction in the Tambo Valley are also confronted with extraordinary forms of police and military repression, surveillance, and

criminalization. Since the grassroots movement advocating for the cancellation of the Tía María project started using indefinite strikes (*paros indefinidos*) and blockades of the Pan American Highway (*bloqueos de vías*) as protest strategies in 2010, Peru's government authorities and mass media outlets have increasingly portrayed mine critics as a threat to national security (Pinto Herrera 2016a, 2016b). Relying on unfounded claims that the protests contesting the mine were financially backed by terrorist groups and illegal mining networks, former Presidents Alan García (2006-2011) and Ollanta Humala (2011-2016) deployed thousands of police and military forces to the Valley in 2011 and 2015. This resulted in two extended periods of occupation, during which clashes between Valley residents and the militarized forces of the state resulting in hundreds of injuries.

In 2011, four residents of the Tambo Valley were fatally shot in clashes with the Peruvian National Police. The victims were Andrés Taype Choquepuma (22) on April 4th, and on April 7th, Aurelio Huacarpuma Clemente (50), Néstor Cerezo Patana (31), and Miguel Ángel Pino (23) were killed. In 2015, three more residents lost their lives in the same way. They were Victoriano Huayna Nina (61) on April 22nd, Jenrry Humberto Checya Chura (35)[iv] on May 5th, and Ramón Colque Vilca (55) on May 22nd. Additionally, on May 6th, Brigadier Alberto Vásquez Durand (51) was allegedly attacked by a crowd enraged by the murder of Humberto Checya. After receiving multiple blows to the head, Vásquez Durand died of a traumatic brain injury on May 9th.[v]

With the escalation of the mining conflict, the Valley's larger townships witnessed intermittent riots and acts of vandalism against homes and properties of individuals who openly supported or opposed the mine. During the second militarized occupation, many Valley residents experienced—in addition to the disproportionate use of police and military force at protests—

numerous violations of civil rights and due process. In conversations with journalists and human rights lawyers in Arequipa, I learned that some demonstrators at rallies and roadblocks had been implicated with false evidence, leading to criminal trials that were eventually dismissed. Disturbingly, Valley residents have also reported instances where they or their neighbours have been forcibly removed from their homes during night raids and detained without documentation for up to two days. These claims have been largely disregarded by the Public Ministry.

Similarly, the investigations into the hundreds of injuries and eight murders officially linked to the Tía María conflict by the National Office of the Ombudsperson (*Defensoría del Pueblo*) have been dismissed by the Public Ministry. The exception being for the death of Humberto Checya, in which case, the first hearing on the charges of murder pressed against Sergeant Dalmer López Cáceres took place in March 2022 (Prensa Regional 2022).[vi] The brunt of this investigation was conducted by a team of public prosecutors under the direction of María Alejandra Cardenas. In its final stage, the case encompassed a group trial involving 14 community leaders (dirigentes) facing five different charges. These charges included illicit association with criminal intent, disturbance of the peace, extortion, and two separate counts of obstructing public services. While some of these charges implicated all defendants (such as, illicit association and disturbance of the peace), others only pertained to specific individuals.[vii] In February 2022, only three of the accused were sentenced to thirteen, seven, and twelve years in prison.[viii]

These overlaid dynamics of repression, economic precarity, and environmental crisis affect Valley residents in heterogeneous ways. In part, how families of farmers like the Huancas are exposed to these different forms of violence depends not only on how openly they take a stance on the Tía María conflict, but also on where they live. The Tambo Valley is comprised of

five administrative districts in the province of Islay, located on the southern coast of the region of Arequipa. These districts are Cocachacra, Dean Valdivia, Punta de Bombón, Mejía, and Mollendo (the provincial capital), and do not include the province's eponymous sixth district of Islay, an urban area built around the port city of Matarani (Figure 1). The districts of Cocachacra, Dean Valdivia, and Punta de Bombón border the Tambo River and are also crossed by a tract of the Pan American Highway that runs through the town of El Fiscal and serves as one of the main arteries linking the valley to the regional capital of Arequipa. At the same time, the Pan American Highway effectively divides the valley into two sections, often referred to by residents as *valle arriba* (upstream from the Highway) and *valle abajo* (downstream from the Highway) (Figure 2). Far from being a trivial distinction, this division marks important differences in infrastructure and access to services. During the Tía María conflict, marked differences in road infrastructure, along with the absence of suitable places for accommodating large police and military contingents, meant that people living in the upstream townships of the Tambo Valley experienced less policing compared to the residents of downstream communities. At the same time, the conflict exacerbated the challenges of limited mobility for upstream residents who already faced constraints due to fewer available transport services.

For the Huanca family, who reside upstream and cultivate an area of 4 hectares (divided into several small plots, or *pozos*, scattered along the river), the relative inaccessibility of their community has been both a blessing and a curse. While, on the one hand, they did not regularly worry that Ismael and Don Octavio might become targets of police surveillance or abduction (as was the case with the men of many families downstream), on the other, the decreased availability of transport also increased its cost. Consequently, since farmers upstream obtain their seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers from retailers in the town of Cocachacra, the rising costs of

transportation also made farming itself far more expensive. In turn, the Huanca family entered two cycles of debt precipitated by losses precipitated by the conflict in 2011 and 2015 on their crops of rice, potatoes, and wheat. A third militarized occupation in 2019, the Coronavirus pandemic, and a shortage of synthetic fertilizers (ureic acid) resulting from the war between Ukraine and Russia (Zegarra 2022) meant that the Huanca family did not come out of debt until 2022. Whenever we spoke about his family's financial situation (both during fieldwork and, after I returned to Montreal, by phone), Ismael would often compare farming in the Valley to gambling, and insist that the Tia Maria conflict had only made this already precarious situation even more difficult (*el agro, acá, es como ir al casino, pero ahora con el conflicto, más que antes*).

Beyond the struggles that the Huanca family had with debt and the unstable economy of family farming, the mining conflict added other, subtler layers of hardship to their lives and the lives of their neighbours. Healthcare provision in the Tambo Valley is extremely limited. As of the end of my fieldwork in 2019, with only a few clinics (*postas médicas*) and a single hospital in the city of Mollendo,[ix] valley residents often traveled to the city of Arequipa for specialized medical care. During the conflict, the prospect of traveling to a militarized zone to look for transport to the city made the experience of addressing health issues extraordinarily distressing, not only because of the expense and logistical problems of getting there and back, but also because of the fear of getting caught up in the clashes between police and demonstrators. During the militarized occupations of 2011 and 2015, the Huanca family's health problems included Don Octavio's chronic back pain, a couple of physical injuries, and recurrent bronchial infections that affected, most of all, Ismael's son.

Lastly, the relative isolation of upstream communities also meant that some people in

these communities were asked to shelter family and friends facing police harassment or outright persecution downstream. These requests, whether accepted or not, often strained intimate ties as they entailed sharing limited resources and uncertain risks at a time of marked violence. When speaking to valley residents about their experiences of the militarized occupations that took place before my fieldwork, I learned that in 2015, as the police began using not only tear gas but also lead pellets to suppress peaceful marches, young men from the Valley's communities took initiative to safeguard demonstrators and help maintain the roadblocks that accompanied the general strikes. These contingents, known as *espartambos*, were composed of men as young as 15, who used shields made from wood or tin and slingshots to ward off riot police. Alleging that members of these self-defense groups received support from terrorist groups and illegal mining networks (Pinto Herrera 2016b), state forces began to raid the homes of Valley residents who were known or rumoured to be *espartambos*. It is in this context that many people living in the Valley made desperate pleas for shelter to friends and relatives upstream or in the city of Arequipa.

For instance, in one of the interviews I recorded with residents from the Valley's downstream townships, a woman recounted how she begged her sister-in-law to temporarily take her son into her home as a precaution for his safety. Señora Ambrosia's plea was at first turned down by her sister-in-law. However, when she managed to speak to her brother, he welcomed the young man into his family's home:

> I used to beg my sister-in-law, "Take my son with you because he can't stay here. Look, with things as they are, any day they might hurt him, or worse, even kill him." And she, well, no—no—she didn't want to support me, you know? She would say, "There's nowhere for him to sleep here. We can't, because of this, that, and the other." So, we were afraid at night. One time, the lights went out like that, all black, and we were [praying for them not to come]... After a few days, he also started going to sleep in the

> countryside, for a while, like that, until my brother returned from a trip he had taken to ——,[x] like that, and he told me for him to go with him to ——. Well, we sent him off, two, three months, I think. Then, by November, feeling more at ease, he came back. [*Yo le rogaba, pue, a mi cuñada, llévate a mi hijo porque acá no se puede quedar. Así, mira, como están las cosas, cualquier día me lo van herir, o peor hasta matar. Y ella, no—no, pue—no quería apoyarme, ¿no?, me decía, "acá no hay para donde él va a dormir. No podemos, qu'esto, qu'el otro." Entonces, ya pues, nos daba miedo en las noches. Una vez que se apagaron las luces así, ¡fum!, todo negro, "que no vengan, que no vengan," decíamos, dios mío… Ya luego de unos días, él también empezó a irse a dormir al campo, por un tiempo, así, hasta que mi hermano regresó de un viaje que había hecho para ——, así, y me dijo pa qu'el se vaya con él a ——. Ya, lo despachamos, dos, tres meses, creo. Ya luego, pa noviembre, ya más tranquilo, vuelta ha venido.*]

Near the end of our conversation, Señora Ambrosia told me that even though she was grateful for her brother's support, she could not forget the humiliation of begging his wife for help, nor that her being was met with "coldness" for her son's life (*una tampoco puede olvidar, ¿no?, esa humillación de rogar, más esa—¿que te digo?—esa, lo que es, pues, frialdad con la vida te tu hijo*). Later in my research, some of Señora Ambrosia's neighbours told me that her son had been involved in violent clashes with the police and that he was an *espartambo*.

In a similar situation, a neighbour of the Huancas sheltered his daughter's family after her husband was detained by the police. I have heard Señor Abel, who lives along the same winding dirt road as the Huancas, recount the experience twice. First, it surfaced spontaneously in a conversation with his neighbours, which I delve into in later chapters. We then returned to it in an intimate interview, where I also spoke with his family about how to maintain their confidentiality. From our conversations, I learned that the event took place at night and during a blackout, when unidentified police raided his son-in-law's home without a warrant, accusing him of supporting the *espartambos*. Edison—he explained—was held in custody for two days, during which time, his family did not know his exact whereabouts. After being violently questioned

about other Valley residents while in detention, Edison began to fear that someone he knew, possibly a neighbour, may have given his name to the police to ingratiate themselves with the occupying forces or divert attention away from their own home.

Edison's wife, Socorro, was the most detailed. On the night of our group conversation, both men told me that Edison was beaten, deprived of food, and threatened with being charged with abetting a "paramilitary group." As she saw Señor Abel and me off, however, she described the bruises on her husband's body when he returned home. Though the moment of our exchange was brief, it was enough to show me that the impression Edison's wounded body left on Socorro was not. I have since come to think of Edison's own sparseness of detail in speaking about the ordeal and its consequences as expressing an effort to contain the caustic force of his experience.

Señora Ambrosia's son and Edison were not the only people who feared or survived harrowing scenes of unlawful detention. The sociologist José Antonio Lapa Romero (2017) and the geographer Alexander Dunlap (2019) have both documented the violent escalation of state violence during the militarized occupation of 2015, noting valley residents' reports that the police cut off the lights in the Valley, threw rocks and tear gas into houses, planted false evidence on demonstrators, and carried out night raids on the homes of suspected organizers. From my own conversations with Valley residents, it appears that these events took place after the state of emergency was enacted in May and before October 20, 2015, when a contingent of police and military forces left the Valley (though some forces remained in place until the end of the year).[xi] In a particularly distressing account of the raids, Dunlap describes his conversation with a woman who reported pleading with the police not to throw tear gas into her house, expressing concern for her sick mother with bronchitis and 'a delicate heart.' Instead of heeding her plea, the police responded with the words, 'shut up, you shitty terrorist,' before attacking the woman's

house, provoking an urgent need to get her mother to the hospital in Arequipa (Dunlap 2019: 19).

Similarly, the anthropologist Daniel Quispe (2021) has also documented reports of state violence while conducting research into the negotiation mechanisms through which the Southern Peru Copper Corporation has been seeking to obtain Valley residents' consent for the project after the occupation of 2011. Keenly, Quispe Aguilar observed that Valley residents often employed phrases such as "being ground up" (*ser molido*) to describe "the beatings that detainees receive from the police, leaving them seriously injured with lasting consequences for life" (2021: 158). Though he does not elaborate on the significance of this language, after my own fieldwork, I could not help but think of the conspicuous absence of the word "torture" in both my notes and in my recorded interviews with Valley residents. People spoke of their fear of being "ground up," beaten (black, blue and until bleeding), starved, threatened with unlawful criminalization processes, and even temporarily disappeared. However, with just a few exceptions, almost no one said "torture."[xii] In 2015, a coalition of Peruvian NGOs[xiii] conducted two on-site visits to gather the testimonies of local authorities and Valley residents affected by the violence of the conflict. The first of these visits took place in May, before the state of emergency, and did not address the night raids or widespread tactic of arbitrary detentions. The second visit took place in June and therefore overlapped with the state of emergency and the time around which Valley residents alleged experiencing night raids and unlawful detentions—which is to say, abductions—that sowed so much fear in their communities. While the first report is available online through the website of Peru's National Coordinating Office for Human Rights (CNDDHH), the second one is not. Rather, I learned about it from reading a publication on women and mining conflicts by the journalist and poet Rocío Silva Santisteban (2017), who was a member of the CNDDHH in 2015, and participated in both observation missions. Strangely,

however, I have not been able to find this report.[xiv]

Instead, reading Silva Santisteban's *Women and Eco-Territorial Conflicts*, I learned of three different mining conflicts in which the Peruvian National Police was publicly denounced for torturing people who participated in grassroots mobilizations against three major mining projects (owned by Monterrico Metals, Glencore, and Newmont Mining Corporation).[xv] In detailing the violence of the Tía María conflict, Silva Santisteban writes in careful detail about the seven documented deaths and hundreds injuries associated with the state's disproportionate use of force. Equally, she describes how the experiences of water scarcity, masculinist leadership, betrayal, and activist criminalization have hampered grassroots organizing, and suggests that the *espartambos* respond to these pressures ambivalently by enacting a violent response in defense of a collectivity that is besieged by a situation of violence. I will return to this matter in more detail in the sub-section titled "Ethics & Politics," under the heading of "Belonging." For now, I wish to focus on one of the two matters that escape Silva Santisteban's analysis: the change in the chemical composition (and not just the flow) of the Tambo River, and Valley residents' experiences of night raids that took place during the 2015 state of emergency.[xvi] Many of the Valley residents who claimed to have endured or witnessed these raids remarked on the absence of police records. In parallel, reading the monthly reports on so-called "social conflicts" prepared by the Office of the Ombudsperson (*Defensoría del Pueblo*), I found no mention of the night raids either.[xvii]

As with the boric acid and arsenic in the river, talk of the night raids associated with the militarized occupation of the Valley in 2015 presents us with forms of harm that I call *intimate poisons*. Along with Michael Herzfeld (1998) and Lauren Berlant (2005), the Dutch anthropologist Peter Geschiere (2013) has suggested that we can think of intimacy in relation to

Sigmund Freud's (2003 [1919]) concept of the uncanny. This line of thinking suggests that rather than assuming that "intimacy, whether of the family or the neighborhood or other forms of proximity" (Geschiere 2013: 13) necessarily entails "a harmonious sphere of security" (*ibid.*: 28), we can understand it as coextensive with disavowed aggression. In this vein, Bhrigupati Singh has suggested theorizing intimacy as a relational mode that blurs the distinctions between public and private, and self and other—without assuming that this ambiguity is in itself "inherently good or bad" (Singh 2015:152). This perspective encourages an exploration of the ambivalences and ambiguities inherent in intimate relationships and to the proximate others, social worlds, and even modes of governance that make us possible (Berlant 1998).

In that sense, the concept of *intimate poisons* resembles Singh's concept of agonistic intimacy, which denotes the shifting degrees of mutual affirmation and hostility that shape relations between neighbours, or other people who are proximate to each other yet not necessarily friends (2015: 151). However, while Singh's concept emphasizes the forms of intimacy sustained alongside contestation, I aim to highlight the forms of harm embedded in the very conditions that shape and sustain life in a particular context.

When I speak of the presence of metalloids and state violence in the Tambo Valley as *intimate poisons*, I mean to say that these forms of harm blur with the lives of Valley residents and with the social worlds that make them possible. Put differently, for the time being, both metalloids and militarized violence are part of the conditions in which existence unfolds in the Valley, and as such, they become part of the relationships that make up the lives of its residents in ways that produce complicated textures of suffering and desire. Today, the conditions of environmental crisis, economic precarity, and militarized violence that give rise to these and other *intimate poisons* in the Tambo Valley and elsewhere in Peru are most immediately shaped

by recent experiences of internal armed conflict (1980-2000) and neoliberal reforms (1990-present), which in turn extend the long-standing histories of colonial domination and racial capitalism (de la Cadena 2000, Quijano 2000, Robinson 2000 [1983], Segato 2022).

Figure 1: Map of the six districts in the province of Islay, Arequipa, from "Riesgos y Potencialidades del VALLE DE TAMBO EN TIEMPOS DE LA COVID-19 Y REACTIVACIÓN ECONÓMICA," elaborated by Juan Aste Dafós for Red Muqui (Red Muqui 2020)

Figure 2: Map of the Tambo River delta (Islay, Arequipa) depicting the planned locations for the Tia Maria and La Tapada mines (red dots), along with the treatment plant for leaching copper from the extracted stone heap (blue dot). Elaborated by author using Google maps (and referencing Dunlap 2019, Red Muqui 2020)

WAR & THE MAKING OF NEOLIBERAL PERU

Let me now move out of the Tambo Valley and to the city of Arequipa, a two-hour drive across the desert plateau of La Joya, to describe a scene of grassroots mobilization. In 2019, public healthcare workers in Peru rallied to demand the fulfillment of their pay increase as per the standing agreement between the National Medical Federation (*Federación Nacional Médica*) and the National Ministry of Health (*Ministerio de Salud, MINSA*).[xviii] Regional mobilizations also occurred in Arequipa over demands for a larger budget for medical equipment, for which

there were intermittent rallies and strikes lasting from January to September (Diario EP 2019, Red de Comunicación Regional 2019). Coincidentally, the struggle of healthcare workers overlapped with the resurgence of the protests contesting the Tía María project. As a result, the struggles of both groups—healthcare workers and farmers—surfaced intermittently on local AM and FM radio stations for a few months, and were sometimes even thought alongside each other, presenting two clashing views of governance. While more conservative callers on regional news shows blamed the budgetary crisis on the country's waning economic growth, critics of the country's political-economic model blamed corruption fostered by institutional reforms designed to favour large-scale private investment as a path to development.

In June 2019, I joined a friend from the Anti-Corruption Civic Association (*Frente Anticorrupción de Arequipa*)[xix] at a rally, where grassroots activists contesting the Tía María project marched alongside healthcare workers contesting the ad-hoc austerity measures holding up their pay. My friend, Señor Aurelio is a tall man with a sonorous voice, which he often jokingly referred to as a "built-in speaker" (*vengo con parlante incorporado*). At the time, he was in his early 70s, had a portly build and a large beard. Usually, he would carry a shoulder bag, which dangled to his waist and gave his already-heavy gait a slant. I could tell that he was held in high esteem by his peers, not only because of his age and sagacity, but also because he spent more than five decades of his life participating in grassroots political movements across Southern Peru. He was a former member of the Vanguardia Revolucionaria (1963-1985), a "New Left" Marxist movement that aimed to challenge Peru's oligarchic history of statecraft by supporting peasant organizations and workers' unions in struggles over land and labour (Gamarra and Pimentel 2023).

Señor Aurelio was often asked to facilitate the association's meetings, or to accompany

local *dirigentes* during their interactions with public authorities. In June, at the march of farmers and hospital workers that took place, Señor Aurelio and I made our way to the back and stopped at each cross street to keep the intersecting traffic from breaking up the group. From this place, we could see the semi-armoured cars trailing a few metres behind us. I think I might have nearly forgotten this detail were it not for a man in camouflage mounted on top of the vehicle nearest to us. He had a long-barreled firearm out and pointed at the crowd, which is to say, us.

When Señor Aurelio noticed the young man, he turned to me and said, "do you see, brother? Neoliberalism is war!" (*¿ya ves, hermano? el neoliberalismo es guerra*). Though his remark was not meant to open a conversation, along with the density of the scene and the mystery of the young man's gesture, it echoed throughout my fieldwork as a series of questions. What could it mean to say, at the edge of an intermittently militarized mining conflict, that neoliberalism is war? What could it mean to say this in Peru, given the country's recent history of internal armed conflict? In what ways *is* neoliberalism war? And what is at stake in claiming this knowledge publicly? I do not intend to give a final answer to any of these questions, but I do wish to show how they matter to the understanding of contemporary Peru I have acquired through my fieldwork with Valley residents, farmers, market workers, and activists concerned with small-scale agriculture in Arequipa.

The Peruvian Miracle

Let me continue by noting that the regional controversies surrounding the public healthcare budget and the prospect of a mine in the Tambo Valley mirrored national debates on the crisis of the so-called "Peruvian Miracle." By 2019, as the pattern of rapid growth that began

in the 1990s and characterized the 2000s came to the fore as an ambivalent public concern, mainstream media outlets linked the state's budgetary challenges to the slowing economy due to declining investment in large-scale extractive and agroindustrial ventures (Abusada 2018, Cuba 2019). This outlook reflected the position of business lobbies such as the National Confederation of Private Business Institutions (*Confederación Nacional de Instituciones Empresariales Privadas, CONFIEP*) and the National Mining Society (*Sociedad Nacional de Minería*). (CONFIEP 2018). Both institutions saluted the government's decision to grant the Tía María a construction license in July 2019, and took the occasion to also lament that the "excessive red tape and overregulation, as well as social conflict, are factors that have become 'barriers' to new investment projects" (*excesiva tramitología y sobrerregulación, así como la conflictividad social, factores que se han constituido en "barreras" para nuevos proyectos de inversión*) (CONFIEP 2019). In turn, after approving the Environmental Impact Assessment submitted by the Southern Peru Copper Corporation, government authorities and the head of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, Francísco Ísmodes, insisted on the importance of large-scale mining in general, and the Tía María project in particular, to ensuring "economic and social growth" (*el crecimiento económico y social*) (El Peruano 2019). This impetus to frame large-scale mining as an essential resource for the country's development can be understood as a local expression of a much wider regional trend. Since its rise in the 1990s, Peruvian neoextractivism has relied and expanded on many of the institutional reforms designed during the dictatorship of Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) to incentivize foreign investments, precipitating a tenfold increase in yearly mineral exports between 2000 and 2015 (Svampa 2015).

Contending with the vision of Peru's economy promoted by the CONFIEP, independent journalists, activists, and civic associations critical of Peru's neoextractive "Miracle" highlighted

its unsustainability, arguing that over the past 30 years, the country's economic growth has come at the cost of corruption and rising inequality (CooperAcción 2017, Flores Unzaga 2019, Luna Amancio 2016, Oliva 2018). Among these groups, Red Muqui, an NGO dedicated to promoting social and environmental justice in areas impacted by large-scale mining, published a case study on the effects of this sector on small-scale agriculture, which supplies 70% of the food consumed in Peru (2019: 23). Noting that the area concessioned to mining more than doubled between 2002 and 2017, rising from 7.4 to 18.12 million hectares (*ibid.*: 29), the report then details the impact of mining on rural communities, focusing on the problems of water scarcity, pollution, structural impoverishment, and displacement. Additionally, communities that register the impacts of large-scale mining also become complicated sites of conflict, as some residents strive to document the effects of extraction to contest the presence of mining companies, while others, to negotiate better benefits. In this respect, the militarization of mining conflicts also presents a dense matter of concern for critics of neoextractivism in Peru. In 2019, the Legal-Defense Institute (Instituto de Defensa Legal) and EarthRights International published the first report documenting the security agreements between the Peruvian National Police since 1995. Thinking from within these national debates, and the discourses and effects they aim to generalize, Señor Aurelio's remark that "neoliberalism is war" gestured not only to the forms of extraordinary policing that have come to characterize Peru's economic model, but also to the destructive effects of corporate power. Moreover, though he was not explicitly making this argument at the time, in Peru's post-conflict context, there is yet another range of connections joining neoliberalism and war, as the country's neoliberal reforms were enacted during a period of internal armed conflict.

Between 1980 and 2000, Peruvians were immersed in a prolonged conflict involving the Armed Forces and two distinct guerrilla groups—the Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru

Revolutionary Movement (CVR 2003). This period of warfare resulted in the death and disappearance of 70,000 people, primarily hailing from rural and Quechua-speaking communities. Concurrently, during the 1980s and early 1990s, Peru also grappled with a crisis marked by hyperinflation and severe economic instability. The latter period of internal armed conflict bore the emergence of an authoritarian regime led by former President Alberto Fujimori and Intelligence Chief Vladimiro Montesinos. In the period from 1990 to 2000, Fujimori's administration implemented various institutional reforms aimed at stimulating private investment and economic growth. These reforms included restricting the influence of unions, introducing new specialized labour frameworks, privatizing state-owned enterprises, and establishing a regulatory framework for resource extraction (Carrión 2006, Degregori 2001, Pajuelo 2023).

Most controversially—much like in Pinochet's Chile—Fujimori's regime also spearheaded a redrafting of Peru's Constitution, which resulted in the adoption of a new ruling document in 1993. Backed by military and corporate elites, the process that led to the implementation of Peru's twelfth effective Constitution since the foundation of the Republic in 1821 is a well-known story for those who regard the country's "Economic Miracle" with skepticism, such as Señor Aurelio and many of the grassroots activists in his circle. Two years after being elected president by campaigning on the promise that he would not liberalize the economy, Fujimori disbanded the Peruvian Congress over a long-standing disagreement concerning security reforms that would severely limit civil rights. On the night of April 5, 1992, as military tanks and soldiers filled the streets of Lima's central districts, Fujimori gave a televised message to the nation, which dismissed Congress and called for general elections of a legislative body with constituent powers. In doing so, he made a rhetorical appeal to the exceptionality of Peru's "antiterrorist struggle" (*lucha antiterrorista*) and to "the real interests of

the people" (*los reales intereses del pueblo*) in socioeconomic changes that would defend the nation from "terrorism, narcotrafficking, and corruption" (*el terrorismo, el narcotráfico, la corrupción*). The event, which has since become known as Fujimori's "self-coup" (*autogolpe*), gave rise to the "Democratic Constituent Congress of 1992" (*Congreso Constituyente Democrático de 1992*). This year-long legislative assembly has been amply critiqued for lacking the participation of the country's major political parties and social movements. The following year, with 52.33% of voters approving the resulting draft in a national referendum with a turnout rate of 70%, the Constitution of 1993 came into effect, thus emerging as a central element in a process some social scientists in Peru deem to be an instance of "state capture" by corporate elites (Durand and Crabtree 2017).[xx]

As the basis for the mode of governance constituting Peru's "Economic Miracle," the country's so-called "neoliberal Constitution" has been at the heart of many conversations throughout my fieldwork on what neoliberalism is, and how it works in Peru. In this respect, my efforts at accounting for neoliberal governance in post-conflict Peru strives to attend to the tension between the impersonal economic rationalities that shape the conditions of life in late capitalism and the all-too-personal capture of state institutions by national elites (Escobar 1995, 2018, Harvey 2005, Schmelzer et al. 2022, Tsing 2005). In other words, I am approaching neoliberalism by attending to the discursive and material techniques that make up emplaced structures of domination, along with the people who extend them to profit exorbitantly from the inequalities they produce.

Thinking Neoliberalism in Peru

Economically speaking, neoliberalism is often conceived as a reduction of the state's authority over the market and the lives of individuals. In practice, however, neoliberal policies present us with a selective withdrawal and intensification of the state's presence, which differs significantly from other modes of liberal governance. As numerous scholars have pointed out, laissez-faire economics aims to reduce the intervention of the state in the workings of the market (and vice-versa), and Keynesianism, to carefully regulate national markets to manage economic cycles and fund state welfare policies (Brown 2003). Unlike either of these approaches, neoliberalism can be understood as a way of organizing the relations between the market and the state, which aims to stimulate economic growth through policies that promote private investment and maximize competition.

One way to approach neoliberal governance ethnographically is to attend to the ways in which different state formations actively deregulate markets and remove "barriers" to investment. In this respect, I have been influenced by Aihwa Ong's attention to the circulation of mobile technologies that enact economic rationalities of rule (Ong 2007). Ong uses the term "mobile technology" to refer to a discourse, practice, or instrument that both serves to accomplish a given purpose and circulates globally as different projects, aiming to coordinate statecraft around the demands of actors, adopt and adapt each other's tactics. Some well-known examples of such techniques are Special Economic Zones (SEZs), Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), Contracts of Work (COWs), Legal Stability Agreements (LASs), financial deregulation, flexible labour regimes, corporate tributary exemptions, austerity measures, the privatization public enterprises, and the marketization of education and healthcare—to name only a few tools

or techniques of neoliberal governance.

In Peru, the anthropologist Carlos Iván Degregori (2001) has written extensively on a mode of governance he calls *antipolítica*, which enabled the Fujimori regime to unilaterally implement ad-hoc adjustments at the limits of the state's institutional order. Degregori borrows the term *antipolítica* from the sociologist Nicolás Lynch (2000),[xxi] who uses it to describe what happens when an ongoing and complex crisis produces the implosion of the political institutions of a liberal democracy, both within the state itself and in the governance of political parties. Unlike Lynch, however, Degregori's account centres the *autogolpe* of 1992, which he refers to as its "primordial scene," that is to say, an event that reveals a central aspect of *antipolítica* as a mode of governance (Degregori 2001: 36). After dissolving Congress, between April and November of 1992, Fujimori became the sole head of Peru's so-called "Emergency and National Reconstruction Government" (*Gobierno de Emergencia y Reconstrucción Nacional*), and as such, he promoted the election of a new Constituent Legislature. Because of the unprecedented and wildly controversial nature of the situation, this transitional process did not include political parties or social movements, and was thus, directed by military and corporate elites. For the next eight years, Fujimori's regime continued to instrumentalize national catastrophes or ambiguities in the institutional ordering of the state to precipitate structural transformations (*ibid.*: 36-40).

Thus, for Degregori, in attempting to change the rules of the game through a shrewd manipulation of unprecedented circumstances, the *autogolpe* of 1992 reveals a technique of governance at the limits of authoritarianism. Insofar as this technique aims to bypass the normative pathways of institutional restructuration by instrumentalizing situations of generalized uncertainty—such as guerrilla warfare, environmental disaster, and political crises—it resembles disaster capitalism (Adams 2013, Klein 2007). Both disaster capitalism and *antipolítica* use

chaos to incite transitional processes in unprecedented circumstances. In doing so, I want to say that the instrumental use of uncertainty can be understood as a mobile technology for implementing neoliberal policies with minimal resistance. Moreover, in the case of *antipolítica*, this mobile technology is used to constitute a "volatile" mode of governance, where ongoing crises—at times induced through scandalous breaches of standing institutional norms—enable elites to incite and direct transitional processes in critical circumstances (Degregori 2001: 20, see also Durand and Crabtree 2017, Pajuelo 2023).

Within my fieldwork, the extraordinary forms of militarized policing that characterize the Tía María conflict present another example of a mobile technology of neoliberal governance. More specifically, they are part of a global array of discourses, institutional practices, and laws, which facilitate the use of extralegal force in defense of private investments deemed necessary for sustaining economic growth (Brock and Dunlap 2018, Simon Granovsky-Larsen & Larissa Santos 2021). A key part of this mobile technology are the figures of internal enmity, which aim to suspend the civil and human rights of people participating in grassroots movements against corporate interests (Drinot 2014).

In attending to the state's repeated use of disproportionate and extralegal force against Black communities in Chicago, Laurence Ralph (2017, 2020) has keenly observed that such forms of policing are extraordinary but not exceptional. With this claim, Ralph means to contest the idea that instances of torture, unlawful detention, and even murder are simply perpetrated by select officers rather than enacted as systemic practices built into the very hierarchies of the institution through different degrees of complicity. Moreover, in accounting for the relative tolerance of such abuses by wider publics, Ralph has noted the instrumental role that fantasies of Black predatory violence play in trivializing police brutality and enabling legal strategies for

police officers to evade sentencing (Ralph 2019). The racist trope of the "superpredator" recasts Black urban youth as having "no conscience, no empathy," and thus reasonably justifying that law enforcement personnel use extreme measures in bringing them "to heel" (*ibid.*: 7).[xxii] Effectively, such tropes work as figures of internal enmity that establish hierarchized regimes of citizenship, where deft combinations of discursive and legal manoeuvres enable the forces of the state to selectively target selective groups of people with unyielding intensity (Ong 2000, 2006).

Soon after the fall of Fujimori's regime, Deborah Poole and Gerardo Rénique (2003) published "Terror and the Privatized State: A Peruvian Parable," an article that observes the perverse affinity between neoliberal statecraft and the language of "terrorism" in post-conflict Peru. The article begins by noting the fear and uncertainty that pervaded Peru's internal armed conflict as unpredictable forms of guerrilla warfare, such as the use of car bombs (*coche-bombas*), were increasingly used against civilians (Poole and Rénique 2003: 150). Poole and Rénique go on to claim that the mass mediation of these harrowing scenes and their aftermath "introduced a new form of violence known as *terrorism* into the lexicon of Peruvian political life" (*ibid.*: 153).[xxiii] In newspapers and on television, images of guerrilla violence against civilians circulated in a macabre montage that juxtaposed the torn façades of buildings and gnarled metal shells of *coches-bomba* in Lima with maimed bodies and mass graves in the highlands. With a visceral dread that became quotidian, these flashes of horror were sutured to fragmentary narratives, all of them using the word "terrorism" to describe an all-too-partial knowledge of kidnappings, targeted murders, acts of public torture, sexual violence, and massacres.

From within a collective experience of violence, that was indeed terror-striking, the Fujimori regime made deft use of the fear—that no place or body was safe from the unseen

forces of the Shining Path—to adopt increasingly illiberal policing tactics. Instrumentalizing the shock and the language of "terrorism," the Fujimori regime intermittently implemented measures such as, "[the] suspension of habeas corpus, special military tribunals, sanctioned racial profiling, heightened surveillance, 'homeland security,' military checkpoints, unrestricted wiretapping, and censorship" (*ibid.*: 151, see also CVR 2003: III, 121-124). Crucially, Poole and Rénique keenly observe that these forms of policing "mimic[ked] the invisible and exceptional forms of power to which the terrorist so effectively lays claim" (*ibid*: 162). Though, as the historian Cecilia Méndez (2021) has recently demonstrated, it would be untrue to say that the internal armed conflict marks the introduction of such illiberal tactics into the Peruvian state, the violence of the Shining Path nevertheless marked an important shift in Peruvian discourses on "terrorism." In the 19th century, "terrorism" primarily referred to state violence against social movements. However, by the end of the 20th century, "terrorism" came to mean acts of violence perpetrated against civilians by an internal enmy. Ever since—as I will show in Chapters Two and Three—this concept has worked to partially strip people participating in social movements from their citizenship.

For ten years, the Fujimori regime exploited a binary logic—which divides the citizen from the terrorist—to justify "arbitrary arrest[s], disappearances, [extralegal executions],[xxiv] illegal wiretapping, surveillance, and even blackmail" as either exceptional measures or unfortunate "excesses" (Poole and Rénique 2003: 160). In doing so, "terrorism" changed the way state violence was "seen" (*ibid.*: 160), thus making it possible to air out the open secret of a liberal state precisely as it became most grotesquely evident (*ibid.*: 162). What makes Poole and Rénique's account a parable is that the darkest, intimate wartime secret of a third-world country, here Peru, is nothing more nor less than the irreducible paradox of the liberal state: those who do

not understand the non-violent practices of deliberative democracy must be taught, pleaded for, or killed (Mouffe 1999).

As Jo-Marie Burt (2007) has extensively documented through fieldwork and interviews with grassroots activists in 1990s Peru, the Fujimori regime used the figure of the terrorist to stigmatize, criminalize, and justify the murder of those who opposed its neoliberal policies. At this time, the rhetorical opposition between terrorist and citizen underpinning the discourses of Fujimori, military generals, and government authorities relied heavily on the pop economic theory promoted by Hernando de Soto through the Institute for Liberty and Democracy in Lima. A faithful adherent to the theories of Milton Friedman, De Soto (1987) framed guerrilla warfare in Peru as a result of excessive economic regulation, arguing that movements like the Shining Path arose precisely because of the failures of the free market in impoverished areas. De Soto's advocacy for an "economic answer to terrorism" focused on the need to formalize property relations, claiming that a stake in the free market would keep people from turning to violence out of resentment for their exclusion. As the Fujimori regime implemented these deregulation policies, it drew on De Soto's logic to accuse the members of left-wing social movements who opposed his reforms of opposing the country's economic development because they were affiliated with terrorist groups. Burt observes that as these discourses were deployed to generate stigma and organize state violence, they gave rise to a so-called "culture of fear," which is to say, a demobilization of civil society (2007: 155) and selective breakdown of citizenship (*ibid.*: 50-51). In this way, amid the pressures of guerrilla warfare and authoritarianism, citizenship in Peru came to be partially reconfigured around the wartime notions of economic growth.

In a post-conflict context—where the language of "terrorism" is still used to police and criminalize Peruvians participating in grassroots movements that contest corporate interests, such

as the Tía María project in the Tambo Valley—it bears to ask, *how is today's killing different from yesterday's war?*

This is a crude question, but one which I think needs to be asked and answered repeatedly. What is at stake in its dark music—and in my own questions about violence and belonging—is an embodied knowledge of the fractured past on which the present rests, with all its *intimate poisons*.

The writer and historian José Carlos Agüero has written eloquently on this ambivalent matter, noting that "we can still feel the war's consequences in towns, in neighborhoods, in politics, in institutions" (2021: 51), and yet—"you have to accept that war is not the same as peace, even though injustices and social conflicts never go away" (Agüero 2021: 28):

> The Peruvian war was brutal and atrocious. Still, it can't be compared to the postwar period, although it's true that certain constants make it tempting to erase the differences between past and present (such as poverty, exploitation, and racism) (*ibid.*)

For Agüero—the son of Shining Path militants, who were extralegally executed by the Peruvian state—accepting that *today's killing* is decidedly different from *yesterday's war* is what makes it possible to begin reckoning with the scandalous connections between the two. In line with Agüero, though not as a direct response, the anthropologist María Elena García (2021) has argued that using the term "post-conflict" to periodize the project of statecraft that emerged after Fujimori's ousting constitutes a form of cruel optimism (Berlant 2011). Here, rather than insisting that the conflict has not ended, I understand her to mean that the desire to live as if the conflict had never happened prevents us from reckoning with its irrevocable consequences, and therefore from beginning to live after the war, which is to say, amid its afterlives. Like the

biopolitical state and its forms of anonymous care (Stevenson 2014), extractivism too is a killing machine—and in Peru, one made from the rubble of another, which is war itself.[xxv]

In 2007, former President Alan García reinterpreted Hernando de Soto's ideas in a post-conflict context, suggesting that private investment in natural resource exploitation could spur economic growth and fund anti-poverty projects. García labeled critics of extractive development as suffering from the "syndrome of the dog in the manger," portraying them as irrational and harmful. This framing led to three militarized interventions targeting Indigenous and rural communities contesting extractive projects and new waves of neoliberal reforms.

In this context, Eric Hirsch's (2022) ethnography of extractive development in the Andean Provinces of Caylloma (Arequipa) and Espinar (Cusco) attends to the work through which corporate outreach programs and government agencies employ discourses of "growth" to enact a moral project. Hirsch's ethnography focuses on the semiotic, affective, and material aspects of these mediations, tracing the rise of "growth" as a concept and a structure of feeling, which scaffolds notions of community improvement around resource extraction. In turn, "growth" coordinates state and corporate practices that nurture structurally impoverished worlds to "ultimately [prime] them for extractive capitalism by transforming them into resources" exerting a hold that is both "tender and violent" (Hirsch 2022: 7). Like pastoral and anonymous care (García 2010, Stevenson 2014), the power relations Hirsch terms *extractive care* are thoroughly entangled with modern-colonial histories of improvement, which do not exclude domination.

However, Hirsch's account of domination stops short of acknowledging the relationship between Peru's internal armed conflict and the extraordinary forms of policing economic growth, which make *extractive care* possible. For example, working in the Tambo Valley, two

bus rides away from the town of Yanque (where Hirsch stayed during his fieldwork), the geographer Alexander Dunlap has focused instead on the link between economic growth and counterinsurgency (2019: 12). In such circumstances, for many Valley residents, the notions of growth associated with extractive development are experienced as a distinct lack of care (Dunlap 2019: 16). In turn, Dunlap argues that corporate social responsibility programs can be best understood through the lens of *social war* (Foucault 2003), as combining "the brute force of 'hard' conventional warfare and 'soft' strategies that form a larger mutually reinforcing governmental corporate strategy, disciplining, enchanting, and engineering the 'hearts' and 'minds' of target populations" (Dunlap 2023: 276). In trying to understand neoliberal governance in Peru, it is possible to argue for a synthetic reading of these concepts, for example by claiming that *extractive care* is a dimension of *social war*, and vice-versa. I think this is true, and that Hirsch and Dunlap's research complement each other. However, I wish to resist this act of conceptual closure, and instead attend ethnographically to the intimate textures of violence and belonging that emerge between the two.

BELONGING

On a weekday afternoon in May 2019, I visited Señora Francisca's home in the Tambo Valley. Seated at Señora Francisca's kitchen table, I listened as she told me about her family's efforts to take care of their crops of rice during a martial occupation of their community, which took place four years prior.

For Señora Francisca's family, the problem of how to take care of their crops while simultaneously avoiding the possibility of police and military violence became dire when her

nephew became a target of police harassment. For three months at the end of the rice season, Mateo and his uncle moved temporarily to the home of a relative outside the valley, while Señora Francisca watched the crops with the help of her daughter. Occasionally, the men returned to tend to their rice fields, and when they had to stay overnight in the valley, they slept outdoors to avoid being caught if their homes were raided.

Señora Francisca said that the fear she felt every day during those three months "put [her] soul at the mouth" (*el miedo me puso el alma en la boca*), meaning that it made her feel like she was at the very threshold of coming undone. And yet, even in describing this moment of intense uncertainty, she was also describing a group of people trying—as best they could—to distribute the risks and resources of an increasingly violent social world. As already mentioned, in my fieldwork with residents of the Tambo Valley and with the market workers and networks of activists, project participants often used the word *arraigo* to refer to these embodied histories of interdependence. That afternoon, Señora Francisca explained that *arraigarse*, the enactment of *arraigo*, means "to make oneself of a place" (*hacerse de un lugar*). Listening to Señora Francisca's experience, and thinking with it—more broadly—about the violent conditions it indexed and located at a margin of Peru's neoliberal state, I wondered: what—then—does it mean to make oneself of a place as this very place is being unmade?

The Tía María Conflict has undeniably precipitated new textures of violence, precarity, mistrust, and bitter resentment in the Tambo Valley. And yet, troubled as life in the Valley has become, most of the people who participated in my research did not wish to go elsewhere. Rather, they insisted, with both actions and words, that their connections to the Valley were integral to their very being.

Even though the Spanish word *arraigo* means "rootedness," the stories of *arraigo* that

project participants shared with me spoke less of fixed attachments to a given order of things than of embodied histories of interdependence. Throughout fieldwork, Valley residents—like the Huancas and Señora Francisca—frequently reflected on how their relationships with each other, the river, and the land were continuously made and unmade by actions like coordinating the use of irrigation canals during water shortages, sharing farming knowledge on how to improve soil quality, and as previously discussed—at intense moments in the conflict—even sheltering community members facing police harassment or brutality. As I explore in more detail in Chapter One, these ethico-material attachments are what I am calling "belonging." Given that belonging is a polyvalent subject for anthropologists and cultural theorists, let me say a bit more about this leap.

On the more skeptical end of these conversations, many scholars use this word to denote a possessive attachment to identity, which structures social cohesion along given lines of recognition premised on sameness and haunted by exclusion (Berlant 2011, 2022, Geschiere 2009). In this sense, theorists like Jasbir Puar (2017 [2007]) have described some of the ways in which the language of belonging used to construct collective identities can undergird techniques of self-making that rely on practices of othering resembling the formal dynamics of Orientalism as described by Edward Said (1979). Thus, Puar shows how majoritarian identity practices, even in their most liberal modalities, make a community imaginable by circulating typified representations of the values and attributes that establish the lines of sameness binding a group together. As is the case with discursive and aesthetic tropes that Said calls 'Orientalism,' such nationalist modes of belonging vilify imagined outsiders in order to create an idealized vision of an in-group portrayed as occupying an exceptional position with respect to other communities.

The disquieting knot at the heart of Puar's *Terrorist Assemblages* (2017) is the

ambivalent rise and persistence of such drives to identification in minoritarian communities. Thus, Puar attends to the ways in which minoritarian communities "laboring under the identity signs of race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, and nationality" can strive for recognition within a hegemonic order by appealing to narratives of inclusion, which leave essentialist logics of belonging unquestioned (2017 [2007]: 162). A central concern driving her work is the progressive integration of queerness and homosexuality into the national imaginaries of US life throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s. During that time, Puar contends, the debates surrounding the potential repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policies for members of the US army, and the political struggles for marriage equality and adoptive rights, offered precarious invitations to an order of national belonging (*ibid.*: 10). In other words, these articulations of a minoritarian public within the discursive and institutional terrains of US nationalism constituted a particularly wicked bargain because they promised recognition within an imagined community that otherwise remained structured by an ethos of either sameness or exclusion. This ethos, in turn, was glaringly evident in the concurrent rise of Islamophobia fueled by the nationalist rhetoric accompanying the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Puar's critique partially echoes Wendy Brown's well-known argument in *States of Injury* (1995). With a markedly skeptical perspective, Brown highlights the contradictions inherent in grassroots struggles for collective rights. A constitutive limit in such movements, she observes, is that they appeal to the morality of an oppressive order for some form of redress and then engage in the work of shaping the logics of their own governance by collaborating with the institutions that, to varying degrees, bear responsibility for their suffering. Brown's argument is undoubtedly compelling and, within the world of North American anthropology, has informed Elizabeth's Povinelli's work on the cunning of multicultural recognition (2002). Like Puar, Povinelli is

concerned with the ethics of national social life that determine the central perspective from which difference is to be judged, as well as the thresholds of commensurability at which it comes to matter in governable ways (2011). To different degrees, both thinkers examine the promise of national belonging as a hard bargain, which sustains desires for recognition and access to the conditions that guarantee a good life, yet does so in ways that ultimately impede a person's flourishing (Berlant 2011). What makes belonging such a fraught concept across these texts is the role it plays in rendering community as based on given and formulable notions of sameness, which in turn casts difference as that which either cannot matter in itself or only matters a threat.

Having said this, it bears noting that Puar's critique is aimed at enabling new "efforts to elaborate different and alternative modalities of belonging, connectivity, and intimacy" beyond the co-option of identity-based struggles for self-determination by the structures of nationalism (Puar 2017 [2007]: 208).[xxvi] In that sense, Puar both draws from and contributes to scholarship on belonging at the intersection of critical race theory, feminist philosophy, queer studies, and the affective turn. This critical scholarship on belonging does not solely focus on forms of sociality based on sameness and integration, but rather, seeks to depict intricate textures of care in the formation of selves, social worlds, and/or relational terrains, in ways that are both experimental and, at times, even partially opaque. For instance, scholars like Elspeth Probyn and José Esteban Muñoz offer ethical frameworks that centre gestures of hospitality, which render interstitial spaces and fleeting scenes of encounter inhabitable without presupposing a shared set of norms. In this sense, the notions of "outside belongings" (Probyn 1996) and "belonging-in-difference" (Muñoz 2009) attend to the ways in which presence can come to matter beyond the conventional categories of identity, and even a shared life in language.[xxvii]

In my own attempts to think ethnographically at the crossing of the various tensions that

converge in scholarly approaches to belonging, I have been influenced by the work of Tine Gammeltoft (2014). In *Haunting Images*, Gammeltoft attends to the experience of selective reproduction in Vietnam, where, between 1961 and 1971, the US employed the chemical compound known as Agent Orange to strip jungles and rural lands of foliage and leave Việt Cộng guerillas without coverage. Three generations after the war, as the adverse environmental and health effects of this tactic persist, Gammeltoft's research delves into the prenatal screening programs overseen by the Vietnamese state. These programs aim to identify congenital health difficulties and, in some cases, to facilitate and strongly advocate for the early termination of a pregnancy. As a public health measure that responds to the biological effects of a chemical hazard, these selective reproduction programs can be understood as an example of biopolitics, that is, a mode of governance designed to exert control over the life of a group of people who are managed as a statistical aggregate at the level of a population (Foucault 2003).

In situations where a fetus is considered to be at a higher risk of requiring specialized healthcare to survive, Gammeltoft explores how the decision of whether to continue a pregnancy brings biopolitical deliberations into an intimate space. In *Haunting Images*, such decisions become privileged sites in the articulation of belonging, as they are less the effects of individual autonomy than matters of collective deliberation between a network of people who share both resources and ethical responsibilities for each other’s well-being. Moreover, Gammeltoft observes that whether pregnancies deemed to be at risk were carried to term, the consequences of deciding confronted the people making them with paradoxical experiences of loss, where pursuing one possibility meant leaving others behind. In examining these uncertain processes where close relations reimagine how to stewart life at the margins of the state, Gammeltoft uses the word “belonging” to register the enactment of the mutually constitutive connections that bind

singular selves to larger collectivities at different scales (2014: 20). Thus, Gammeltoft's use of the word belonging denotes the layered and ambivalent forms of interdependence that constitute the self at the intersection of different social worlds and technologies of governance, which are continuously transfigured through its enactment.

Indeed, Gammeltoft approaches the study of belonging through a three-tier framework, beginning with the forms of subjectivation enacted through situated techniques of governance, such as biopolitical interventions and nationalist discourses of belonging. While Gammeltoft speaks of nationalism strictly in the strict sense associated with the construction of a national identity, I think it is also possible here to think of nationalism and governance in Puar's sense.[xxviii] The second tier of Gammeltoft's approach to belonging attends to the modes of care that sustain networks of family and neighbours who—to differing degrees—share the risks, resources, and responsibilities of inhabiting a lifeworld. At this level, belonging is understood as the enactment of intimacy and kinship, and through these registers, also the formation of a self and one or more social worlds (Borneman 1992, Strathern 2005). Lastly, and more complexly, belonging also emerges as the haunting images of what is lost in the process of enacting a decision and enduring its consequences. In this sense, belonging also entails the work of mourning and a sensibility for the enduring presence of what is gone but does not disappear (Rudy 2009, Stevenson 2014). Thus, for Gammeltoft, the experience of belonging is far from comfortable, but rather, emerges amid ambivalent textures of care and violence, which make the self both possible and prone to suffering, conflict, and loss.

Inspired by Gammeltoft's ethnography, I use the word "belonging" to describe how the people who participated in my research continuously tried to conjugate the modes of care that connect them to the social worlds. Thus, instead of assuming that these attachments are

necessarily enacted as possessive or fixed investments in a given order of things (as is the case with the mode of belonging Jasbir Puar calls "nationalism," for example), I attend to the ways in which their ethical and material dimensions are continuously transfigured from within situations of impasse and after loss. One important consequence of this approach is that belonging does not always feel good, nor does it necessarily point us to a scene of social acceptance, recognition, or fulfillment. Rather, it turns our attention to the conditions that make selves and social worlds possible (each by way of the other), and to the ways in which these conditions are endured and acknowledged. Against vitalist understandings of belonging, my own attends to the precarious reconfiguration of these ethical and material attachments. Beyond Gammeltoft's work, my attention to the emergent process of self- and world-making that I call 'belonging' is also inspired by ethnographic concepts that document the ethical and political dimensions of living amid uncertainty and violence (Allan 2014, Das 2007, Han 2012, Stevenson 2014).

THE ETHICAL & THE POLITICAL

On a May evening in 2019, I attended the first meeting of an ad-hoc grassroots collective that I will call here "Somos Sur." The group formed in response to the rising tensions surrounding the licensing of the Tía María project, as the deadline for the Ministry of Energy and Mines to approve the project's Environmental Impact Assessment loomed on the horizon.[xxix] Some of Señor Aurelio's friends were part of the organizing group. The meeting was announced widely on the radio and we showed up early to help set up the folding chairs in a circle, run a couple of printing errands, and take other tasks off the organizers' hands.

The turnout was moderate, just over twenty people, though they came from surprisingly

different backgrounds. Some were workers at the city's markets, and others, well-known grassroots activists in the city, and then there were also two stay-at-home mothers and an army reservist. It is not unusual in Southern Peru for army reservists to participate in grassroots politics against government interests, often out of visceral experiences of disappointment in being deployed to defend corporate interests.

Señor Ricardo—the reservist—was part of a controversial movement called *etnocracerismo*,[xxx] whose founding members, Antauro Humala and former president Ollanta Humala, led a famous uprising against Fujimori's regime in the year 2000.[xxxi] He wore a pair of black cargo pants with a grey shirt tucked into the waist. He was seated a couple of empty chairs down from a woman with shoulder-length hair clipped behind her head, who was wearing a pair of blue jeans and button-down blouse. Señora María told us that she heard the call-out for the event on the radio, and that she had been eager to come ever since. She told us that she had two children, that her husband worked in construction, and that she ran a small lunchtime restaurant from the first floor of her house. Like many, she said that she was worried that in time, a mining project in the Tambo Valley would slowly damage local agriculture, raising the price of food in the city, and perhaps even reducing its availability.

As the meeting got underway, after we briefly introduced ourselves, we discussed the possibility that as the tensions of the conflict began once more to escalate, farmers in the Valley would call for another indefinite strike (*paro indefinido*) and perhaps face a third period of militarized occupation. We talked about the different ways in which we could imagine the next few months playing out, about the criminalization of grassroots leaders and protestors in 2015, and about the kinds of support we could offer Valley residents from the city. From within the tension of these conversations, I wish to draw out a single thread arising from a moment of

confrontation between Señora María and Señor Ricardo.

As the evening wore on, a sorrowful sense of helplessness intermittently overcame the conversation as a few attendees voiced their feelings of violation and despair in facing a billion-dollar mining project backed by extraordinary displays of police and military force. Eventually, in an attempt to reach beyond the sense of being trapped in an endless loop of domination, Señor Ricardo emphatically interrupted a conversation on the *ollas comunes*, or collective meals, that sustained the people who participated in roadblocks and rallies.

He suggested that a group of "courageous and combative men" (*un grupo de valientes y combativos*) take over the Matarani shipping port a few hours north of the Tambo Valley, in the district of Islay. Noting the importance of the Matarani port as a link between large-scale mines in the highland provinces of Cusco and Apurímac and international markets (Zhang 2023, CooperAcción 2022), he was suggesting a drastically more aggressive measure than simply blocking select stretches of the Pan American Highway. Moreover, in proposing this strategy, he stood up from his chair, adopting a voice of command, to declare, "here, what we need is 'a march and some deaths,' and that's it. At the very least, they will suspend the project, or maybe even cancel it" (*acá lo que necesitamos es, marcha y muertos, y se acabó. Por lo menos suspenden el proyecto un tiempo más, o hasta lo cancelan*).

With the phrase, *marcha y muertos*, Señor Ricardo was using language that evoked a known possibility in grassroots confrontations with corporate interests, where the outrage provoked by the death of civilians can at times pressure companies to back down. For example, in the history of the Tía María conflict, the project was temporarily suspended in 2011 and 2015, after a group of four and then three valley residents were killed by the state.

However, most of the people with whom I spoke on this matter throughout fieldwork

used the phrase *marchas y muertos* ("marches and deaths") to lament a situation, where it was people's spectacular deaths rather than the conditions of their lives that elicited a response from corporation, the state, and even the general public. "It's a shame that we have to, that they do not hear us out until there are marches and deaths" (*Es una lástima que no nos escuchen hasta que haya marchas y muertos*), or "There have been so many marches and deaths, and for what? To continue like this?" (*Han habido tantas marchas y muertos, ¿para qué, para seguir así?*). In these and other similar phrases, I found the words "marches" and "deaths"—both in the plural—expressed a sense of sorrow over the implication that some Peruvian citizens matter to the state more when they are dead than when they are alive. By contrast, Señor Ricardo's words—*marcha y muertos* ("a march and some deaths")—turned this state of affairs into a strategy, where the deaths of a few *valientes* could be seen as a mere means to achieving the cancellation of the project.

Before Señor Ricardo finished speaking, however, Señora María cut him off with the phrase, "have you, in fact, given birth to speak like that about someone's life? This is a war of endurance" (*¿acaso has parido tú para hablar así de la vida de alguien? Esta es una guerra de aguante*). She then said that she could not see how the group could help with a takeover (*toma*) of the Matarani port, and that she thought it would be more useful to support road blockages and rallies by going to the city's open-air markets to gather donations for their collective meals (*ollas comunes*). Her indignation at Señor Ricardo's interjection was palpable, and her language, visceral—particularly in her choice of words for the action of giving birth on which she staked the ground for the legitimacy of her judgements. As opposed to the phrase *dar a luz* (literally, "to give light"), which is more commonly used to describe birth and emphasizes the uncovering of a latent presence, the word *parir* denotes the embodied labour and risk of birth and is most

commonly used to speak about animals.[xxxii]

I think we can approach the tense exchange between Señor Ricardo and Señora María as a disagreement about what matters in the painstaking process of making a change possible. Michael Lambek has argued that when reflecting on anthropology's relation to ethical questions, it is most useful to approach this term "adverbially or adjectively" (2015: 7), thus, framing the ethical as a dimension of life rather than as a discrete sphere distinct from the political (see also, Fassin 2015). What I understand Lambek to mean by this phrase is that the concepts of ethics and politics do not present us with separate spheres of human action, but rather, with overlapping registers for reckoning with the values enacted by the things that we do, as much as the systems that we rely on, to sustain our lives and lifeworlds. In that sense, while Señor Ricardo emphasized the ends of achieving the cancellation of the Tía María project over the means of doing so, and Señora María—on the other hand—insisted on procuring the means for a strike to endure, both were voicing strategies grounded in commitments that were ethical and political at the same time.

Philosophers like Hannah Arendt (1998 [1958]) and Jacques Rancière (2004 [1998]) locate the political in the transvaluative potential of human action, epitomized in moments of disagreement that make the world different. For thinkers like Stanley Cavell (1999 [1979]) and Lauren Berlant (2022), transvaluation is not only at play in actions that have a decisive "before" and "after," but also in processes where change is gradual and inseparable from loss (thus making thinking a form of mourning). Ethnographically, Naisargi Dave (2014) and Amy Krauss (2019) draw attention to the ways in which ephemeral temporalities of intimacy in acts of witnessing and solidarity, enacted through grassroot activist networks, can unsettle ends-driven notions of the political. In doing so, they suggest that an integral understanding of the process of

making another world possible demands attending also to the ongoing forms of work and labour that make imagination responsive and action effective.

Drawing from Lauren Berlant's examination of the juxtapolitical (2011) and Elizabeth Povinelli's discussion of the otherwise (2011), I understand the political register of human life to express a concern with the standing modes of power that give particular possibilities form within a given social world, relationship, or relational terrain. This view is partially informed by the work of the French philosopher Jacques Rancière (2004 [1998]).

In *Disagreement* (2004), Rancière locates the political dimension of relational forms between the dynamics of policing and contestation over their norms and limits. In other words, his concept of the political explores the modalities of power whose conjugation, competition, and transformation shape what becomes possible in a particular context and how these possibilities are experienced (Rancière 2004 [1998]: 28-29).[xxxiii] Building on Rancière's attention to the power relations underlying the ongoing exclusions through which an order of things is made to cohere, Povinelli's concept of the 'otherwise' gestures to the alternative social worlds located at the limits of the material and discursive histories that constitute liberal projects of statecraft. Equally, this notion also attends to the transformative possibilities that abound within these worlds yet remain under the threshold of what can become sensible and intelligible from within the dominant paradigms of colonial modernity (Povinelli 2011: 110). As a collective experience shaped by both structural violence and transformative possibility, Povinelli's concept of the 'otherwise' resonates with anthropological voices expressing similar concerns about the dynamics of inchoate exclusion and freighted generativity, for example, Veena Das and Deborah Poole's conception of the 'margins of the state' (2004). This is one way in which the political register of human life—which attends to the forms of power that hold given arrangements of

social and material conditions in place, and the modes of contestation that seek to alter them—is constitutively entangled with ethical concerns.

In accounting for the ethical as an aspect of life, my thinking is shaped by the work of anthropologists like Veena Das (2015, 2020), Michael Lambek (2010, 2015), Clara Han (2012), Lotte Buch-Segal (2018, 2021), and Marco Motta (2019). The notion of the ethical that surfaces across these works expresses a concern with the exchanges and evaluations that make up "one soul's examination of another and of itself" (Cavell 2005: 121), or seek to acknowledge a separate experience and its conditions. This view of the ethical emphasizes the importance of responsiveness in the process of revealing the shades of sense and value that sustain particular modes of association as they continuously change to absorb, refract, and contest the pressures of encompassing social worlds.

Throughout my own fieldwork with farmers and activists affected by an intermittently militarized mining conflict, I have found that while some people used the language of politics to share their knowledge of the modes of governance bearing on their lives, most did not. However, some allow me to witness their responses to difficulties in their relationships with family, friends, and neighbours, or even described the pains of living social worlds shaped by layered forms of violence, expressing their desires for life to be otherwise. It is by listening to these different moments that I have come to think of the ethical and political dimensions of belonging at the margins of the state in neoliberal Peru.[xxxiv]

Let me now briefly return to the first meeting of "Somos Sur." After Señora María voiced her opposition to the fantastical approach of seizing control of the shipping docks at the port Matarani, Señor Aurelio redirected the conversation towards a consideration of the potential hazards associated with organizing communal meals (*ollas comunes*) for the road blockages. As

we pivoted from one discussion and another, Señor Ricardo made a remark, which I hastily jotted down in my pocket notebook, though for the most part, it seemed to go unnoticed. "Revolutionaries," he said, "almost do not carry feelings… At any moment, one might die, but if you break, at that moment, the other one [your enemy] is going to kill you" (*Casi los revolucionarios no llevan sentimientos… en cualquier momento uno puede morirse, pero si te vas a quebrar, en ese momento, el otro te va a matar*).

The next few times we met, Señor Ricardo adopted a rather different voice, abdicating his commanding tone. In June, he offered to drive a small group of people on his flatbed truck to give out flyers and gather non-perishable goods from the city's open-air markets. On one of these drives, Señor Ricardo spoke about his life in Arequipa, where he moved as a young adult to study law at the public university, leaving his family in a rural town in the southern highlands (*centro poblado*). Though he did not have to pay tuition, the cost of living in the city had him working too much to be able to study. Eventually, he put his degree on hold and joined the army in the late 1970s, right before the war. It is hard to say exactly what Señor Ricardo meant when he said that *revolutionaries almost don't carry feelings*, but I got the impression that there was something paradoxically emotive in his disavowal of feelings, a kind of melodrama—perhaps a wish for company, if not understanding—after overcoming an overwhelming experience. A revolutionary who carries no feelings indeed.

FIELDWORK & WRITING

Between 2016 and 2019, I conducted 19 months of participant observation with people connected to small-scale agriculture in Southern Peru, particularly, in the Tambo Valley. My

research began at the Palomar Market and the Avelino Cáceres shipping terminal, where I joined workers at a prepared food stand and a street cart on their daily routines. During a second visit in 2017, workers at both markets helped me meet small-scale farmers in the Tambo Valley who supplied some of their stock, people who in addition to being business partners were often also close friends, family, or fictive kin.

In the Valley, I was welcomed by a family of farmers in one of the upriver townships along the unpaved road that lines the south bank of the river. This road was built in the early 1970s, during the military government of Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975), a left-wing General of the Peruvian Army, who enacted the country's Agrarian Reform. While the legacy of Velasco's reforms is a highly controversial topic in the country's history,[xxxv] in the Tambo Valley, many of the farmers I was able to meet and speak with had a favourable view of his government. Indeed, many of their families acquired their land thanks to Velasco's land redistribution policies.

In October 2018, I began a 14-month stretch of fieldwork, and my connections in the Valley and in the market brought me into contact with grassroots activist groups contesting the Tía María Project. In these circles, I often spoke with people who framed the Tía María Project as a threat to the accessibility of food in the region of Arequipa and Southern Peru—and not just to the livelihoods of farmers and market workers there. At this stage in my project, I spent two weeks in the city and two weeks in the Valley, where I stayed mostly upriver, though I often visited people in the townships closer to the coast—like family friends and señora Francisca.

In the city of Arequipa, I helped out at the prepared meal stand at the Palomar Market. The place, which was divided into three different stalls, was owned by Señora Valentina, who cooked the meals at home with the help of her neighbour. Both women worked seven days a

week, beginning at four in the morning, when they met in the semi-industrial kitchen Señora Valentina built into the first floor of the house. At seven, they would ride down to the market, wrapping all their pots in squares of cloth and packing them into a neighbour's van, who would drive them to the market by eight, a little later than everyone else. On the days that I helped out at Señora Valentina's stand, I would arrive at her house shortly after four in the morning, cook, then wait on tables at the stand, and finally, accompany Señora Valentina on her nightly shopping errands at the Avelino Cáceres Market. Between December 2018 and April 2019, I rented an apartment in Señora Valentina's neighbuorhood, where I stayed three to four days a week. Otherwise, I stayed at my grandmother's house, a few blocks from the Avelino Cáceres Market. On the Monday after Easter 2019, my apartment was robbed, and I moved fully into my grandma's house.

In October 2018, in addition to helping Señora Valentina at the market stand, I began attending the bi-weekly meetings of the Anti-Corruption Civic Association of Arequipa (*Frente Anticorrupción de Arequipa*). Throughout the Tía María conflict, this group has played an active role in supporting grassroots activists from the Tambo Valley in their struggle for the cancellation of the mining project by organizing rallies and marches, and also by invigilating the public hearings of grassroots organizers facing criminal charges for the protests of 2015. During fieldwork, I attended these hearings with Señor Aurelio—an active member of the Anti-Corruption Association—and Daniel Quispe Aguilar, an anthropology student at the Universidad Nacional de San Agustín.

In addition to their involvement with the Tía María conflict, the members of the Anti-Corruption Association were also carrying out two major campaigns. The first sought to audit the construction of the Uchumayo Highway (*Variante de Uchumayo*) by reviewing reports on the

project from the Comptroller General (*Contraloría General de la República*) to formalize a document addressed to the Public Ministry presenting sufficient grounds for a corruption investigation. This project focused on contracts with private companies hired by the regional government during the administration of Juan Manuel Guillén (1999-2002) and Yamila Osorio (2015-2018).

The association's second major campaign was to support a group of workers from the private companies running the city's public transit system in their efforts to provide evidence and leads for an investigation into a sprawling case of bribery and extortion implicating Arequipa's Regional Board of Transport (*Gerencia Regional de Transporte*). The workers claimed that a racketeering group, composed of government officials and members of the police, charged the owners of their companies monthly payments per vehicle, which under the threat of having their operating licenses revoked—the owners of the bus lines passed onto the drivers and ticket takers, many of whom already had to work in unsafe conditions.

In parallel, the Anti-Corruption Association also aired a daily AM radio show on Frecuencia 1330 ("La Hora del Frente Anticorrupción"),[xxxvi] where its members discussed current events, shared news on the progress of their group's projects, and received feedback from callers. During fieldwork, in addition to assisting the group's bi-weekly meetings, I accompanied Señor Aurelio as he carried out various tasks for the group, including hosting their radio show once a week. Starting in May, Señor Aurelio and I also attended the meetings of the ad-hoc grassroots collective, "Somos Sur." I maintained this rhythm—tacking between the Valley and the city, spending two weeks at a time at each place—between October 2018 and July 2019.

“Everything is just on loan”

At the end of July 2019, Señora Valentina was killed by a racketeering group who had been deceiving her for several months. Señora Valentina and I had known each other since the beginning of my project, and I had become intimately acquainted with her family. After her death, I kept in touch with her daughter, Milagros, who sent me news of the investigation, which she and her brother—both lawyers—tracked very closely. In February 2020, nine months after Señora Valentina’s murder, three of the four people involved were detained. At the end of October, this too was the case with six police officers suspected of encumbering the investigation and of having worked with the racketeering group on covering up other scams and even cases of extortion. At the time, however, I did not know this. I only knew that my friend had been shot from the back of a motorcycle, and that when she died, I felt sorrow and fear:

> **07-20-19:** “I held her hands for a few minutes. She had a black eyelid and a cut across her forehead. Sr. M- paid for a more expensive coffin… 2 men lifted her coffin from the stand and put it on the floor of the funeral home. They left for a few minutes and came back with a second coffin, putting the two side-by-side, before lifting her by the arms and legs. Heat gone, only her weight remained. When she was placed in the new coffin, and the coffin was set up on the stand, I held her hands again and noticed her skin was soft... They couldn’t hold the wake at her house, because the front room was filled with 102 sacks of rice from the valley.”

In time, I have come to wonder whether she knew that her life was at stake, and if so, when and how this might have dawned on her. It is hard to admit that I had not seen the danger myself. Somehow, even though my friend had been the *victim* of a racketeering group, I felt unexplainably disappointed in her. Did my friend know that she was at risk? Did she know that she was putting us at risk with her? Did she wish to do this? I felt as if *she* ought to have known

better but not I, as if *she* had betrayed *us*. The day after Señora Valentina's funeral, while the full extent of the situation remained unknown and the perpetrators were yet at large, I left Arequipa for my safety and spent the last five months of my research in the capital city of Lima. I have since felt that, in some sense, not being there to see things through was a betrayal of my own.

In time, I have come to accept the doubts surrounding my friend's death, not out of resignation, but rather to make room for her and for me in my life. Most immediately, this means accepting that I cannot know with complete certainty what she wanted or how she understood the risks she was taking. This also means accepting that I did not see what was going on, not only because I trusted her, but because I *chose* to trust her. Señora Valentina's company mattered to me. It still does. She was a lovely person and her friendship marked a before and after in my research and my life.

> Four months before Señora Valentina's death, on a Monday night in early March, Señora Valentina decided not to open the market stall the following day, so we could go to the beach before the end of summer. Isa and I met outside Señora Valentina's house. Their neighbour José picked us up and gave us a ride to a parking lot near the interprovincial bus stations, where Gabriel waited for us so we could take a *colectivo* across the desert to the ocean.
>
> As we loaded our things into José's car, he teased Señora Valentina, "and your husband? He's not coming?"
>
> "Which husband?" she said taking the front seat, "I have many. If I bring one, the others complain. If I bring two, they fight. And if I bring three, they drink."
>
> "No, I mean, the one you're married to," he insisted, turning briefly to see if he was getting a reaction.
>
> "He's the one who's married, not me," Señora Valentina said, lowering the volume on José's stereo, "And, what is this song, José? 'Your love is a trap'? Is this what you put to see if someone bites?"
>
> Their banter continued on and off through the ride, interspersed

> with softer, more intimate questions about each other's lives. (*Son, how are your mother's triglycerides? How is…?*) We said goodbye in an empty lot near the Gratersa station, where José refused to take money from Señora Valentina, insisting that he had to drive down for work anyway, and thanking her for her company. A few minutes after we got off, Señora Valentina realized that she forgot her wide-brimmed hat on José's dashboard, a gift from her daughter.
>
> At the beach, as we set down our bags under a rented umbrella, Señora Valentina remarked that she hadn't taken a day off since November. Gabriel said that hadn't gone swimming since he left Venezuela in 2016.
>
> "Well, off to the water, Mr. Fish," Señora Valentina replied, and while Gabriel went for a swim, we walked south, along a meandering streak of sun-bleached sand crab shells, which traced the previous tide in pink and white, looking to buy a new hat.
>
> Regretting losing of her daughter's gift, Señora Valentina repeated a phrase that had previously anchored our conversations on death: "todo es prestadito, no más," she said. *Everything is just on loan*.

Everything is just on loan. I think about these words often, have come to live with them, even, because I cannot interpret them away. Though I have not been able to elaborate my notes on our friendship into a full chapter, Señora Valentina is present throughout my thesis, guiding my attention to moments where the bonds holding people and social worlds together endure amid heartbreak and confusion.

When I arrived in Lima, I stayed at the home of my friend and mentor, Angélica Motta. This arrangement, which was kindly set up by her sister Rossio, lasted until I returned to Canada. Between late August and December, I took up fieldwork again, although with no given plan. I attended rallies calling for the cancellation of the Tía María Project, and began to build relationships with activists, journalists, and artists. These friendships have given me a wider picture of the growing instability in Peru's institutional politics, and of the piecemeal extension of projects of governance enacted by military and corporate elites.

I came back from the field in December 2019, a few months before the Coronavirus pandemic, which in Peru, not only produced an extraordinarily dense landscape of death—over 6,000 per million inhabitants, according to WHO estimates—but also a process of militarization. Under former President Martín Vizcarra, as the Armed Forces were deployed to enforce a nationwide curfew, Congress enacted a new version of a controversial measure, known locally as the "police protection law" (*ley de protección policial*). This amendment to the Peruvian Penal Code absolves individual members of the Peruvian National Police and the Armed Forces[xxxvii] from criminal liability for injuries or killings, when acting "in the fulfillment of its constitutional function and in the use of its weapons or other means of defense, in a regulatory manner" (*en el cumplimiento de su función constitucional y en uso de sus armas u otro medio de defensa, en forma reglamentaria*).[xxxviii] While this manoeuvre can surely be understood as an instance of "political opportunism" (*oportunismo político*) (Gamarra 2020), within the Peruvian context it can also be understood as part of a contemporary landscape of *antipolítica*.

Though its national and international legal standing is precarious at best, Peru's so-called "police protection law" coincided with an unprecedented rise in nation-wide instances of state violence amid massive protests contesting two separate attempts at establishing a right-wing ruling coalition.

A crucial example of this, though by far not the only one, is the controversial use of a Constitutional provision (Art. 117), which enables Congress to vacate the office of the president on grounds of moral incapacity. Unlike the process of impeachment, which is restricted to specific actions, the so-called "vacancy motion" (*moción de vacancia*) does not specify what counts as "moral incapacity."[xxxix] As a result, Peruvians have seen seven different people sworn into the office of the president in a period of six years. In this context, since the "police

protection law" of 2020, the protests over the rise of right-wing ruling coalitions through the mechanism of the *moción de vacancia* have turned extraordinarily lethal. In November 2020, and between December 2022 and March 2023, state violence in two separate periods of massive protests has led to at least 51 murders, which groups such as Amnesty International have qualified as extra-legal executions.

Considering that a previous version of the "police protection law" of 2020 had been in place in 2015, as one of the many forms of extraordinary policing enacted against the residents of the Tambo Valley, at the end of my thesis, and on the other side of the "Peruvian Miracle," another parable on terror and the privatized state seems to be at stake. For the farmers and activists I met during fieldwork, these measures were quite literally nothing new. In a perverse way, the Southern Peru Copper Corporation and the Peruvian state did bring the future to the Valley, though not exactly a future of economic prosperity. Instead, many of the techniques of governance that became increasingly generalized to the rest of the country during the Coronavirus pandemic, were tested—if not invented—in the Valley in 2011 and 2015. A kind of apocalypse.

In the wake of fieldwork, grappling with the rising authoritarianism—or contemporary formations of *antipolítica*—in my home country, my questions on violence and belonging have also become questions of writing. How does one write a killing machine? How does one attend intimately to its forms of violence, yet resist the grotesque seduction of claiming it to be exceptional? How does one write the ways life goes on at its margins and maybe behind its back? And how does one do so, without putting the very life one wishes to write in its crosshairs?

In my own attempt at thinking through these formal questions through the process of

writing itself, I have had to practice acts of radical acceptance in the sense described by José Carlos Agüero—namely, I have had to accept that the killing machines I have been facing and which my family and amid which friends live are indeed larger than the mind, and that the helplessness this provokes is not the truncation of thought and feeling, but its condition. We have always been post-apocalyptic. *How is today's killing different from yesterday's war? And how are they similar?*

In such circumstances, I want to say that thinking can be a kind of mourning, and mourning, the melancholic improvisation of a sensibility to what is there because something else is not. Absences that are not just haunting the present, but actively shaping it (Moten 2003, Stevenson 2014).

I wrote my thesis between Montreal and Toronto. It consists of four chapters, which detail different experiences of violence and belonging at the margins of the state in neoliberal Peru, and perhaps also at its limits.

Drawing from my ethnographic fieldwork as well as anthropological scholarship on the image and ordinary ethics, I suggest that belonging is not a fixed attachment to a given order of things, but rather, a continuous effort at responding to the ambivalent contradictions and losses that make up a social world. My thesis begins with an experience-near account of the uncertainties that come to bear on the difficulties of belonging in the Tambo Valley as the Tía María conflict continues. Then, by paying close attention to the institution of the *pollada*—a Peruvian fundraising practice whereby the sale of fried or oven-roasted chicken helps a hosting party cover overwhelming expenses—it focuses on how the layered forms of violence that intersect at the margins of Peru' neoliberal state are absorbed, refracted, and circulated. In doing so, it produces a theory of belonging that does not eschew conflict or violence, but rather attends

to the heterogeneous and often contradictory ways in which people are continuously made and unmade through precarious attachments to uncertain social worlds.

Chapter One explores Señora Francisca's notion of *arraigo* as it emerged in our conversations, amid strategic refusals of the language of politics, which in the context of my work, is frequently undermined by cruelty, deceit, and disappointment. Attending to the ways her family and neighbourhood relations have been frayed by the mining conflict and ecological crisis, I show how the language of *arraigo* becomes delicately interwoven with her attempts at voicing her attachment to the possibility of a shared life beyond these forms of structural violence. Focusing particularly on moments of radical uncertainty—such as her family's efforts to farm during the militarized occupation of 2015—I attend to the tones of fear, grief, and rage that texture the efforts at enacting *arraigo* amid strife, what she calls "learning how to live" (*aprender a vivir*).

Whereas *Chapter One* unpacks *arraigo* as a form of belonging, *Chapters Two* and *Three* attend to the techniques of governance enabled by the conditions of social belonging that constitute neoliberal Peru.

Chapter Two describes how the backdrop of the mining conflict inflected the Huanca family's experience of a violent robbery in the house of their relatives—Señor Ignacio Huanca. Given that Señor Ignacio openly opposed a community organization suspected of being funded by the mine, Ismael wondered if the robbery was a form of punishment. This chapter begins at the *pollada* held to support Señor Ignacio, where his close relations wondered if the masked intruders who broke into his house were somehow connected to people in their community. Their doubt was partly informed by testimonies of the night raids that took place downstream in 2015, when some farmers collaborated with the police to divert violence from their own homes. In my

analysis, I describe the talk surrounding the night raids and the robbery as a discourse of anonymous violence, and then draw on the concept of corporate counterinsurgency to locate its emergence—a concept that examines regimes of governance that combine community development programs and state violence to territorialize extractive projects.

Chapter Three moves from project participants' concerns with punishment as a form of governance, to their concern with impunity. To do so, it presents and unpacks a conversation where Señora Antonia Huanca and her friend Señora Elsa discuss the pop-up clinics sponsored by the mine's community outreach programs. Their conversation, in turn, reveals an ethical imaginary, where accessing the mine's services is understood not only as expressing consent for the mine, but also as complicity in the forms of state violence that have sought to emplace it. To locate the form of power that this ethical imaginary detects, I turn to the concept of 'graduated sovereignty.' This concept describes the strategies of differentiation that determine the degrees to which techniques of governance based on improvement or policing are deployed to regulate the conduct of different groups of people.

Chapter Four asks: what role do *polladas* play in making and circulating knowledge of Peru's neoliberal state? Drawing on interviews from 2013 and 2020, this chapter attends to the experience of Inés, a market worker in the City of Cusco, who lost a close friend to an unexplained domestic explosion in 2009. It tracks the rumours that circulated surrounding the young woman's death, which Inés and I encountered at a *pollada* held to cover the expenses of the funeral. Rather than taking these rumours as forensic data, I suggest that they reveal the contours of a community's imagination for the forms of violence that compose Peru's emergent post-war state. Lastly, through conversations with Inés, I describe the image of grief that came to constitute her knowledge of the devastating experience of the young woman's mother.

Drawing on both of these strains, I argue that by making a community at the margins of the state present at moments of radical uncertainty, *polladas* can in fact be seen as portraits of that state.

CHAPTER ONE:

"LEARNING HOW TO LIVE:" ARRAIGO AND THE MAKING AND UNMAKING OF A WORLD IN CONFLICT

In early October 2019, a couple of months before the end of my fieldwork, I joined a group of farmers and activists outside Peru's Ministry of Energy and Mines for a rally against the Tía María Mining Project—the large-scale extractive concession at the centre of my research on violence and belonging in the Tambo Valley.

To reach the Ministry, I had to walk around a few intersections blocked by crowd control barriers, with only small gaps in between. Police officers in riot gear completed these makeshift fences with their own bodies. At the first of these barricades, one of the officers stepped forward with his open palm. "There's no way through, young man," he said, "please keep going" (*no hay pase, joven. Circule, por favor*). I decided to walk around the neighbourhood to photograph the enclosure around the rally and see if I could find my way through, since not all the streets seemed to be shut down. It was a damp morning, and Lima's grey sky stretched over the city's soot-covered buildings like another wall.

The rally of October 2019 was a response to the construction license that the Ministry had granted to the Southern Peru Copper Corporation a few months earlier, after more than ten years of opposition. It took place in a park across from the Ministry's side entrance, where about 100 people gathered, most of them carrying neon green banners that read, *Yes to Agriculture! No to Mining!*—a slogan used by grassroots activists who contest the Tía María project. After a roundabout walk, as I finally stepped into the park, I heard someone call my name from the shade of an acacia tree. It was a farmer from one of the Valley's downstream townships who,

like most people at the event, had traveled to Lima on an overnight bus. As we hugged, I noticed that her eyes were glassy with fatigue and that her blouse—a light blue floral print I had seen her wear on Sundays at the market after church—was slightly wrinkled. Also, instead of bringing a neon green banner, she was one of the few people who carried a handwritten sign listing the valley's crops, "rice, potatoes, garlic, onions, wheat, sugar…"

At this time in my research, Señora Francisca and I had known each other since 2017,[xl] and I was both glad and surprised to see her at the rally, because until then, it seemed to be that she had been rather careful not to claim a position on the mine. The few times that I, or one of her neighbours, asked for her thoughts on the project itself, she deflected the question, most often by claiming not wanting to get involved in "political things" (*no me meto en cosas de política*). A few months earlier, as we recorded a conversation in her kitchen, she had even explained to me that so-called "political things," such as speaking for or against the mine, cooking for demonstrators, making banners, and attending rallies, were far too "risky" for her to get involved in. Throughout fieldwork, I began to think of Señora Francisca's aversion to so-called "political things" as a way to deflect state violence and reduce conflicts in her home and neighbourhood.

Since the Tía María project was first announced in 2009, the ongoing disputes over its construction have become one of Peru's longest-lasting conflicts over an unrealized mining venture. Perhaps the project's most controversial features are its two proposed open-pit mines, which according to the company's plans will be located 3 and 7 kilometers from the Tambo River (Wood Group USA 2021), a body of water that irrigates 15,000 hectares of arable land and supplies the homes of 24,000 people living in Arequipa's subtropical desert (Red Muqui 2020). The mine's measurements have been contested by independent researchers who claim that the pit planned nearest to the river has been mapped at just 1.2 kilometers from the banks (Dunlap

2019). Beyond the contested accuracy of these measurements, the Tía María project has become a source of controversy due to the nefarious environmental track record of both the Southern Peru Copper corporation and its parent company, Grupo México (Lapa Romero 2017).

In this context, while some Valley residents have come to either support the mine or to establish an ambivalent relationship with its community outreach programs, others continue to oppose it at an increasingly high cost. In 2011 and 2015, government authorities responded to the indefinite strikes calling for the cancellation of the Tía María project by moving police and military troops into the Valley. Both periods were marked by violent clashes between protestors and the police, which resulted in the death of seven civilians and one police officer.[xli] With the escalation of the mining conflict, the Valley's larger townships became sites of intermittent riots and acts of vandalism against the homes and property of people openly for or against the mine. During the second militarized occupation, many civilians became the target of state violence even outside the context of the protests, as unidentified police officers began to raid the homes of Valley residents at night and men were sometimes detained for up to two days (Dunlap 2019, Ugarte Cornejo 2020).[xlii] At this time, Señora Francisca's nephew, who had lived with her and her husband since he was child and was then in his mid-20s, became a target of police harassment.

Declaring an aversion to political things allowed Señora Francisca to refuse claiming an explicit position in disagreements when the mining conflict became painfully entangled with the interpersonal during arguments within her close circles. For instance, this was the case when two women in her block became increasingly hostile against a third for procuring medical treatment from the mine's community outreach programs. Likewise, Señora Francisca's husband and their oldest son, Javier, disagreed about whether the family should keep farming amid environmental

crisis, economic instability, and more recently, intermittent periods of militarized occupation. In both of these situations, Señora Francisca refrained from passing judgment on her family and neighbours by saying that she did not engage in "political things." And yet, there we were, standing outside the Ministry of Energy and Mines in what by most accounts, including hers, could be understood as a political event.

I asked how she was doing and how things were at home. She said that she had not slept well, giving my hand a gentle squeeze, and then began to tell me about the previous day. Her husband, Señor Melchor, paid for the trip to Lima by selling two sacks of rice—a total of 100 kilos for 240 Soles, about 95 Canadian dollars.[xliii] The money was not enough to pay for a comfortable ride, but it could get her to the Ministry and back. Then, before sending her off, Señor Melchor cut down one of the banana trees on their land, packing half of the fruit for Señora Francisca. The other half, he gave to one of their neighbours as a small gesture of gratitude for feeding him and Mateo—Señora Francisca's nephew—while they fertilized the wheat they planted in late May.

Faced with the arduous effort of Señora Francisca and her family, I wondered what had changed? (Had her son and husband resolved their disputes? Had she given up on trying to hold back the tensions arising from the disagreements between her neighbours?) Curious, I asked how she decided to get involved in political things (*¿como así decidió usted meterse en cosas de política?*).

To my surprise, Señora Francisca responded, "politics? What politics? There have been changes, changes, changes! Here, we're just learning how to live!" (*¿Política? ¿Qué política? Han habido cambios, cambios, cambios! ¡Acá, estamos no más aprendiendo a vivir!*). She insisted on withholding the word "politics" (*política*). Instead, she gestured to the changes

(*cambios*) that disrupted her life, and then, to her conviction in a different way of making things different (*aprender a vivir*). This encounter—nested within the contexts of our relationship, her life in the Tambo Valley, and contemporary politics in Peru—prompts me to ask two questions. What can Francisca's use of the phrases "political things" and "learning how to live" show us about belonging amid the layered forms of violence coming to bear on her life and the lives of other Valley residents living along the Tambo River? What can belonging look like a community affected by a long-term mining conflict at the margins of the state in neoliberal Peru? And what can Señora Francisca's experience of belonging show us about the ethical and political dimensions of living in uncertainty with proximate others?

As I mentioned in the introduction, "belonging" is a polyvalent word for anthropologists and cultural theorists who have used it to discuss a variety of themes, including the techniques for governing difference through notions of collective identity and social belonging (Povinelli 2011, Puar 2017 [2007]), the enactment of intimate modes of self- and world-making on scales of time that are both durable (Borneman 1992, Strathern 2005) and fleeting (Probyn 1996, Muñoz 2009), and the experience of loss and mourning (Freud 1957 [1917], Stevenson 2014).

Drawing on Tine Gammeltoft's approach to belonging (2014), I - rather than resolving the tensions between these different outlooks- use the word belonging to denote the continuous efforts of project participants to respond to the ambivalent contradictions and losses that are part of their social worlds. In turn, I have come to see the enactment of belonging in the attempts of farmers, Valley residents, and activists at conjugating the different modes of care that come to bear on their constitutive attachments to the people, places, and things that make them matter. This means that contrary to liberal notions of social belonging, my approach focuses on the precarious reconfiguration of the ethical and material attachments that connect selves and social

worlds as these come under pressure from multiple forms of violence.

Over time, I came to see that Valley residents live amid overlapping forms of violence, some of which are immediately palpable (like home invasions, arbitrary detentions, and instances of extralegal force) and others incremental and diffuse (like the "slow" devastation of environmental damage and economic precarity), texturing everyday life with varying degrees of danger not always perceptible as events (Das 2007, Povinelli 2011). Far from being exceptional, Valley residents' experiences of such palimpsestic violence are exemplary of neoliberal governance in post-conflict Peru, where policies designed to stimulate rapid economic growth have also fueled inequality and conflicts over land, labour, and resources (Drinot 2014, Graeter 2017, 2020, Li 2015).

Though Señora Francisca did not participate in "political things," at least as she described them, she did find other ways to respond to the pressures of the mining conflict in her community. By giving attention to these efforts and the conditions in which they unfold, I approach Señora Francisca's notions of *arraigo*, that is her understanding of the mutually constitutive attachments that give selves and social worlds form. While the Spanish word *arraigo* literally means "rootedness," participating in the lives of the Valley residents and activists affected by the Tía María conflict has taught me that *arraigo* is anything but static.

Rather, making things matter amid uncertainty— specifically, in the case of my fieldwork, the uncertainties of a militarized mining conflict over agricultural land—entails different kinds of movement. As Valley residents contend with the pressures of environmental damage, economic precarity, and extraordinary forms of policing, these changes give rise to new ways of inhabiting the fraying relations that make up their social world. These different forms of violence have produced changes in the lives and practices of Valley residents, and to different

degrees, also in the lives of the activists and market workers connected to the Valley. For instance, here, I discuss the ways in which higher concentrations of boric acid and arsenic in the soil, resulting from an infrastructural project upstream, have changed local farming practices. Additionally, I also discuss how the combined pressures of economic instability and state violence not only put the Valley's agricultural future at stake but also jeopardize the current livelihoods and well-being of its residents. As one might imagine, such immense pressures create tensions and disagreements that go beyond a person's support or opposition to the mine. I am precisely interested in these subtler questions of how to deal with a complex history of violence for which we are responsible in divergent and often incommensurable ways. Lastly, I have traced a third dimension of movement through Señora Francisca's experiences and reflections on *arraigo*—that of the uncanny transformations we undergo in the wake of loss.

Arraigo, as I have come to understand it through my relationship with Señora Francisca, is more than a matter of merely reproducing the life of a community and its conditions of possibility as they stand. Rather, *arraigo* entails participating in a process of survival and self-examination, which continuously finds (rather than founds) the very a way of being in the world both in the wake and the midst of loss (Cavell 1989, Moten 2003). As I will discuss in more detail at the end of this chapter, these are some of the lines along which an ethnographic theory of *arraigo* can overlap with a bibliographic examination of belonging. In that sense, understanding *arraigo* also asks us to acknowledge how life is pulled out of itself through encounters with loss, writ large and small (Gammeltoft 2014, Stevenson 2014). Extractivism, like the biopolitical state, is a killing machine whose piecemeal expansion is brokered by logics of care, both murderous and optimistic (Graeter 2020, Hirsch 2022, Li 2015). In the next chapters, I will address the psychic life of these forms of care, which are enacted by strategies of

governance at the murky intersection of the corporation and the state. Here, however, I wish to attend to the more mournful experiences of care and violence that emerge as the people living in the Tambo Valley are faced with the making and unmaking of their most vital connections to a social world.

"Changes, changes, changes"

Before describing the layered forms of violence that overlap with the Tía María conflict, let me briefly recap the contested life of this mining concession. The Tía María mining concession was initially acquired by the Canadian corporation Teck Cominco in 1994. Subsequently, it was held by Dodge Phelps and Rio Tinto until it was optioned to the Southern Peru Copper Corproation (SPCC) nine years later (Ugarte Cornejo 2020).

The first design for the Tía María project was presented in 2009, and quickly rejected by people living in the Tambo Valley and the city of Arequipa. The project's first Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) became a subject of controversy in 2010 due to major ambiguities in its regarding water use. In response, activist groups adopted a two-pronged approach to oppose the mine. They used the institutional pathways provided by the Ministry of the Environment (then in charge of the licensing process) to present technical observations concerning the project's viability, and they also organized marches, rallies, and two indefinite strikes (Pinto Herrera 2016a, 2016b). Eventually, relying on this combination of institutional mechanisms and political pressure, the project's EIA was sent to the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS) for review.

In March 2011, after the Ministry of the Environment suddenly canceled its contract with

the UNOPS, alleging a lack of funds due to errors in budgeting, the report was leaked, revealing both 138 major flaws in the project's design and evident corruption in the licensing process (Salazar 2011). The central government responded to the ensuing riots in the Tambo Valley by accusing environmental activists of being affiliated with "terrorist" groups and illegal miners, and stationing an unprecedented influx of police and military troops in downstream communities (Drinot 2014, Silva Santisteban 2016). Clashes between Valley residents and the occupying forces of the state ultimately resulted in a total overhaul of the licensing process. In 2013, the SPCC began to approach Valley residents through community outreach programs as it undertook the licensing process for a second EIA.

The first of these strategies was called "The Future Has Arrived" (*El Futuro Llegó*), and it accompanied the SPCC's second attempt at obtaining approval for the Tía María project's Environmental impact Assessment. This initial community outreach initiative, which consisted in the allocation of 100 million PEN for infrastructural projects, was turned down by municipal governments. The second wave of programs, called "Reconnection Plan" (*Plan Reencuentro*) began during the militarized occupation of the Valley in 2015, two months before the state of emergency was lifted in October. This community outreach strategy offered benefits directly to Valley residents, most notably, pop-up healthcare services. Lastly, *Plan Reencuentr*o was succeeded by *Valle Unido* (Valley United) in 2017, a civic association staffed with Valley residents, who in addition to coordinating the mine's healthcare services also held information workshops on the project as well as "agricultural assistance and training; job skills training and internships; educational assistance and vocational guidance programs" (Wood Group USA 2021: 1-19).

In August 2013, when the SPCC filed its second Environmental Impact Assessment, due

to recent changes in the management of Peru's extractive industries, the process was overseen by the Ministry of the Energy and Mines and the procedure included information workshops as an obligatory citizen consultation mechanism, as well as additional negotiating tables through which the mining company sought to make agreements that would guarantee local support for its investment. Both governance techniques were deemed fraudulent by many Valley residents and environmental activists, who documented the SPCC's use of paid attendees brought to Cocachacra on buses to attend the events (Quispe Aguilar 2021).

In 2015, the Tía María conflict took yet another harrowing turn, as the fourth indefinite strike calling for the project's cancelation gave rise to a second episode of militarized occupation. The Peruvian state mobilized 2,000 police officers and 3,000 soldiers under a state of emergency that began in May and lasted for two months, with a diminishing number of troops remaining in place up to five. The extraordinary but by no means exceptional policing measures employed at this time in the conflict also sought to target the rise of local self-defense groups known as *espartambos*. Composed of teenagers and young adults, *espartambos* used slingshots and shields made of wood or thin metal sheets to protect roadblocks from being cleared out by police and military forces equipped with armoured tanks, helicopters, and live rounds. The Valley residents who spoke to me about these dreadful months also described enduring or witnessing night raids where young men in their communities were extralegally detained for up to two days without documentation of their arrests. Some of the people I spoke with claimed that they were held at the Chucarapi barracks, where they were intermittently beaten and questioned, and in some cases, deprived of food. These claims have been largely ignored by the Public Ministry and human rights NGOs, and are only recently being documented by researchers.

During my fieldwork in the Tambo Valley, it became evident, however, that the Tía

María conflict was only the most spectacular form of violence in a layered array of "changes, changes, changes"—as Señora Francisca put it outside the Ministry of Energy and Mines that day. I will now describe how this palimpsest of environmental crisis and economic instability was experienced from within Señora Francisca's family.

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On a Sunday in January, as I carried Señora Francisca's groceries from the market to a *colectivo* station, she noticed a mosquito on my arm. Since my hands were occupied with her bags, she slapped it away, saying, "there are more and more mosquitoes, now. They don't respect anything—the bandits" (*hay más y más mosquitos, ahora. No respetan nada, los bandidos*).

On the walk, Señora Francisca elaborated by telling me that mosquitoes seemed to be getting more abundant in the Valley. Meanwhile, the fish that used to swim in the irrigation canals—silversides (*pejerreyes*)—were becoming scarce.[xliv] Other Valley residents mentioned the waning of fish, the rise of mosquitoes—and the coming of new pests, like the pea leaf miner.

Since the early 1990s, the expansion of large-scale infrastructures in the Tambo River basin has contributed to problems with water scarcity and environmental damage near the coast (Arenas Figueroa 2018, Lapa Romero 2017). This is the case, for example, with the Pasto Grande dam, a project located in the highlands of the adjacent region of Moquegua. Though initially built to supply irrigation canals for small- and medium-scale agriculture upriver, modifications of the dam, dating to 1992, expanded its capacity by capturing new sources of water. Since the late-2000s, the Quellaveco mine—owned by the Anglo American Public Limited Company—has increasingly played a greater role in the management of the Pasto

Grande dam. By supporting projects that extend the dam's capacity to provide potable water and irrigation to communities upstream, Quellaveco has successfully negotiated the right to use some of the dam's resources for its own operations.

These infrastructural changes in the Pasto Grande dam have had notable effects downstream, not only reducing the volume of the Tambo River, but also altering its composition. Two of the river's sources—the Titire and Ichuña Rivers—are highly mineralized, because of their formation in a volcanic region. Before the dam's modifications, the boric acid and arsenic in these tributaries were diluted by a high volume of fresh water from the Vizcachas river. In the past thirty years, however, the expansion of the Pasto Grande dam has led to a dramatic rise in the concentration of boric acid and arsenic in the Tambo River (Arenas Figueroa 2018: 247). Moreover, since 2012, tailings spills from the Florencia Tucari mine, owned and operated by the Aruntani company in the region of Puno, have been intermittently turning the river ochre, contributing to a significant rise in these metalloids (El Búho 2021). Though the closing operations of the Florencia Tucari project began in 2019, due largely to its appaling environmental track record, toxic leakage from the mine's facilities has continued to contaminate the water table (Montaño 2023). In turn, the environmental crisis precipitated by the Pasto Grande dam and the Florencia Tucari mine has been slowly but surely affecting the yields of farmland downriver, and changing the fauna in the delta of the Tambo River, including the waning of fish.

As I helped Señora Francisca carry her groceries to the *colectivo* stop, one absence echoed another, and the waning silversides recalled her oldest son.

"Mi Javiercito," she said, using the diminutive, "he lives in Arequipa now. How he used to love fried silverside sandwiches!" (*vive en Arequipa, ahora. Como le encantaba el pan con*

pejerrey!). Javier, she said, was in his late twenties, and had studied at the Universidad Nacional San Agustín in the city of Arequipa, and after graduating in 2014, he was hired in a managerial position at a factory and decided to stay in the city. Señora Francisca's longing, however, went beyond the matter of watching her son leave the family's home and become an adult. Though she lived about three hours away from her son, Señora Francisca had not seen Javier since the end of 2017, when a fight with his father resulted in his prolonged absence from the family's home. Crucially, at the heart of their disagreement lay different understandings of the mine's presence in the Valley, the duration of the conflict, and how the family should respond to the layered pressures of environmental damage, debt, and intermittent state violence.

The rise of pollutants in the river not only cleared the fish from the Valley's irrigation canals, but also led to the slow accumulation of pollutants in farmers' plots—and thus, to increasingly unstable crop yields. In such difficult circumstances, growing rice has become an important part of farmers' efforts at maintaining the quality of their soil. Rice cultivation in the Valley begins in December, when the Tambo River swells with highland rains. For a period of three months—from December to March—the rainwater dilutes the high mineral content from tributaries like the Titire and Ichuña rivers. Farmers in the Tambo Valley have found that growing rice during the rainy season improves the quality of the soil. Many of them speculated that pooling rainwater in their enclosed plots during the rice season helps "desalinate" (*desalinizar*) the land by removing some degree of boric acid and arsenic from the soil. When speaking about farmers' attempts to use rice cultivation to mitigate the presence of boric acid and arsenic in the river, a friend from the city of Arequipa who works as an agricultural engineer told me that while boric acid dissolves easily in water, arsenic does not. Instead, he said, the arsenic is most likely absorbed by the rice itself. Coincidentally, a friend who works at the FDA alerted

me that rice is a crop that is specifically monitored for arsenic absorption.[xlv] Thus, not without ambivalence, rice cultivation in the valley has become crucial to the health of the soil and to farmers' livelihoods.

At the same time, the very importance of rice to local economies has also made it a source of vulnerability for many families. The decrease in market prices for rice is mainly the result of the Free Trade Agreements that Peru established with neighbouring countries, starting in 1993 with the Andean Community. This pattern continued with Peru joining the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) in 2005, leading to the gradual removal of import taxes on essential food staples, particularly rice. In 2017 and 2018, rice producers in the north protested against the radical implementation of these measures, which took place in 2015 with two Supreme Decrees from the Ministry of Economy and Finances (Paucar Albino 2017a).[xlvi] Moreover, given that rice is harvested between May and June, the periods of militarized occupation that took place in 2011, 2015, and 2019 overlapped with a key window in the life of the crop, putting many farmers in the extremely precarious situation of having to brave state violence to make the most of their diminishing returns and avoid falling into debt.

Thinking back on my exchange with Señora Francisca on that Sunday afternoon in Lima, it is difficult not to see how the changes in the river altered the relations in her family, and how, in turn, the making and unmaking of these relations is experienced as a series of associations embedded in the life and matter of the Valley itself.

A Family Disagreement

In 2019, when Señora Francisca and I returned to the subject, she said that farming in the

Valley had become like going to the casino, and that for her family, this gamble had meant contending with more than three years of debt. Throughout 2017, Javier asked his family to sell his land and move to Arequipa. Señora Francisca said that at first, her husband tried to understand Javier's position, but he worried that aging in the city would impoverish their family's life by depriving him and his wife of a means to support themselves. Over months of Javier's insistence, however, Señor Melchor grew disappointed in his son. Though Javier occasionally sent money to cover a few farming-related costs, he called and visited seldom and seemed altogether disinterested in his father's efforts to pull the farm out of debt. While Señor Melchor wagered that their problem with debt was momentary, and that their land had value with or without the mine, Javier was convinced that his community stood no chance of repelling a 1.4-billion-dollar project, and that given Grupo Mexico's environmental track record, agriculture in the Valley ultimately had little chance of surviving it. The disagreement between Señor Melchor and his son turned into a fight that lasted through the Christmas holidays and resulted in Javier's prolonged absence from the family's house.

Señora Francisca lamented that the tension between Javier and his father affected everyone in the family, especially her nephew Mateo, who had been living with them since the age of five. Señora Francisca and Señor Melchor referred to Mateo as their "son by raising" (*hijo de crianza*). In his mid-20s, Mateo had become the backbone of the household's precarious stability as he took charge of farmwork with his uncle, enabling the family to depend far less on hired day labourers (*jornaleras/os*) at a cost of 60 to 80 PEN, or roughly between 24 and 32 CAD per day.[xlvii] Mateo's work, therefore, enabled the family to continue living and farming in an increasingly risky situation, which Javier opposed. Though the pair had been fond of each other as children, at the time of my research, the family's disagreement over how to deal with the

pressures of environmental damage, economic precarity, and extraordinary policing on agricultural life in the valley drove a wedge between them.

When I spoke to Señor Melchor, I was left with the impression that for him, his son's plan of selling the family's land to buy a place in the city was not ill-intentioned as much as short-sighted. "What Javier doesn't understand is that he won't be able to carry our weight from the day we sell the house until the day we die" (*Lo que Javier no entiende es que no va a poder cargar con nosotros desde el día de la venta de la casa hasta el día de nuestra muerte*). In his view, keeping the family's home and his land in the Valley—even amid the conflict—gave him and his wife vital resources for their old age. Even if he could no longer work, Señor Melchor imagined that he would rent out the family's plots. After the argument with his son, Señor Melchor began to refer to Javier as a mine supporter (*pro-minero*), using the language of the mining conflict to express his bitter disappointment. By the end of my research in December 2019, Javier still refused to visit the family's house, and would only speak to his father by way of his mother and his younger sister Roxana, who had moved to the city of Arequipa where she lived with her husband and two children. Señora Francisca stayed in touch with her son over the phone, and Roxana occasionally visited his apartment. In my comings and goings between the valley and the city, Señora Francisca often asked me to bring chickens, milk, rice, and other foodstuffs from her farm for her two children. I would then deliver these items to Roxana, who met me at the Gratersa bus terminal near Arequipa's Industrial Park.

On a Monday in June 2019, Señora Francisca handed me a market bag with two chickens (which she had killed and cleaned the night before), six litres of milk (stored in two bottles of soda),[xlviii] and four bags filled with rice and potatoes. After a two-hour ride across the desert, as the van pulled into the terminal, I spotted Roxana waiting for me outside the company's offices.

When the van parked, she joined me and the small group of passengers gathered at the back as we retrieved our luggage. We talked about her kids and about her mother-in-law's vegetable stand at one of the city's markets, where she was trying to find wholesale buyers for her family's new crop of rice. Then, she asked if I was hungry, and we walked to a food stand just outside the terminal, and after placing my duffle bag and her parcel between our stools and the cart, we ordered two plates of *chicharrones y chuño*. The small cuts of deep-fried alpaca meat served with a generous handful of potatoes, been naturally freeze-dried and had a slightly fermented flavour that nicely balanced with the aroma of spearmint in the boiling water.

Though she knew that I mostly worked upstream and saw her family only once or twice a week, Roxana wanted to hear more about how they were doing. I said that her family appeared to be in good spirits and that they were hopeful about selling their rice at a good price this year. Then I added that her father still seemed wounded by his argument with Javier, and that I had a hard time understanding why he called his son *prominero*, since Javier did not seem to support the mine, at least not in the way of advocating for it. Roxana, who seemed to me to have considered her father's words before, said that despair kept both men from thinking (*es que los dos se desesperan y ya no puede pensar*).

"Learning how to live"

In conversations with Señora Francisca, she sometimes described the precarious impasses in her life as moments of uncertainty where, without a given path, she had "to learn how to live." Within the context of the Tía María conflict, this is how she described her experience of the militarized occupations that took place in the Valley in 2011 and 2015—a time when

maneuvering between incommensurable possibilities of loss put her family in the position of "learning how to live with the conflict" (*nos tocaba aprender a vivir así, pues, con el conflicto*). Both of these prolonged events took place between April and December, and so overlapped with the last three months of the rice season, which since the mid-1990s, has become the Valley's most important crop. Thus, the militarized occupations put farmers at a difficult impasse, as they could not seek refuge elsewhere without abandoning their fields. As our conversations became more intimate, Señora Francisca shared her experience of this impasse in 2015, describing it as a time of uncertainty, where fear—in her own words—"put [her] soul at the mouth," (*el miedo me puso el alma en la boca*). I will turn to this matter in more detail at the end of the following section. Before I do, however, I wish to further render a better picture of the mutually constitutive relationship between self and world implicit in Señora Francisca's mournful attention to the experience of change.

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In May 2019, I visited Señora Francisca on a weekday afternoon so we could record an interview. When I arrived at Señora Francisca's house, she brought me to the kitchen, where she had left a pot of chicken stew simmering on the stove. Mateo and Señor Melchor were out working in a neighbour's rice field, and Señora Francisca said that she expected them to be back between 4:30 and 5:00, adding that she was making enough food so that I could stay for dinner. Then she brought another pot to her two-range stove and began toasting handfuls of corn (*cancha*) using a dry reed to swish the kernels around in a pool of shallow oil until they were golden and slightly cracked. After pouring *cancha* into a tin bowl, Señora Francisca brought it to

the table along with a wheel of fresh cheese and a bottle of soda.

That day, our conversation touched on a few different themes, but I wish focus here on her description of Mateo's arrival at her family's home, and through this experience also on her insights into how experiences of loss and grief continuously change a person's "rootedness" (*arraigo*) in the relationships, places, and social worlds that are a part of their very being.

Both Señora Francisca and Mateo moved to the Valley from the highland region of Puno, south of Arequipa.[xlix] Mateo came to live with Señora Francisca's family in 1999 at the age of five, a few weeks after his father, an interprovincial truck driver, died in a road accident. At the time, Señora Francisca's sister, Señora Imelda had three children—a girl of seven, Mateo, who was five, and a younger baby. They lived with her in-laws in the city of Juliaca. However, after her husband's death, their relationship became strained. Unsure of how long she would be able to stay with her in-laws, Señora Imelda asked Señora Francisca and Señor Melchor to take Mateo into their home while she tried to find a way to support her children:

> At that time, I said, "Let's help Imelda, what is she going to do with three little ones?" Then, I saw that this child was in pain and that he didn't know—I believe that he didn't know that his father had passed away. He was so little. I remember, sometimes, he cried and couldn't catch his breath. [*En ese tiempo, decía, "vamos a ayudarla a la Imelda, ¿qué se va a hacer con tres wawas?" Luego, recién vi que este niño estaba dolido y no sabía—yo creo que no sabía, pues, que su papá, ya pues, se nos había adelantado. Estaba chiquitito. Me acuerdo, a veces, lloraba y no alcanzaba a respirar.*]

Not too long after Señora Imelda brought Mateo to her sister's house, she moved to Lima to find work, bringing only her baby with her and leaving her oldest daughters in Juliaca. I asked Señora Francisca if she could remember what her sister's visit was like, and she said that it was difficult to recall details on the spot, except for her sister's absentmindedness.

"When Mateo came," she continued, "he was a little uprooted, but we had to learn to live with him just as he was" (*Cuando llegó el Mateito estaba desarraigadito, pero nos tocaba aprender a vivir con él así como estaba*).

"A little uprooted?" (*¿desarraigadito?*) I asked, trying to get a better idea of what she meant. Señora Francisca explained that though Mateo was old enough to speak, for the first few months, he simply did not, and so, she was not sure whether he understood that his father had passed away, or even that she was his mother's sister. It was not unusual for him to get into fights with Javier and other kids in the neighbourhood. He cried frequently, and sometimes peed in his bed or wet his clothes. Reflecting on Mateo's suffering while partially answering my question on what she had meant when she said he was "a little uprooted," Señora Francisca explicitly addressed the experience of loss and the uncertainty that comes with it:

> When talking about it, all of this seems smaller, right? But in those days, not knowing what would happen, I thought and thought, "what can we do?" Now, I think and see, right?, that that child, for him, he had lost everything, everything. His life was all gone. *[Cuando una lo cuenta, todo parece más pequeño, pero en esos días, sin saber más que iba a pasar, yo pensaba, pensaba, "¿qué podemos hacer?" Ahora, pienso y veo, ¿no?, que ese chiquito, para él, él lo había perdido todo, todo. Su vida se le acabó.*]

Señora Francisca imagined that after the death of Mateo's father, the bonds that connected her sister to their social world began to come undone, and this gradual unraveling ultimately marked a significant change in life for her and her children.[1] Then she expressed her experience of Mateo's loss by saying that with his father's death and his mother's gradual displacement from her in-law's home, "his life was all gone" (*su vida se le acabó*), even though he clearly was not deceased in a physiological sense. This wording invites us to imagine how profound losses, such as the death of a loved one or an involuntary migration, can also be

experienced as one's own death, the loss of one's own life. Yet as her attention to Mateo's experience shows, these losses can also evoke an uncanny continuity beyond that death. How then, might we approach Señora Francisca's understanding of the precarious thresholds between one life and another?

One way to begin thinking through this question is by turning to Freud's concept of mourning and what it can tell us about the making and unmaking of the self. Freud pays great attention to the emotional energy that suffuses the connections that matter to us, understanding it as the driving force behind a person's needs and desires. In his view, this psychic energy, or libido, holds the self together, forming a person's way of being in the sense that it animates their encounters with the world and can be understood to comprise their orientation in a broader phenomenological sense - rather than simply sexually speaking (Ahmed 2006). Freud's early theory of mourning (1957 [1917]), published in his famous 1917 essay, describes the process of mourning as a gradual withdrawal of the emotional energy a person has placed in a significant bond, which ceases to exist as they have come to know it. Here, Freud argues that when faced with a significant loss, a person withdraws the energy that was previously invested in this now-absent relational object, gradually allowing the self to become "free and uninhibited" (*ibid.*: 245), such that mourning accomplishes nothing short of putting the self back together.[li] By contrast, in the pathological variation of mourning, which he calls melancholia, this process of detachment does not occur as effectively and an unresolved attachment to a relational object that no longer exists as it did before becomes the source of persistent emotional pain.

Here, Freud's view of mourning is guided by an implicit optimism. It does not (yet) ask whether it is possible to detach completely, which the categorical distinction between mourning and melancholia takes to be the case, or whether the work of mourning does indeed return the

psychic energy that drives a person's existence[lii] I will return to this thought later in this section. For the moment, however, I wish to note how a general understanding of mourning as a regenerative process can give us a way of thinking about Señora Fracisca's experience of Mateo's grief. Specifically, I want to render the reorientation of desire that comes to be at stake at the precarious thresholds where one life ends and another begins. Putting Freud's theory of mourning on the table, so to speak, allows me to point out that upheaving experiences of loss do not simply transform how we desire to be part of the world, but rather, put this very desire at stake as part of the process of transformation.[liii] In this sense, significant losses confront the bereaved and those nearest to them with the helplessness of coming undone.

Let me now return to a moment in my conversation with Señora Francisca, where she described her own limits in helping Mateo survive the life-changing loss of his father's death, and within these limits, the way that watching him allowed her to participate, indirectly, in his grief. Though Señora Francisca did not speak about the psyche and mourning in Freudian terms, she did describe Mateo's "unsociable" (*huraño*) character and her own experience of ungainliness (*estar umpa/o*):

> For him, it seems, right?, that his soul didn't want to be here. Like this, when a person is going to die, sometimes, their soul starts leaving, right?, it's possible to hear their voice where that person is not. That means their soul is departing. Like this, [Mateo] was unsociable until little by little we called his little soul for him. Oh, son, during that time, I also lived with my soul at my mouth; I felt, sometimes, that I was dumb from so much worry. (*A él, parece, ¿no?, que su alma no tenía ganas pues, estar acá. Así, cuando una persona se va a morir, a veces, su alma, se va yendo, ¿no?, se escucha su voz, donde no está. Eso es que su alma se está yendo. Así pues, él estaba huraño hasta que poco, poco le llamamos su almita. Ay, hijo, en esa época yo también vivía con el alma en la boca, sentía, a veces, umpa que estaba de tanto la preocupación* [sic.])

Beyond the surface equivalence of the words “psyche” and “alma,” both of which denote a soul or mind, Señora Francisca spoke about Mateo’s unsociability in terms of his desire, or rather, his lack of desire. *His soul didn’t want to be here*. I want to stay for a moment with this picture of the soul as something that can wish to be elsewhere, that can wander off from the body, and that can be *little by little* be called back.

This was not the only time I came across this idea in my fieldwork. For instance, in the city of Arequipa and in the Tambo Valley, I often came across packs of outdoor dogs, which people use to guard their homes and neighbourhoods in places where the community does not trust the police. While in most circumstances outdoor dogs were largely indifferent to my presence, at night or when they gathered in roving packs, outdoor dogs could become frighteningly hostile. After a particularly tense encounter near the home of a market worker in the city of Arequipa, in which she and I became stuck at the bottom of a ravine with two packs of dogs waiting for us on either side, my companion said that we needed to call our souls back because “fear” (*miedo*) could drive them away. She then insisted that to make sure my soul did not escape, I should pull on a tuft of my own hair three times while saying, “come, come, come” (*ven, ven, ven*).

When I asked other market workers and later Valley residents about this gesture, some found it funny, and with embarrassment qualified it as a “popular belief” (*creencia popular*) while others added layers of interesting commentary. The woman who ran the market stand, where I occasionally worked bussing tables and preparing food, told me that when our souls want to go, we can get sick, see things in distorted ways, and even go mad or die. Stinging nettles (*ortigas*) worked better than pulling at one’s hair she said, and in addition to making oneself feel pain, that it was also necessary to drink apple water (*agua de mazana*). In the

upstream township where I stayed while living in the Valley, Josefina (who appears again in later chapters) agreed with the apple water remedy and addeing precision said that while pain calls the soul back, food fastens it to the body. Then she told me the story of a woman from her town who called her soul back but did not fasten it to her body, so that not only would it come and go, but a second soul was then able to take hold of her body, which some said had grown in the absence of the other, while others that it was a wandering soul that simply took hold of her. Along a completely different path, when I spoke about this to my therapist who lives and works in Lima, he casually described the gesture as "psychotic."

In all of these conversations, I found that the people around me were using the language of fear (*miedo*), which resembles the language of "fright" or *susto* that medical anthropologists have extensively explored as a folk illness complex in Spanish-speaking Latin America (Klein 1978) and Brazil (Rebhun 1994). Conceived as "soul loss" stemming from "fright" or *susto*, the general consensus among these ethnographies is that *susto* presents us with an experience of psychic and bodily disarticulation in the face of unbearable pressures—such as overwhelming fear, violence, or grief. In turn, *susto* has been studied as an emic lens for rendering the impacts of structural pressures such as chronic impoverishment, adaptation, and the power-laden demands of community life (Mysyk 1998, Rubel 1964, Rubel et al. 1991, Trotter 1982). More recently, in the context of Peru's internal armed conflict (1980-2000), Kimberly Theidon has returned to this scholarship on *susto* to discuss not only how people living in Andean communities conceive lived experiences of violence as a source of illness, but also how these etiologies reveal ethical and phenomenological accounts of what is a social self (2014).

Here I wish to argue that even though Señora Francisca was not using the language of *susto*, in speaking of Mateo's soul as needing to be called back to his body, she was not only

sharing what she knew about the ways in which significant losses can impact health and illness, but also sharing an experience-near picture of the self. Importantly, in her description of Mateo's suffering, she was keenly attentive to the ways in which our connections with other people, places, and social worlds come to bear on the reorientation of a person's desire and the remaking of their very self. In other words, I am arguing that in using the language of soul-loss to understand how distress impinges on subjectivity, Señora Francisca was giving me a picture of the self.

At Señora Francisca's table, over a now emptier plate of toasted corn and cheese, she said that as she became aware that she could not simply put an end to Mateo's suffering, she redirected her efforts to easing the strain on him and her own children. One way in which she tried to do this was by bringing him to the family's farming plots whenever she had to do small tasks like weeding or caring for the gardens she had planted on the hedge banks. Sometimes, she would also bring Javier and Roxana, but mostly her own children would stay with her husband or her neighbours. Though at first Señora Francisca worried that he might wander off or fall into the canal, eventually, noticing that he was curious about the running water, she began to ask Señor Melchor to bring the boys to the river on weekends. In about a year, though Mateo continued to wet his bed and fight with other children, he began to cry less, ask to be taken to the river more, and seek the company of the people in the house.[liv]

Most of all, Señora Francisca remembered the weekend afternoons when her family would go to the Tambo River. In her recollection, Mateo was still too young to look for shrimp or fish, but he watched with interest as Señor Melchor used nylon wire and a small hook to teach his son Javier. Though the family's catch of fish was not usually abundant at the stony riverside beaches closest to their home, they could easily find shrimp for one or two family meals there,

and sometimes, if they wished to make sandwiches, they would stop by the home of a neighbour to buy more fish.

Though not all Valley residents agreed on when exactly the fish began to disappear from the river, for many, the memory of silversides remained an intimate marker of time. According to Señora Francisca, the silversides "left" sometime in the mid-2000s, when Javier was a teenager and Mateo was about ten or eleven. In her kitchen, she lamented once again the waning of the fish, as she had months before at the market. "It's been years since I've seen any silverside in the river," she said. "They're gone now! But before, when there were still some [around], my kids were pulled to the river." (*¡Ya años no he visto pejerrey en el río! ¡Ya se fueron, ya! pero antes, cuando todavía había, a mis hijos les jalaba, pues, ir al río*). A few minutes later, our conversation continuing to tack back and forth between the loss of fish and Mateo, Señora Francisca remarked that these day trips to the river were the first step in a much broader change, which ultimately allowed him to come into himself. Being outside, she said, seemed to help Mateo—not just to tire him out, but to pull him into an activity and a place he could share with those around him.

"That's how he began to take root," she said (*así ya empezó a arraigarse*).

Having asked what she meant by *dedarraigadito*, I now asked Señora Francisca what she meant by *arraigarse*. (*Arraigarse*, *¿qué quiere decir para usted?*)

"To take root," she replied, "is to make oneself of a place" (*arraigarse es hacerse de un lugar*). I want to say that, with these words, Señora Francisca was trying to condense much of what she knows about the making and unmaking of the self.

In describing the grief Mateo felt after his father suddenly died and his mother found herself unable to care for him, Señora Francisca drew on the concept of soul loss to describe her

nephew's overwhelming experience of grief and disorientation. Though Señora Francisca did not say that Mateo was mourning, she did say that his soul did not wish to be in the valley, which is evocative of Freud's early account of mourning. In making this observation, however, I am not arguing for a Freudian understanding of soul-loss as a form of melancholia. Rather, I am making the more modest suggestion that the language of soul-loss gave Señora Francisca a way to talk about the chaotic recomposition of Mateo's desire. He was coming undone, and she was not sure that he would come back. In that uncertainty, Señora Francisca described the shared effort of *calling his soul for him* as paradoxically both active and passive—that is, as a combination of doing something and waiting. Her attention to Mateo's curiosity about the irrigation canal turned into a family tradition of outings to the river, which folded a small community into her nephew's care, but also a place.

In *Lugares Parientes* (2019), the Peruvian anthropologist Guillermo Salas Carreño draws on ethnographic research in three Quechua speaking communities in the region of Cusco (2002-2008)[lv] to understand how food substances and everyday rhythms of cohabitation enable places, or *ruwalkuna,* to emerge as part of more-than-human kinship networks. *Lugares Parientes*, or "kin places," continues a tradition of Andean ethnography based in Quechua and Aymara speaking communities and contributes to the elaboration of the *ayllu* form, which has been largely understood to refer to kinship networks constituted through ongoing reciprocal exchanges of work and energy (Castro-Pozo 1924, Bastien 1978, Ferreira and Isbell 2016). From a North American perspective, the anthropologist John Murra has greatly shaped contemporary understandings of the *ayllu* as a social form, defining it as "an enduring, named, localized group of households sharing genealogical and/or ritual identity on lines of inheritance" (2020 [1969]: 73). *Ayllus*, Murra contends, were maintained by a mode of reciprocity known as *ayni*, which

denotes the work and energy invested in collective efforts at making a particular form endure, and which—unlike *yanapa*, a mode of reciprocity that does not presuppose a durable form—requires accounting (*ibid*.: 22).

In Andean contexts then, it is widely understood that kinship relations are vital not only to the management of households (Mayer 2002), but also to the governance and the making of socio-material worlds (Salomon 2004, 2011). Beyond the context of rural peasant and Indigenous communities, social science research has detailed how the ethics of reciprocity articulated through the concepts of *ayni* and *yanapa* have been absorbed into a wide range of fictive kinship and mutual-aid practices (Allen 2002 [1988], Weismantel 2006). Bibliographically, Andean reciprocity is often discussed as an important aspect of fictive kinship forged through bonds of sponsorship and godparentship (*compadrazgo*) (Leinaweaver 2016, Mintz and Wolf 1950), and in the construction of squatter settlements at the margins of state-sponsored forms of urban planning (*autoconstrucción*) (Gyger 2019), as well as in the management of precarity and aspiration through food-based fundraising events (*polladas*) (Béjar Rivera and Álvarez Alderete 2010). More recently, Marisol de la Cadena (2015) has provided a new turn in ethnographic scholarship on the *ayllu* by showing how this Andean form encompasses beings and relations beyond the human. de la Cadena argues that *ayllu* relations are experienced as a collectivity of human and non-human beings bound together in the making of a socio-material world through practices of intra-care (*uyway*) (*ibid*.: 103). Put differently, while the concept of *ayllu* may frequently denote genealogical lineages and family-based kinship networks, it also has a broader application that encompasses the collaborative and adversarial relations between beings that condition each other's ethical and physical existence.

It is in this sense that Salas Carreño speaks of *ruwalkuna*, or place beings, as kin.

Compellingly, he also examines a relationship between soul-loss and place, although in the opposite direction. That is, hungry *ruwalkuna* can frighten either passersby or members of their own *ayllu*, putting them at risk of soul-loss, until they receive an appropriate ceremonial payment (*pago*) (Salas Carreño 2019: REF). In my conversations with Señora Francisca, she did not speak about the river as a *ruwalkuna* or *tirakuna*, though she did speak of it as a presence with the power to impinge upon how her nephew came to matter.

Extending the Andean ways of knowing discussed in Salas Carreño's work, it is possible that when Mateo left Juliaca with his mother, a hungry *ruwalkuna* may have frightened him along the way and put his soul at risk. However, this is not what Señora Francisca said. Rather than speaking about Mateo's soul as taken, she spoke of it as *not wanting to be in the Valley*. That is, rather than attributing it to the hunger of a *ruwalkuna*, she put the notion of soul-loss into play to express her attunement to his grief and desire. Nevertheless, when she explained that *arraigarse* means *to make oneself of a place*, she situated the desire that animates the self within the wider context of the psychic and material exchanges that make up a social world.[lvi]

The Tambo River participated in Señora Francisca's family's efforts at calling Mateo's soul back, noting the enlivening way in which the river used to pull them (*les jalaba*), not only drawing their interest to a shared moment and activity, but also, drawing their souls to the Valley, making the Tambo River both an agent and an object of care:

> The river here gives us everything, everything, everything. For me, in my land, my family, it gives me rice, garlic, potatoes. It has given me the education of my son. It has given me even—it has returned to me, well, my son, Mateo, who is my son by raising, right? That's everything. That's all I say" (*El río acá nos da todo, todo, todo. A mi, en lo que es mi tierra, mi familia, me da arrocito, ajo, papa. Me ha dado la educación de mi hijo. Me ha dado hasta—me ha devuelto, pues, a mi hijo, al Mateo que es mi hijo de ciranza, ¿no? Lo que es todo. Eso no más digo.*)

In this regard, though her care for the river was limited by the risk of the forms of extraordinary policing that accompanied the Tía María conflict, Señora Francisca still sought to reciprocate the river's gifts. Señora Francisca's attention to the importance of the river as an agent and object of care deeply entangled with her family's survival expresses a knowledge of the mutually constitutive relation between self and place, which—I want to say—partially resembles the ways of knowing associated with the *ayllu* form. Even though she did not explicitly describe the river as a *ruwalkuna* or frame her ethics in terms of Andean reciprocity, Señora Francisca was still bound by a formative relationship with a non-human agent who could give and receive care.

Just as Valley residents used rice cultivation to "desalinate" their land, in response to the intermittent tailings spills from the Florencia Tucari mine, they also raised funds (often through *polladas*) to cover the costs of independently monitoring the quality of the Tambo River and its tributaries. This arduous work of partially documenting the damage produced by the Aruntani mining company played a small but important part in pressuring government agencies to close the mine, beginning the new struggle over the management of its waste (Montaño 2023). Similarly, since 2004, Valley residents have been demanding an alternative to the management of the river's tributaries via the Pasto Grande dam, whose operation has been increasingly co-opted by the Quellaveco mine (Orihuela 2022). Like many other farmers, Señora Francisca remained abreast of the baroque afflictions impinging on the river's life, and even supported the fundraisers to monitor the flow of metalloids across its basin.

Within some Andean contexts, a relationship characterized by such asymmetrical yet nevertheless reciprocal forms of sustaining relationality could perhaps be experienced as a mode

of mutual care known as *uyway*, which makes *ayullu* relations possible (Oxa 2004). When exploring the paradoxical aspects of selfhood and action linked to *uyway*, Marisol de la Cadena has noted that entities involved in such relationships of mutual care are consistently entangled in each other's existence. In this dynamic, they come into their own through the actions they undertake for the well-being of the other (2015: 102-103). From this perspective, we can say that Señora Francisca—like other Valley residents—acknowledged that in facing the slow destruction of the river, she was also experiencing the death of her community and herself. In this sense, the story of Mateo's childhood grief not only pointed to one of the gifts binding her family's life to the river, but also to the possibility that with the river's waning, her own life might run out too. Insofar as the threads of connection binding Señora Francisca to the river are both psychic and material, the self- and world-making power of *uyway* can perhaps help us see *arraigo* also as an embodied obligation (Povinelli 2006, 2011), that is as a way of knowing and practicing the very conditions of one's being.

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As we have seen, for Señora Francisca and the people in the Tambo Valley, *arraigo* entails not only enlivening gifts and forms of mutual care, but also contending with the poisons of the very relations that give us a place in the world. In the case of the metalloids saturating the Tambo River and accumulating in the delta, we can say that reciprocity, in some instances, manifested through grassroots efforts to test the water downstream for its chemical composition from the Aruntani mine and the Pasto Grande dam. These documents were then used to formulate institutional complaints, which—along with freedom of information requests, public

rallies, and news reports on local outlets—exerted pressure on government agencies, urging them to address the environmental crisis in the Valley. Adjacently, as I mentioned earlier, since the 1990s, rice cultivation has become a local way of mitigating the accumulation of boric acid and arsenic in the soil, and thus, stemming diminishing crop yields. Most of the farmers I spoke with described this process of "desalination" as a matter of heavily irrigating their farming plots (*pozos*) with fresh water from the rain, which is less saturated by volcanic sediments and can wash away the toxic elements accumulated throughout the year. Not everyone, however, shared this uncomplicated optimism.

When I learned that it is highly possible that the arsenic deposited in the river is leached out, so to speak, by the rice, I spoke with a few farmers for whom the cultivation of this crop, though necessary to keep the soil quality from degrading, was also deeply troubling:

> "What are we going to do? I mean, yes, it's a problem, but we are in the middle, right! It's the dam that has changed the river waters, and then the mine, the mines upstream. So, now if they tell us that selling our rice is wrong, that would be too much, I think. But look, besides, I'm going to tell you something else. You know, the Peruvian is a rice eater. We eat a lot of rice, right? … But then, I say, why does no one talk about that? Why? Because it [means] telling the people, 'there, your delicious chicken and rice... your stew, it has poison. Racumin [rat poison]. We have put racumin in your food.' Damn!" … Anyway, well, what we are doing here is, diluting, because there's nothing else, [to do]. Besides that, well, we would only have to endure everything like this, until we burst, or have to leave the valley, that's it. [*¿Qué vamos a hacer? O sea, sí es un problema, ¡pero nosotros estamos al medio, pues! Es la represa que ha cambiado las aguas del río y más luego la mina, las minas de arriba. Entonces—entonces, ahora si nos dicen que está mal vender nuestro arroz, eso ya es, ya sería mucha concha, yo creo. Pero mira, además, yo te voy a decir algo más mira. Tú sabes, el peruano es arrocero. Comemos harto arroz, ¿no? ... Pero entonces, digo yo, ¿porqué nadie habla de eso? ¿Porqué? Porque es decirle al pueblo, 'eso, tu rico arroz con pollo, tu seco, tu estofado, así, eso tiene veneno. Racumín. Te hemos puesto racumín en tu comida, ya.' ¡Pucha! ... De cualquier forma, lo que estamos haciendo acá es, pues, diluir,, porque no hay más, pues. Más eso, nos quedaría no más aguantar todo así, nosotros*

hasta reventar, pues, o tener que salir, no más, del valle.]

The troubling ethics of healing the land by leaching the arsenic in the soil through rice cultivation presents us with a much less handsome dimension of *arraigo*. In the context of my research, for instance, to make oneself of the Tambo Valley involves not only being exposed to elevated levels of metalloids harmful to human health but also grappling with the environmentally violent and ethically fraught dynamic of "being in the middle" (*estar en el medio*) of their circulation. Unable to stop this larger movement, farmers are confronted with the choice of either letting these toxic materials accumulate in their land and bodies or of facilitating their movement in hopes of "diluting" their effects. I refer to this dimension of *arraigo* as unhandsome because it presents us with an unheroic practice of survival, where farmers cannot be described as either simply victims or perpetrators of violence (Bourgois 2004).[lvii] Instead, the Valley residents with whom I spoke most candidly during my research described their relation to the layered forms of environmental, economic, and militarized violence shaping their lives in terms of impasse and bitter compromise (Han 2012).

With the advent of the Tía María project, the unhandsome dimensions of *arraigo* in the Tambo Valley confront us not only with the circulation of toxic materials, but also with the fraying of the intimate relations between family members and neighbours under the pressures of militarized violence. Thinking with Señora Francisca, I want to say that *learning how to live* in these circumstances constitutes a paradoxically effortful and patient experience of crossing a precarious threshold between one possible life and another. Through her description of Mateo's childhood grief, Señora Francisca seemed to say that at such moments, grappling with the unraveling of the bonds that make the self possible involves enduring some degree of decomposition with no assurance of restoration. She made this prospect tangible using the

language of soul-loss. Here, I am suggesting that such a practice of mournful attention can also partially describe the suffering of living through a situation of impasse, which—as Señora Francisca put it—entails *living with one's soul at the mouth*, rather than having it put there suddenly by fright or unexpected loss.

"What Politics?"

In this section, I want to describe how the mining conflict is transforming the experience of contestation among Valley residents, bearing in mind that arguments and disagreements are—in complex ways—encounters with the possibility of loss. More specifically, I will describe four scenes of confrontation, which have helped me understand how, with the advent of the Tía María conflict, figures of internal enmity are adding increasingly antagonistic textures to the everyday conflicts that underwrite life in the Tambo Valley.[lviii] At the end of this section, I will return to Señora Francisca's reflections on *learning how to live with the conflict*.

Señora Marta

As I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Two, in 2013, the Southern Peru Copper Corporation began implementing a changing array of community outreach strategies, which have had an increasingly divisive effect on Valley residents. In 2019, the pop-up clinics sponsored by the mine since 2015 became the focus of tensions in Señora Francisca's block after one of her neighbours began relying on them for treatment and medicine. Most of the people in Señora Francisca's community oppose the mine to differing degrees, and thus refuse to participate in its

community outreach programs, understanding these initiatives to legitimate the mine's presence in their community. That is, they were wary that the mine's attempts to provide them with services are subsequently documented to substantiate the claim that the project has the Valley residents' approval.[lix] In this context, while some of Señora Marta's neighbours did not wish to judge her for trying to meet her healthcare needs, recognizing that the public healthcare centres (*postas médicas*) in their community did not offer specialized or even reliable services, others understood accessing the mine's services as a form of betrayal.

I learned about this disagreement in Señora Francisca's community on one of our day's at the Cocachacra market, when we ran into one of her neighbours. The woman, who looked perhaps a few years younger than Señora Francisca, wore a red blouse and a pair of dark blue jeans, black polished flats, and a baseball cap. I imagined that she had gone to mass, like Señora Francisca, and then decided to run a few errands before heading home. She carried two market bags without much difficulty and seemed to be on her way out. In a short exchange, she told Señora Francisca that a few of their neighbours were going to find a time later in the week to ask Señora Marta to stop accessing the mine's medical services.

Seeing the perplexed expression on Señora Francisca's face, her neighbour insisted on the need for such an invasive tack by claiming that it was important not to "yield ground to the mine" (*es que no podemos cederle terreno a la mina*). Withholding a judgment of the situation, Señora Francisca simply said that did not get involved in "political things." After we said goodbye to her neighbour, I asked Señora Francisca if she could help me understand Señora Marta's situation. She explained that her neighbour had started having chronic health problems three years prior for which the doctors she saw in the city recommended a treatment that included no longer drinking water from the Valley.

During my fieldwork, Señora Marta continued to procure healthcare from the mine, and—I learned—to support rallies calling for the project's cancellation by donating food from her farm to feed demonstrators. While a few people in her community accused her of trying to play both sides, from what I could gather, most of her neighbours simply accepted that she needed medical care. Among Señora Marta's detractors, however, two women from her block insisted that receiving services from the mine made her a potential *infiltrada*, which in this case meant an informant or collaborator of the mine (rather than an undercover police agent). Troubled by the ambiguity of Señora Marta's position, both women cast her as a willfully deceitful person and a threat to their community.

The concern with betrayal among Valley residents opposing the mine became particularly intense after 2015, when Pepe Julio Gutierrez, a prominent grassroots leader (*dirigente*), attempted to negotiate a bribe with mining officials to call off the fourth indefinite strike demanding the cancellation of the mining project. Pepe Julio Gutiérrez was a *dirigente* associated with the Tambo Valley Defense Front (Frente de Defensa del Valle de Tambo). At the end of April 2015, as a fourth indefinite strike was well underway but before ex-President Ollanta Humala declared a state of emergency, a recording of Gutiérrez's voice was released on social media, in which he could be heard asking for half a million US dollars to call off the strike. For those who were following the conflict, it was surprising to learn that his interlocutor was Jesús Gómez Urquizo, an environmental lawyer who just four years prior had helped the Defense Front prepare a dossier of technical observations of the mine's first EIA. As it turns out, however, Gómez Urquizo had been hired by the Southern Peru Copper Corporation in 2013 to work as a consultant on their second EIA, a detail that was confirmed in 2020 by the mine's public relations coordinator, Julio Morriberon Rosas (Quispe Aguilar 2022: 161). Beyond the

shock at the public revelation of Gómez Urquizo's affiliation with the mine, another consequence of the so-called "pepeaudios" was that the Public Ministry construed Gutiérrez and his affiliation with the other members of the Frente de Defensa as a criminal organization bent on instrumentalizing the anti-extractive struggle for personal gain.[lx] At rallies and in interpersonal exchanges, people berated both men, calling them "traitors" (*traidores*), "homeland sellers" (*vendepatrias*), and "sell-outs" (*vendidos*). More viscerally, however, they were repudiated for the callousness of turning a profit from a collective struggle, during which seven civilians were killed and hundreds more were injured by the state.When I asked Señora Francisca to share her view on the tensions surrounding Señora Marta's use of the medical services offered by the mine, she said that the two women in her block who found this deeply troubling, now treated Señora Marta with contempt (*la tratan con desprecio*). "They don't even speak to her, son, sick as she is, they treat her as if she were nobody at all" (*ya ni le hablan, hijo. Así, enfermita como está, la nigunean*). It is possible to imagine that Señora Francisca's neighbours felt rage over the betrayal of the *pepeaudios*, which they could not resolve and that these emotions were then displaced towards Señora Marta at a moment when her position on the mine was experienced as ambivalent.[lxi] Unlike arguments over the use and management of collective resources or divergent personal interests, arguments over how to respond to the mine can be shadowed by notions of enmity and threat.

Let me briefly draw the reader's attention to one of the words Señora Francisca used to describe the hostility directed towards Señora Marta, which is the verb *ningunear*. Famously, the Mexican writer Octavio Paz has described the practice of *ninguneo* as "an operation that consists in making No One out of Someone" (*una operación que consiste en hacer de Alguien, Ninguno*), of turning a peer into an incarnation of nothingness itself (Paz 2000 [1950]: 48-49). As Paz

describes it, the practice of *ninguneo* is used to assert the hierarchies of a colonial situation by enacting a mode of relationality (*trato*) that negates the importance of any form of presence or expression that does not resemble settler life. Thus, while Señora Marta's neighbours imbued the practice of *ninguneo* with a content that markedly differs from the one described by Paz, they nevertheless expressed a desire to turn somebody into nobody, and moreover, claimed to do so for the good of their community. Thus, while their attempt at turning Señora Marta into a pariah failed, it seems to me that it nevertheless revealed a wish to eliminate a threat, which found expression in the very gesture of refusing to speak to Señora Marta, that is, of denying her a place in the community. In other words, conflicts between neighbours are not uncommon in the Tambo Valley, but disagreements over the Tía María mining project had the power to give intimate relations an extraordinarily hostile tone and gave rise to new forms of hostility within neighbourhood life.

To begin examining this complicated scenario of neighbourly hostility, let me briefly turn to Bhrigupati Singh's (2015) research in Shahabad (Rajasthan, India), an ethnography of rural life that gives considerable attention to the points of tension in the relations between neighbours. In particular, I wish to draw on Singh's concept of agonistic intimacy, which attends to the shifting degrees of mutual affirmation and hostility that became part and parcel of the relationship between neighbouring communities in Shahabad (2015: 151). Rather than conceiving of desire and aggression as categorically distinct and homogeneous spheres of action, Singh focuses on the thresholds that differentiate these experiences, marking shifts in their intensity and quality, as well as transitions from one to the other. Relations between neighbours, Singh observes, trouble categorical distinctions between friend and enemy, allowing for conflict and sometimes even violence that is not premised on the destruction of a proximate other. For

instance, though the ongoing contentions regarding forest use in Shahabad affect the intensity of hostilities among communities living in the same locality, they do not upend their neighbourly relations.[lxii] In other words, agonistic intimacy attends to the "fluctuating disruption of the friend-enemy distinction" in conflicts between neighbours (*ibid.*: 274).

Thinking with Singh, it seems to me that in the situation of Señora Marta and her neighbours *ninguneo*—as Señora Francisca describes it—marks the threshold of agonistic intimacy, where disagreement comes to be shadowed by enmity. In other words, Señora Francisca's neighbours treated Señora Marta as if they wanted her to disappear, as if she had already become *no one*. To better flesh out this claim, let me give an example of agonistic intimacy in the Tambo Valley by describing the experiences of a farmer in one of the upstream communitiesw ith ordinary disputes surrounding the use of the irrigation canal.

The Irrigation Canal

On a January evening, in the middle of the rainy season, I spoke to a farmer in the upstream section of the Valley who was very close to the Huanca family, with whom I stayed during my fieldwork. In this conversation, Señor Florentino explained how the irrigation canal can become a source of contention for Valley residents.[lxiii] Before launching into our conversation, let me briefly describe how the canals work.

The irrigation infrastructure in the Valley consists of a series of dug-out trenches that draw water from the river into smaller parcels, locally known as *pozos*. While some of these trenches are covered in cement and operated through rotating valves, others are simply cut into the clay and barricaded with logs that are thatched with patches of dry grass and covered with

large plastic bags to make a seal. The use of the canal in the district of Cocachacra is overseen by a single Water Management Board, which allocates watering times to different sections of the canal by controlling when the main valve linking a section of the canal infrastructure to the river will open, allowing the water to flow through this branch (*ramal*). In turn, smaller committees of delegates draft a schedule indicating when the gates connected to a specific parcel (*pozo*) can be opened.

While orderly in its allotment of time, this system is far from equitable in its distribution of water, as topography and the changing flow of the river play important roles in how much water might course into a parcel at a given window of time. Thus, whether the window of time allocated to an individual farmer will satisfy their crop's needs is, to a degree, up to chance. This means that beyond the schedules regulating canal use, farmers often have to borrow, buy, and steal water from their neighbours to try as best they can to meet the needs of their crops. Señor Florentino described his experience of using the canal as follows:

> The river, well, it's not like a faucet in your house. It swells. It shrinks, and you don't know how much water will be coming down the canal when it's your turn [to water your *pozo*]. What's more, up here, the gates to every *pozo* are sealed with logs, like you have seen already, and plastic, the plastic bags from *urea*, fertilizer—[with] that! It's not a concrete lock that you open and close with a handle. You have to go in the water, to your knees, your waist, sometimes your only shins, and take the logs out one by one, take out the plastic bags, put it all on the hedge bank [*bordo*], and wait until the *pozo* fills up, then put everything back… So, if there is little water, no pressure, and I see my *pozo* is not full when my time is up, almost, maybe I forget to close [the gate] right, you understand? Some neighbours do this because—well, if I don't completely seal my *pozo*, and little by little more water filters in, at least I'm winning something… That's why, [when] I go to water my *pozos*, I'm always watching, watching, sometimes I walk up the canal to see if water is escaping somewhere. Some neighbours, we already know, don't care or they do it on purpose. Others sometimes just forget… [*El rio, pues, no es como un caño en tu casa. Crece. Baja, y no sabes cuánta agua va a estar viniendo por el canal cuando te*

> *toca. Acá, además, las puertas de cada pozo se sellan con troncos, que ya has visto, y plástico, las bolsas de la urea, el fertilizante—¡eso! No es una compuerta de concreto que abres y cierras con una manija. Tienes que meterte al agua, hasta las rodillas, la cintura, a veces hasta abajito de la rodilla no más, y sacar los troncos uno por uno, sacar vuelta las bolsas de plástico, botarlo al bordo, y luego para esperar que el pozo llene, luego vuelta poner todo Si hay poquita agua, pues, nada de presión, y veo que no llena mi pozo cuando ya se va la hora, casi, capáz me olvido de cerrar bien, ¿me entiendes? Algunos vecinos hacen esto—pues, si yo no sello mi pozo al cien, y poquito se va filtrando el agua, poquito, así por lo menos estoy ganando alguito siquiera Por eso, voy a echarle agua a mis pozos, siempre ando mirando, mirando, a veces subo por el canal para ver si agua se está escapando por ahí. Hay vecinos, ya sabemos, que no les importa, o que hacen a propósito. Otros que se olvidan…*]

After telling me about the potential conflict between his brother and one of their neighbours over the use of the canal, Señor Florenticno described some of the implicit doubts shaping how he understood his neighbour's attention when unblocking and resealing the gates of their *pozos*. On his account, the irregular flow of the river undermines the even distribution of water among the Valley's farmers, giving rise to subtler strategies for siphoning water, which made him and his neighbours wary without thus erupting into hostilities that destroy their relations. He went on:

> If I know the person who is watering [their *pozo*] after me is a friend, I will be more careful not to forget [to close the gate well], you understand?… Because you forget, and then they will think that you're taking their water… So, if I need water and don't want a problem, I can watch how the river is coming down. When it swells, I can ask, 'who's [on the] watering [list] today?' I can go maybe to Cirpriano's house and ask to buy some water, or say, 'Hey Cipriano, I'm worried about my rice, it's looking thin' [*ralo*] and see what he says… [*Si sé que la persona regando después de mi es un amigo, voy a tener más cuidado de no olvidar, ¿entiendes?… Porque te olvidas, y luego van a pensar que te estas tomando su agua… Ahí, pues si necesito agua y no quiero hacer problema, puedo ir viendo como baja el rio. Cuando se pone concho, puedo preguntar, '¿Quién riega hoy?' Puedo ir a la casa del Cipriano y comprarle agua, o decirle, 'Oe Cipriano, me preocupa mi arróz, Está ralo,' y ver que dice…*]

Like many of the other farmers with whom I was able to speak during my fieldwork, Señor Florentino emphasized the importance of the river to local livelihoods while also noting its increasingly uncertain flow. In turn, the watchfulness he described combined wariness and interdependence, which rendered his view of the unavoidable conflicts of neighbourly relations in the Valley.

Señor Florentino explained that Señor Santiago often quarreled with the people who had *pozos* on the same extension of the canal. The most recent altercation happened in November because Señor Santiago left the gate of his *pozo* open to water an early crop of rice, not only ignoring the schedule but also causing his plot to overflow. Part of his hedge bank or *bordo* crumbled onto the field of another neighbour, ruining a small part of her potato crop, and resulting in a physical fight between the woman's son and Señor Santiago. Whereas most other farmers observed the schedule and at least tried to seal the gates to their *pozos*, Señor Santiago was known for doing what was most convenient for him with little regard for others. However, this did not sever Señor Santiago's relations with his community. As Señor Florentino put it, Señor Santiago had a difficult character, and his use of the canal was "bothersome but not a danger" (*es molestoso pero no es un peligro*). Reflecting more broadly on the ordinary conflicts in his community, Señor Florentino added, "well, here, we've known each other all our lives. Everyone knows who limps from what foot, and how to get along, but we also have a few jewels." (*Acá, pues, nos conocemos de toda una vida. Ya cada uno sabe quién cojea de qué pie y cómo llevarse bien, pero también tenemos algunas joyitas*).

In Peru and other Spanish-speaking contexts, claiming to know the foot from which another person limps (*el pie de qué cojea*) is a way of declaring an awareness of their weak

points. Though the phrase can indicate a familiarity and patience for that person's flaws, it can also connote the intention to use this knowledge to gain an advantage over them rather than accommodate them. Thus, while Señor Florentino's remark that people in his neck of the Valley knew how to get along (*llevarse bien*) gestured to the former and friendlier reading, his follow-up observation—that some were "little jewels" (*joyias*)—complicated a straightforward inference. The phrase gestured to the ordinary agonism of neighbourly life. He seemed to be saying that over a lifetime of living alongside each other, the people of his town developed practical ways of maneuvering around each other's pricklier sides.

Earlier, I noted that Singh's notion of agonistic intimacy responds to the way neighbourly relations can undermine categorical distinctions between friend and enemy (2015: 195). In Singh's analysis, the concept of agonistic intimacy is useful because it can enable ethnographers to notice and theorize modes of contestation that do not instantiate a practice of politics bent on the designation of an enemy that has to be excluded from the community, either by being banished or exterminated (Schmitt 2005 [1922]). Instead, by turning his attention to the ongoing exchanges and disputes that arise as neighbouring communities inhibit the same locality, Singh shows us how overlapping tensions between proximate others can cause disputes, conflicts, and even violence without resulting in "unrelenting hostility" (2015: 158). In other words, by opening a space for examining how "potentially hostile neighboring groups live together" (*ibid.*) the concept of intimate agonism traces modes of contestation that attend to the continuous transgression and assertion of boundaries that make up a plural world. How has the mining conflict shifted these neighbourhood antagonisms?

As I mentioned earlier, government authorities and mass media outlets have used the figure of the terrorist to cast those contesting the construction of the Tía María project as a threat

to both national security and economic stability. Thus, while within the Valley the figure of the undercover agent or informant (*infiltrada/o*) can test the limits of agonistic intimacy in disagreements pertaining to the mine, outside the Valley and at a different scale, the figure of the terrorist has been deployed to justify the militarization of the mining conflict. In Chapter Three, I will discuss how Valley residents conceive of the role of this terrorist figure in the governance of the Tía María conflict.

In what follows, I draw from my fieldwork with a group of regional activists dedicated to monitoring the influence of private corporations on the working of government institutions and public processes (such as the licensing and closing of regional mining projects). The Anti-Corruption Civic Association of Arequipa (*Frente Anti-Corrupción de Arequipa*)[lxiv] became involved in the struggle calling for the cancellation of the Tía María Project in 2010, largely through organizing solidarity marches in the city of Arequipa. In 2015, members of the Anti-Corruption Association also began to gather food donations for preparing the collective meals (*ollas comunes*) that helped sustain the rallies and roadblocks that were part of the general strike calling for the cancellation of the mine.

"Those words… might even be a threat."

On a June evening in 2019, the Anti-Corruption Association met to discuss how to support Valley residents as the Ministry of Energy and Mines approached the deadline for the decision on the construction license for the Tía María Project. As already discussed in the Introducction, this group included market workers, stay-at-home mothers, environmental activists, farmers, and a few army reservists. The conversation at the meeting revolved around

the possibility that the Ministry might grant the Southern Peru Copper Corporation (SPCC) the license, thus precipitating another indefinite strike and militarized occupation. Faced with this outlook, activists discussed the option of collaborating with the National Office of the Ombudsperson to help residents of the Valley report any instances of police brutality and irregularities in due process.

This proposal gave rise to a heated debate. Two years earlier, the head of Peru's National Office of the Ombudsperson gave a talk at PERUMIN 33, a bi-annual convention organized by the Institute of Mining Engineers. Walter Gutierrez, who headed the Office of the Ombudsperson between 2016 and 2022, spoke as part of a panel on ethics and resource extraction. Addressing an auditorium full of representatives from transnational mining corporations, government institutions and service companies, Gutierrez avoided talking about the country's mining conflicts and focused, instead, on corruption. However, at the end of his presentation, he made the following remark: "without mining investment, there is no economic growth and without economic growth, human rights are not real for everyone" (*sin inversión minera no hay crecimiento económico y sin crecimiento económico no hay derechos humanos reales para todos*).

Considering Gutierrez's position, and the pro-business stance of the Ombudsperson's Office, they were not considered allies by everyone. Some attendees insisted that they were not neutral. Among them, Señor Ricardo, an army reservist said:

> I think we're forgetting who the Ombudsman is. The Ombudsman says that mining brings economic growth. Does he forget that mining also brings [tailings] spills, bullets? Alright then, let's not be innocent. What is the reason he says that economic growth is what gives us our rights? Those words… might even be a threat. We've already lived through that. [*Creo que estamos olvidando quien es el señor Defensor.*

> *El señor Defensor dice que la minería trae crecimiento económico. ¿Se olvida acaso que la minería trae también derrames, balas? Ya pues, entonces, no pequemos de inocentes. ¿Para qué dice que el crecimiento económico da los derechos? Esas palabras… hasta sería una amenaza, ya. Ya hemos vivido eso.*]

I want to pause for a moment over Señor Ricardo's interpretation of the Ombudsperson's claim made at PERUMIN 33. While these words also caught the attention of alternative media outlets in Peru, independent journalists critiqued Gutierrez for conditioning human rights on extractivism, not for making a veiled threat (Paucar Albino 2017b). Señor Ricardo, on the other hand, understood Gutierrez to mean that human rights do not apply to those who oppose large-scale mining and economic growth. To render the undertones of this interpretation, let me briefly turn to a recent history of discourses on economic growth and internal enmity, which emerged from the recent experience of warfare.

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Notions of internal enmity have been constitutive of colonial and modern projects of governance in Latin America since the advent of Spain's viceroyalties in the 16th century.[lxv] Today, the figures of internal enmity that shape the relationship between Peruvians and the state condense discourses of economic growth and national security, which emerged during a complex crisis that has become inextricably entangled with the country's neoliberal reforms. Between 1980 and 2000, Peruvians experienced a prolonged confrontation between the Armed Forces, and two separate guerrillas—the Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement. Peru's internal armed conflict caused the death and disappearance of 70,000 people—most of whom were persons from rural and Quechua-speaking communities. Throughout the 1980s and

through the early 1990s, Peru's internal armed conflict overlapped with a crisis of hyperinflation and extreme economic instability (Cosamalón 2018). Subsequently, the second half of the internal armed conflict saw the rise of an authoritarian regime headed by former President Alberto Fujimori and Chief of Intelligence Vladimiro Montesinos (Degregori 2001, Pajuelo 2023). Between 1990 and 2000, Fujimori's regime enacted several institutional reforms intended to stimulate private investment and economic growth—such as limiting the role of unions, establishing new special labour regimes, selling off state-owned companies, and setting up a framework for regulating resource extractionthat serves the interests of corporations more than citizens (Carrión 2006).

In promoting these reforms, which were wildly unpopular at the start of Fujimori's regime, government authorities reframed economic growth as a matter of national security (Burt 2007). This position was informed by the writings of the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto, whose publications in the 1980s framed the rise of guerrilla warfare in Peru in economic terms. Citing the growth of the Shining Path in impoverished parts of the country—such as rural provinces in the highlands and squatter settlements in the outskirts of Lima—de Soto's 1986 book, *The Other Path*, argues that guerrilla movements proliferate where a free market fails. These legacies are particularly relevant for thinking about mining conflicts in Peru today, where militarized interventions in communities like the Tambo Valley proceed by framing grassroots opposition to extractive development as a threat, not just to the country's economic growth, but its post-conflict order.

De Soto argued that promoting radical de-regulation and private investment presented an "economic answer to terrorism." In the preface of the 2002 edition of his book, de Soto glossed over the core of this idea with the following words:

> We were able to find out just in the nick of time that people don't rebel because they are poor but because they are excluded from the system. To give people a stake in the economy, to prove to them that government is in the business of including them in formal society, is to put the terrorists out of business (2008 [2002]: 392).

In a context of economic hyperinflation and mass migration, de Soto's argument framed the rise of grassroots forms of life-making—like squatter housing and unregistered trade—as an arena where the Shining Path and the state were "in the business" of recruitment. In this picture, access to a free market represented "the alternative to subversive or criminal violence because it replaces the energy squandered on resentment and destruction with energy well invested in economic and social progress" (de Soto 2002: 258). In other words, for de Soto, the people who participated in the country's so-called "informal economy" could potentially become "terrorists," if—despite their "entrepreneurship"—they found no way to access the resources and benefits of the free market.

Having painted this picture, de Soto claimed that the "economic answer to terrorism" lay in state reforms aimed at facilitating private investment. De-regularization would enable informal workers to access credit and insurance, enabling their businesses to grow. In parallel, corporate profits and economic growth would provide the state and its citizens with a means for building stable institutions. Here, rather than unpacking the construction and sources of de Soto's economic argument, I am interested in its formative influence on the strategy adopted by the Fujimori regime, and on the enduring role of the figure of the terrorist, the informal worker, and the entrepreneur in post-conflict modes of governance (Cánepa Koch and Lamas Zoeger 2020, Dietrich and Ulfe 2019).

Drawing on de Soto's political imaginary, Fujimori's regime sought to enact its reforms

through increasingly authoritarian means. A wide range of scholars working in Peru have described these demobilizing tactics. Among them, Jo-Marie Burt (2007) has documented the rise of accusations that cast grassroots organizers and journalists as internal enemies—either members of a Marxist guerrilla or sympathizers. During this time, the forms state violence enacted against Fujimori's critics included not only mass-media disinformation campaigns, but also kidnapping, torture, and targeted murders.

The figure of internal enmity that emerged from Peru's internal armed conflict was undeniably racialized (Méndez 2021). During the war, the spectral presence of the Shining Path in highland communities and marginalized urban neighborhoods not only informed de Soto's economic theory, but also mainstream representations of rural life, urban poverty, and leftist politics. Cruelly, this condensation has given rise to the figure of the *terruca/o*, which in a post-conflict context is regularly used by government authorities and mass media outlets to stigmatize grassroots activists and members of Indigenous and racialized communities by casting their participation in social movements as insurgent threats to national security (Aguirre 2011).

In 2007, ex-President Alan García (2006-2011) published a newspaper article redeploying de Soto's imaginary in a post-conflict context. Echoing de Soto, García claimed that large-scale private investment in the exploitation of natural resources would foment economic growth and fund projects of statecraft necessary for eradicating poverty. Taking a step in a new direction, however, García re-elaborated the figures of the terrorist, the informal worker, and the entrepreneur for a time when guerrilla warfare is no longer part of Peru's national reality.

According to García, the "anti-capitalist" politics previously embodied by Peru's "communists" were now promoted by "environmentalists." Both—his article explained—were examples of an affliction that could strike any Peruvian. García described present-day critics of

extractive development as suffering from what he called "the syndrome of the dog in the manger." García's phrase alluded to an Aesop fable, in which a dog keeps a group of hungry cows from eating a bale of hay. The dog presents a figure of resentment that begrudges others what it cannot enjoy for itself. The fable ends when the owner of the cows drives the spiteful dog out of the manger with a beating. Critics of extractive development, García contended, were like the dog in the manger, not just irrational, but also harmful—and capable of plunging Peru into a generalized crisis yet again (Drinot 2014, Silva Santisteban 2016). Using this framing, García enacted three major militarized interventions: the first, against Wampis Indigenous communities as they contested a series of laws that would enable private corporations to buy communally held lands with a simple majority vote; the second, against Aymara Indigenous communities opposing the Bear Creek Mining Corporation; and the third, in the Tambo River Valley in 2011.

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Let me return to an unfinished thought regarding the violence I encountered in Señora Francisca's neighbourhood, where two women living in her block accused a third—Señora Marta—of being a potential *infiltrada* for accessing the healthcare services offered by the Tía María mine. So far, I have argued that this experience of contestation traces the threshold of agonistic intimacy in the relations between Valley residents. Here, in light of Señor Ricardo's interjection at a meeting of the Anti-Corruption Association, I want to note that the figure of the undercover agent or informant (*infiltrada/o*) that shifts the limits of agonism in the Tambo Valley is not doing so in a vacuum, but rather, in a context where these communities have already been pushed to the limits of citizenship through the use of the figure of the terrorist

(*terruca/o*). In other words, the violence enacted by the figure of the *terruca/o*, which makes political contestation so costly in neoliberal Peru, extends through the figure of the *infiltrada/o* to stifle agonistic pluralism (Mouffe 1999) in both social movements and minoritarian communities.[lxvi] Thus, though the forms of violence enacted by these figures are incommensurable in scale,[lxvii] the latter partially imbues the former with its divisive force. Both are part of the same killing machine, though one is designed to function as a motor, and the other as a makeshift cog that transmits its force.

In this context, it seems to me that Señora Francisca's refusal to engage with so-called "political things" both expressed a form of care towards the people in her life who were divided by conflict in her home and neighbourhood, and mitigated her family's vulnerability to state violence. In 2015, however, Mateo became a target of harassment by the police troops stationed in the Valley, partly because of his friendship with young men who were members of the self-defense groups that came to be known as *espartambos*.

"Fear put my soul at the mouth"

As we got to know each other better, Mateo told me that some of the occupying troops began to call him "Boliviano." While they claimed to do so because he was born in the region of Puno, which is situated on the border between Peru and Bolivia, for him, this nickname also carried a different and more threatening charge. "There were police officers from Ica, Moquegua, Tacna, like that. The ones from Cusco were more respectful, but the others always called me 'Bolivian.'" (*había así, policía de Ica, de Moquegua, Tacna, así. Los de Cusco eran más respetuosos, pero, pero los otros, siempre me decían Boliviano, así.*) I then asked Mateo to help

me understand why he found it disrespectful to be called "Bolivian" (*¿Y porque es para ti una falta de respeto que te hayan dicho Boliviano?*), and he said:

> It's just that it's, well, their way of saying something else. You see, it's a form of disdain, isn't it? It's a way of telling you, of telling you, it's an insult. It's like if they called you "indio," right? Let's say, it's almost like that. So some of them would call me "Boliviano" to imply something else, and then, well, they said that the people from Puno were going to bring illegal mining, that they were connected with the Movadef, like that. It was ugly. [*Es que es, pues, su forma de decir otra cosa. A ver, es un desprecio, ¿no? Es una manera de decirte, de decirte, es un insulto. Es como que te dijeran "indio," ¿no? Vamos a decir, es así, casi. Entonces me decían algunos así, "Boliviano" para decir otra cosa, y luego, pues, decían que la gente de Puno iba a traer la minería ilegal, que eran así del Movadef, así. Feo fue.*]

Let me unpack Mateo's experience of interpellation, by which I mean—after Althuser (1971) and Butler (1997a)—his experience of being constituted as a subject through an act of naming intended to fix him in place through the injurious use of an identity.

As Mateo described it, the police used the word "Boliviano" as a form of hate speech, a covert proxy for the colonial figure of the Indian, which was then linked to both illegal mining and to an organization called Movadef, or Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights (*Movimiento por la Amnistía y Derechos Fundamentales*)—a controversial political organization advocating for a general for amnesty of Shining Path militants currently in jail. Throughout the Tía María conflict, government authorities and mass media outlets have indeed claimed that protests calling for the project's cancellation were financed by these groups (Villacorta Yamashiro 2021). In that sense, it seems to me that when Mateo was called "Boliviano," this word was used to evoke Peru's post-conflict figures of internal enmity (Drinot 2014, Silva Santisteban 2016), which—according to Alan García's recommended treatment for the

"syndrome of the dog in the manger"—if not civilized through the power of private investment and economic growth, must be eliminated.

Mateo's description of his own experience of vulnerability helped me better understand how his family experienced the risks of openly contesting the Tía María project. Less than two months after my conversation with Mateo, Señora Francisca invited me to stop by their house for an evening meal. On this visit, which took place around Easter 2019, she shared for the first time an account of her family's experience of visceral anguish during the police and military occupation of 2015.

Señora Francisca explained that because the occupation happened during rice growing season, her husband and nephew could not leave town but that they feared sleeping at home. Faced with this impasse, Señor Melchor and Mateo stayed with a relative in a nearby town, where the violence was less pronounced, and returned home only occasionally to tend to their crop. By contrast, Señora Francisca continued to stay at home. She insisted that women who were not actively supporting mobilization efforts against the mine—by participating in rallies, making flags, or cooking for demonstrators—were generally left alone. When Señora Francisca's daughter, Roxana, learned of the family's decision, she did not accept her mother's assurance that because she was a woman, and because she was not involved in political things (*metida en cosas de política*), that she would not become a target of surveillance or violence. Nevertheless, worried about her mother living alone in such trying circumstances, Roxana traveled to the Valley, bringing along her own two children.

When Mateo and Señor Melchor returned to tend the crops, they slept in their fields to avoid being seen by the police or caught if their home was raided at night. From late May to early July,[lxviii] Señora Francisca feared both what might happen to her husband and nephew if

they were caught, and to her family's precarious economy if they could not sell their crop of rice, and this intense fear, she said, "put [her] soul at the mouth" (*el miedo me puso el alma en la boca*). During the harrowing weeks that Mateo and Señor Melchor were traveling back and forth between their township to take care of their crops while, as much as they could, sheltering elsewhere, the occupying police had an early-morning altercation in Señora Francisca's neighbourhood with a group of young men who were returning home after watering their fields. In her memory of the events, the police used tear gas canisters to disperse them, filling part of her street with a stinging smoke. As the haze and the pungent, acrid smell began to also seep into her home, frightened, Señora Francisca and her family grabbed what they could and left. They walked to the centre of town and waited until one of the neighbours' restaurants opened to buy four cups of tea and two egg sandwiches for the kids, which was all they could pay for with the loose change they were carrying. When the owner of the restaurant learned that Señora Francisca's family had just left their home as it filled with tear gas from a police scuffle in her neighbourhood, he asked how they were doing and offered them a meal. Señora Francisca, however, could not bear to accept it.

Many things remained unclear to me after hearing Señora Francisca's story. For example, what did her neighbours do as their street filled with tear gas? How many canisters were used, exactly? Who were the police chasing? Were her grandchildren frightened? Only after fieldwork did I realize that I never asked how she and Roxana explained the situation to them. At the time, I held back from asking such questions because I did not want to give our exchange the tone of a cross examination.[lxix]

The next month—May 2019—when I visited Señora Francisca's home for a recorded conversation, I returned to the scene of the tear gas canister, less to ascertain the facts than to

find a poignant detail that would help me get a better sense of her experience. In this conversation, I asked if she could remember why she did not accept her neighbour's meal, to which she responded:

> "Well, I felt anger. We just barely we put our clothes on, and we were on the street. Out! Like that, as if we were not in our house—plus [with] how [the tear gas] burns, stings, we had to leave through the back. Yes, I was hungry, but I could not eat. I was also with vomit [meaning that she had a feeling of nausea]. I said [to myself], one cannot do anything, nothing—staying, leaving—and the police, [the] people, don't they think? Don't they see that we are working to have the very bread we bring to our mouths? Don't they see us?" [*Me dió cólera, pues. A penas nos pusimos la ropa y a la calle, ¡afuera! Así, como si no fuera la casa de uno, más lo que eso arde, pica, tuvimos que salir por detrás. Sí, pues, tenía hambre, pero no podía comer. Estaba también así con vómito, casi. Decía, nada puede una hacer, nada, quedarse, irse y los policías, la gente, ¿no piensan? ¿no nos ven, que estamos trabajando para tener el pan que traernos a la boca*? *¿no nos ven?*]

In time, I have come to wonder if Señora Francisca might have confused the young men who were chased by the police that morning with Mateo and Señor Melchor, if perhaps—if only for a moment—they *were* her nephew and her husband. Though it is possible, of course, that her nausea was an effect of the teargas, *being with vomit* also seems to gesture to an embodied knowledge of the uncertain limits of *arraigo*. While I cannot say that Señora Francisca felt nauseated at the very thought of two people she loved coming to harm, I can say that in her retelling of the events, these things were closely linked.

POINT OF DEPARTURE

Señora Francisca said that the militarized occupation of 2015 *put her soul at the mouth*,

drawing on the language she had used in our previous conversations to describe her experience of Mateo's grief after the death of his father and loss of his home. She used this phrase to describe moments of uncertainty, confronted with the possibility of losing someone that matters to her, thus, putting her too at the threshold of coming undone. In that sense, there seems to me to be a substantial connection between *having one's soul mouth* and *learning how to live*. I have come to think of these as marking different experiences of uncertainty in the attachments through which a self and a place sustain each other's being, which Señora Francisca called, *arraigo*.

In that sense, while *having one's soul at the mouth* seemed to refer to impasses that confront the self with devastating loss, *learning how to live* seemed to denote the piecemeal work of mourning that makes it possible to call one's soul back.

Returning to early October 2019, when I ran into Señora Francisca at the rally outside the Ministry of Energy and Mines, she said that she was not participating in "political things," but rather, "learning how to live." However, I do not simply want to end this chapter by summarizing my attempt at understanding Señora Francisca's refusal to use the language of "politics" for describing her experience of the Tía María conflict or her wish to continue making herself of a volatile world. I also wish to return to the moments when Señora Francisca detected the limits of *arraigo*. At the time of my fieldwork in the Tambo Valley, residents had lived through two periods of state violence and were anticipating the possibility of third police and military occupation, which indeed took place in July 2019. Though I did not see it until working on this chapter, my run-in with Señora Francisca outside the Ministry of Energy and Mines on October 7th was shadowed by a recent experience of palpitating dread that she had described on our last recorded conversation. In other words, it now seems to me that her refusal to use the language of "politics" spoke of the vulnerability of *arraigo*, and of her experience of these limits

as a physical feeling of nausea (*estar con vómito*) and an embodied knowledge of how the relations holding a soul or self together can come undone. These uncertain limits, I have come to understand, have become embedded in Señora Francisca's attempts at hedging the language of "politics." However, instead of expressing the truncation of her commitments to participating in the making of a volatile social world, they stood as the temporary conditions of an aversive pursuit for other ways of imagining and approaching change. Thus, instead of ending this chapter with a conclusion, I will depart from it by introducing a concern with how other Valley residents experience, detect, and inhabit the limits of *arraigo*, which I will then go on to discuss over the next two chapters.

Figure 4: October 7, 2019. The rally outside Peru's Ministry of Energy and Mines, where it is possible to see a sign like Señora Francisca's. For me, this photograph indexes a moment where I could clearly see what Didier Fassin has called the "troubled waters" between ethics and politics (2015). What I understand Fassin to mean by this phrase is that the concepts of ethics and politics do not present us with separate spheres of human action, but rather, with overlapping registers for reckoning with the values enacted by the things that we do as much as the systems that we rely on to sustain our lives and lifeworlds.

CHAPTER TWO

"SIN NOMBRE, SIN CARA": *ANONYMOUS VIOLENCE* IN THE TAMBO VALLEY

In November 2018,[lxx] a close relative of the family with whom I stayed in one of the upstream towns of the Tambo Valley was robbed in his home after picking up a large cash payment from the mill where he sold a crop of wheat. The robbery left Señor Ignacio severely injured and unable to repay the cost of his hospitalization or the loans he had taken out to buy seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides. To lend a hand, his family decided to host a *pollada*,[lxxi] which in Peru is a type of fundraiser where guests buy portions of fried or oven-roasted chicken to help their hosts address a financial commitment they might not be able to cover otherwise.

A few days after the robbery, Señora Nancy brought her brother back from the clinic in the city where he received emergency treatment for his injuries, and that very evening, some of his family and friends gathered in his front yard to prepare for the *pollada*. As we quartered chickens and peeled garlic for the marinade, Señora Nancy told us that her brother had been robbed by two masked men, who entered his house through the door to the back yard. "People without name, without face," she called them with visible dread (*gente sin nombre, sin cara*).

The men, she explained, came into Señor Ignacio's bedroom and hit him on the side of the head to stunt him before they gagged him and threw a wool blanket over his body. Then, they walked him to the storage room across the yard, where they tied him up and beat him until he passed out. At this moment in her narration, Señora Nancy rubbed the back of her wrists against her eyes, as if she needed a moment to turn away from telling it. Then, with a streak of horror palpable in the subtle trembling of her voice, she added that though her brother could not

see the faces of the men who broke into his house, before losing consciousness, he heard one of them speak. Señor Ignacio could not recognize the voice, but as he was being pummeled under the blanket he distinctly heard one of the thieves say, "don't you go and kill him" (*no lo vayas a matar*).

Both at that moment, and as descriptions of the robbery were repeated the following day at the *pollada*, the scene brought a pervasive sense of doubt to life. Señor Ignacio lived in *valle arriba*, in one of the small towns lining the single road that follows the south bank of the river, where people have known each other for at least three generations. How were the thieves able to manoeuvre so deftly in and out of such a small place without being noticed? How did they know that Señor Ignacio was keeping a large cash payment in his home? In the throes of these questions, the thought that the thieves could be somehow connected to a resident of the Valley provoked rage, pain, and fear from Señor Ignacio's acquaintances. In turn, these doubts drew out pained reflections on recent experiences of state violence within the context of the Tía María mining conflict.

As discussed in previous chapters, this eco-territorial dispute began in 2009, when the Southern Peru Copper Corporation, a subsidiary of Grupo Mexico, announced its plans to build two open-pit mines in the district of Cocachacra and a leaching plant in Pampas Cachendo. In September and October of 2009, Valley residents rejected the project in two non-binding consultations. However, with the promise of a $1.4 billion investment and a standing concession, Grupo México continued to pursue an Environmental Impact Assessment and a construction license.

After the robbery at Señor Ignacio's house, on the night before and during the *pollada*, conversations about the men who broke into his house reminded some attendees of the raids that

took place downstream in 2015.[lxxii] To differing degrees, the shocking break-in evoked the terrifying scenes of extralegal violence, which many Valley residents had endured four years earlier at the hands of unidentified troops from other parts of the country. In the space between these different instances of violence, the phrase, *people without name, without face* marked an experience I will here refer to as *anonymous violence*.

Through my research, I have come to see how the Tía María conflict has turned fears of *anonymous violence* and punishment into everyday realities of life in the Tambo Valley. What might the lingering fear of *anonymous violence* show us about the ways in which the governance of mining conflicts in neoliberal Peru is experienced and imagined by the people who endure it? In thinking through this question, I am returning to the concern with limits of *arraigo*, which I raised at the end of the previous chapter.

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This chapter describes the *pollada* held to support Señor Ignacio after the robbery, taking care to show how it gave his family and friends a way to share their fears evoked in the wider context of the mining conflict, which has become a source of division in their community since 2009. Taking my cues from the tableside talk at the *pollada*, I use the phrase *anonymous violence* to refer to encounters between Valley residents opposing the mine and unknown assailants (whether masked thieves or unidentified police), which raise disquieting questions about the possible degrees of complicity between members of the victims' own communities and the perpetrators of these attacks. However, except for a single exchange between myself and two of Señor Ignacio's intimate relations at the *pollada*, these suspicions never crossed the threshold

to become pointed accusations.

Subsequently, I contextualize the experience of *anonymous violence* through key conversations with members of Señor Ignacio's community that provided a situated view into the militarization of the Tía María mining conflict, and how it is shifting the way Valley residents imagine the relationship to each other, the mine and the state. More specifically, I focus on conversations with a close friend of the Huanca family, Señora Elsa, who on different occasions shared her view of the relation between the outreach programs organized by the mine and the extralegal violence either enacted or sanctioned by the government. Señora Elsa and Ismael's understanding of the forms of violence associated with the presence of the mine in their community extended beyond the militarized repression to encompass also the effects of the mine's community outreach programs on their community.

Cooking and Eating under the Peppercorn Tree

On the day Señora Nancy brought her brother home from the clinic, seven of us gathered under a peppercorn tree in his yard to prepare for the *pollada*. We sat in a semi-circle under the ghostly light cast by a halogen bulb that had been fixed to the end of a few reeds bundled and tied together to rig a post. Señor Ignacio's doorstep faces the dirt road that splits from the Pan-American Highway and runs from the town of Caraquén to Carrizal, winding along the slopes of the desert plateau that rises above the Tambo Valley. The streetlamps along the road, which were few and far between, cast a weak golden lightthat made the night feel heavy, and darkness almost like a substance.

I came with Señor Ignacio's sister-in-law, Señora Antonia, who is also his nearest

neighbour. Sometime after seven, we were joined by her husband, Don Octavio, and their son and daughter-in-law, Ismael and Josefina. Señora Nancy bought out a large bottle of soda and served us each a glass. Like her brothers—Don Octavio and Señor Ignacio—she had grown up in the Valley, but after getting married she moved to the district of Aplao in the Majes Valley, where she and her husband rented a few farming plots and occasionally made a little extra money by selling shrimp. Having returned for three days to help care for her brother after the robbery, she was staying at his house with him and his daughter, Marina, who normally worked in the city but also had taken time off to nurse him back to health. Otherwise Señor Ignacio lived alone.

Señora Nancy did not know the details of the robbery first-hand but had pieced the story together from her brother's fragmentary recollections at the clinic. Don Octavio and his family, who found Señor Ignacio in the storage room not too long after he woke up, were hearing a description of the events for the first time. As we peeled bulbs of garlic, tossing the clean cloves into small plastic tubs at our feet, Señora Nancy told us about the two men, *people without name, without face*, who cruelly battered her brother. With difficulty, she finished her story by sharing the detail that they had paid attention not to kill him. Hearing his aunt relay his uncle's words, Ismael grew visibly upset. His breath quickened, and he threw his head back for a moment. Then, he said, "so it seems they're from here" (*entonces, de acá son, parece*), and turned to his mother to add, "it's not possible to live like this!" (*así no se puede vivir*). I was unsure that I understood what Ismael was saying at first but could hear the anger in his voice.

Later in the conversation, however, Ismael was more direct about his suspicion that the thieves must have known a few things about his uncle and the town. Namely, he wondered how they knew when he would collect his payment from the mill, that he would bring it home

because he did not have a bank account, and that he lived alone. Hearing that the thieves' stated a deliberate intention *not* to kill his uncle stoked his further suspicion that the robbery involved the collaboration of someone from their community. I asked Ismael why he thought this, and he struggled to find the words for his conviction, but eventually gave me a very straightforward answer. "A neighbour," he said, "is not going to do that" (*ya un vecino no va a hacer eso*).

Ismael's response suggested that he thought it was possible that one or more of his neighbours had enabled the movement of an intrusive force through their town and had even used their intimate knowledge of his uncle's life to facilitate the robbery. At the same time, however, the very detail that betrayed a neighbour's involvement, according to Ismael, was the explicit command to maintain the violence of the break-in beneath a lethal threshold.

Building on the conversations generated by Señora Nancy's story, I use the term *anonymous violence* not only to describe attacks perpetrated by unidentified assailants, but also how these acts lead Valley residents to confront the disturbing possibility that their neighbors might cooperate with external actors to facilitate these events and their concealment. In this section below, I seek to depict a couple of scenes from the day of the *pollada* that are essential for understanding Ismael's suspicion and rendering the broader context surrounding the experience of anonymous violence in the Tambo Valley, as witnessed during my fieldwork.

The following day, after helping set up the tables for the guests, Ismael and I went downriver to pick up beer to sell at the event. We arrived at the *pollada* shortly before noon and carried the cases from the bed of Ismael's truck to the adobe storehouse next to the kitchen. The floor of the storehouse was made of packed earth and when we walked in, I noticed a large damp mark in the middle of the room. As we placed the beer on the ground, Ismael said, "they've already washed it out. All of this, just you look, was my uncle's blood" (*ya han baldeado. Todo*

esto, mira ve, era su sangrecita de mi tío). Ismael and I finished carrying the rest of the beer crates without saying a word. Then we joined a small group of men who were seated in the yard under a makeshift awning made from bedsheets.

With the help of the neighbours, Señora Nancy and Señor Ignacio's daughter were leading the cooking in two separate spaces, a small, detached building next to the storage room, and a set of outdoor fire pits, which Ismael and I had set up behind the house the night before. The cooking pits, known in the Valley as *conchas* or seashells, were made with bricks arranged in a half-moon shape, leaving one side open to regulate the fire. Each one of them was outfitted with a large deep-set frying pan and could shallow fry between six to eight pieces of chicken at a time. The stand-alone kitchen next to the storage room was equipped with a two-burner gas stove and a large plastic cylinder filled with water from a water pump in the yard. This is where they cooked rice, boiled hominy corn and potatoes, chopped onions for a small side salad, and mixed a spicy sauce to accompany the meal. Each serving was sold for fifteen soles (about three soles more than in the city).

For the guests, Don Octavio brought two tables from his house, one from his brother's and borrowed three more, along with quite a few chairs from the neighbours. Ismael transported them using his truck and we arranged all but one of them in two rows perpendicular to the road. Then, we placed the last table, which was also the biggest, under the peppercorn tree, where we had gathered the night before. Señora Nancy brought out a large stereo from Señor Ignacio's living room and placed it next to the front table, leaving a large open space for people to dance later in the day. Though our reasons for gathering were painful, the atmosphere was not categorically so. Rather, as I followed Ismael throughout the event, I noticed that the mood of our conversations shifted several times as attendees expressed relief, dread, or sometimes even

made light of his concerns.

Tableside talk

After placing the beer in the storage room, Ismael and I took a seat at a table with three other guests, including a close friend of Señor Ignacio's, Señor Abel, who lived only a few houses away. When Ismael and I joined the group, Señora Nancy was repeating the story of the robbery in almost the same way she had told it to us the night before, except that after mentioning the two masked men, she did not repeat their words. Instead, she mentioned hearing about a similar incident in a small town near the district of Aplao, where an elderly couple were robbed of the money they received from their children in a strikingly similar way. Then, she wondered aloud how the robbers knew the old couple was keeping cash in their home. I did not remember her mentioning this story the night before, and got the impression, though I cannot say for sure, that it was an oblique attempt at raising the concerns that perturbed us.

When she finished, however, Ismael said that people in the Valley usually did not have to worry about these things because, unlike bigger cities, it was a "quiet place" (*lugar tranquilo*). Señor Abel and the other men at the table emphatically agreed and shared their own stories about people they knew in the cities of Lima and Arequipa who had been assaulted in their homes. Whether intentionally or not, their response ignored Señora Nancy's question and the fact that the story she shared took place in a much smaller place than the Tambo Valley. What surprised me, however, was the marked difference in Ismael's disposition from the night before. The rage he had openly displayed when considering the possibility of a neighbour's betrayal now seemed to be absent—or present, rather, in the way it was being disavowed. I am not

entirely sure where Señora Nancy wanted to go with her story and question, but as Ismael kept from putting any of the doubts surrounding Señor Ignacio's robbery on the table, she excused herself and walked down to the road to greet a group of people who were just arriving.

Later in the day, however, as we shared a bottle of beer, Señor Abel returned to Ismael's remark that the Valley is a quiet place, asking what he thought about the mine. Before Ismael could muster a response, however, Señor Abel began to tell us about the experience of his son-in-law, Edison, who was arrested at a particularly violent time during the Tía María conflict.The story took place during the state of emergency that extended from May 22 to October 20, 2015, when the administration of ex-president Ollanta Humala (2011-2016) authorized an influx of police and military personnel in the Valley. Though 2,000 police officers were deployed to the province of Islay at the beginning of the indefinite strike in late March (Pinto Herrera 2016a: 124, 133), during the state of emergency, the Tambo Valley was occupied by more than 3,000 members of the national police and 2,000 soldiers. Moreover, after the state of emergency officially concluded, a contingent of 1,000 police and 1,000 military officers remained in the area until the end of the year (Lapa Romero 2017: 91, 135). Because Edison's family lives in one of the downriver townships where the police and military presence was most intense, his parents and younger brother decided to stay with relatives in the city of Arequipa. Edison, however, did not want to leave his animals or his crops, and his wife, Socorro, did not want to leave him. Knowing that they were taking a risk, they decided to stay behind with their baby.

At the end of May 2015, as armoured tanks and military troops began to flood Edison and Socorro's community, Señor Abel tried to convince them to move temporarily upstream. The prospect of leaving their home, however, put the family in a double bind as the rice Edison and his father had planted in December still needed to be watched and possibly sprayed for pests

before the harvest at the end of the month. He wondered whether he could manage by traveling back and forth between his home and Señor Abel's for a few weeks, fearing both state violence and plunging his family into a financially precarious situation. This predicament, which affected many people living downstream (including Señora Francisca's family in the first chapter), became even more distressing when the police began to arbitrarily raid the homes of Valley residents to arrest and question the men.

During my research, I spoke to a local journalist and to a few Valley residents who either endured or witnessed these raids. They described the overwhelming terror of these experiences as something that was at first completely unexpected, which they still struggled to understand even after their family members had returned home. The raids took place during power outages, long after sundown, making the equipment carried by police the only source of light. I was told that the police usually brought the men of the house out into the street where they were publicly accused of promoting armed violence against the state. Then, without warrants or public prosecutors present, the men of the house would be arrested and held in custody, for days, where they were beaten, threatened with criminal charges, and interrogated on who was leading anti-mining organizing in their community.

Señor Abel said that he could hardly sleep when his daughter and son-in-law—Socorro and Edison—turned down his offer to move upstream and decided for a second time to stay in their house and continue farming. "Every day," he said, "every day, I called my daughter, once, twice a day. *Are you okay? Are you okay?* Never in my life have I lived like this" (*cada día, cada día, llamaba a mi hija, una, dos veces al día ¿estás bien? ¿estás bien? Nunca en mi vida he vivido así*). Though Edison and Socorro tried to remain inconspicuous, one night, during a blackout, the police broke into their home and took Edison into custody. "Those days were

terrible," Señor Abel exclaimed, "we didn't know where he was, and my daughter didn't want to leave their house without him" (*Esos días fueron terribles. No sabíamos donde estaba y mi hija no quería irse sin él*). While in detention, Edison was questioned and beaten by police officers who were not from the Valley and refused to identify themselves. After his release, the young man brought his family and animals upstream, afraid that perhaps one of his neighbours had given his name to the police in a desperate attempt to deflect police and military violence from their own house. Later that afternoon, I asked Señor Abel whether the National Ombudsman's Office had investigated his son-in-law's arbitrary detention. Clearly pained, he said that there was simply no report of it, adding that the raids were carried out without prosecutors and that the police both covered their faces and had no identification badges. Unable to give me a more detailed explanation, he simply repeated, "what's going on is that there are no names" (*lo que pasa es que no hay nombres, pues*).

However, everyone at the table already knew about Edison's arrest because the event had caused a big stir in their community, especially as he continued to travel downstream to take care of his crops. From this angle, Señor Abel's story appears to be less relevant for the facts it conveyed than for the resonances it invited us to inhabit. Opposing Ismael's claim that the Valley is a quiet place, Señor Abel's story was one about disquiet, which echoed the concerns raised by Señor Ignacio's robbery. Perhaps accepting Señor Abel's story as an oblique opening to a difficult conversation, Ismael left his earlier remark aside and admitted that the robbery at his uncle's house left him worried. He then shared with us the rest of his uncle's story, repeating the thieves' haunting words for Señor Abel and the other two neighbours at the table. *Don't you go and kill him*—these words made Ismael's fear palpable and public, and allowed him and Señor Abel to approach painful and unresolved doubts about their world.

In both stories, not only was there a concern over *not knowing* who the perpetrators were, but also a dawning sense of horror in the simultaneous realization that the violence may very well have involved the collaboration of someone from the community, someone they *did know*. However, alongside this important resonance, each of these two situations also entailed rather different circumstances. One story took place during a state of emergency and involved a group of unidentified police officers from outside the Valley whose acts of extralegal violence ultimately served the interests of a transnational mine. The other happened at a time when the Valley could be described as a "quiet place" and involved two masked thieves whose actions were reported to the local police.

By the time I began long-term fieldwork in 2018, protests contesting the Tía María Project had been happening for nearly a decade and had resulted in two major militarized occupations of the Valley. Among these protests, the first strikes and roadblocks against the project's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in April and November of 2010 transpired without any major incidents. However, as tensions escalated in March of the following year, a third wave of massive mobilization against the mine was met with forms of state violence that the Valley residents had not yet experienced.

Demonstrations against the mine ran parallel to an institutional campaign led by grassroots organizations, which presented numerous observations to the EIA elaborated by the US company Water Management Consultants (owned by Schlumberger Water Services). In December 2010, responding to pressure from environmental watchdog organizations and regional grassroots groups, the Ministry of Energy and Mines agreed to submit the company's EIA to the examination of the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS). Four months later, on March 16, a copy of the report was leaked to one of the community leaders (*dirigentes*)

chosen as a spokesperson (*vocero*) of the Frente de Defensa del Valle de Tambo. According to the report's 138 observations, one striking concern was the absence of a hydrogeological study, indicating a clear form of deceit in the company's EIA (Salazar 2011). The evident collusion between the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Southern Peru Copper Corporation provoked the outrage of Valley residents, giving rise to a third general strike (Pinto Herrera 2016a).

In turn, the administration of ex-President Alan García (2006-2011) authorized the incursion of the armed forces to aid the national police by way of an executive order.[lxxiii] As a result of the clashes between demonstrators and the forces of the state, four demonstrators were killed by live rounds: Andrés Taype Choquepuma (22) on April 4th, and Néstor Cerezo Patana (31), Aurelio Huarcapuma Clemente (50) and Miguel Ángel Pino (23) on April 7th. On April 8th, the project's EIA was rejected, but the mining concession remained standing, thus enabling the conflict to continue and setting the ground for future confrontations (Pinto Herrera 2016b, Sullivan 2015). This initial experience of state violence along with the ongoing struggle of family members to obtain civil reparations and determine the government's responsibility in the murder of their loved ones has had a lasting impact on life in the Valley (Pérez 2021a).

Throughout fieldwork, I came to see how the state's violence during the strikes against the Tía María Project in 2011 and 2015 have layered upon each other, affecting how many Valley residents understand their relationships to the police and to their neighbours. Señor Abel's story at the *pollada* evoked these themes when describing the doubts that followed Edison's arrest in 2015, as protests against the mine's second EIA were once again met with the militarization of the Valley. This time, however, with the declaration of a state of emergency, Valley residents encountered new and disquieting dimensions of the dynamic I am calling *anonymous violence*.

The Ghostly Traces of the Tía María Conflict

Later on the day of the *pollada*, after a few rounds of beer with Ismael and Señor Abel, Ismael shared his suspicion that his uncle's robbery might be connected to the ongoing dispute in his community regarding the establishment of a separate Water Management Board (*Junta de Usuarios de las Aguas del Río*) for the upstream section of the Valley.

In the Tambo Valley, the use and the maintenance of the irrigation canal is overseen by a single Water Management Board based in the town of Cocachacra. This group of elected officials is in charge of interfacing with government institutions such as the National Water Association (*Asociación Nacional de Agua, ANA*) and the regional government organization for potable water and sewage services (*Servicio de Agua Potable y Alcantarillado de Arequipa, SEDAPAR*). Additionally, within the Valley, the Water Management Board has two main responsibilities: first, to maintain the canal infrastructure and riverside dike in their towns, and second, to allocate irrigation times to smaller town-based committees. For years, upstream residents of the Tambo Valley have complained that the Water Management Board—which, again, is based in the downstream city of Cocachacra—neglected its responsibilities to maintain the canal infrastructure in their communities. However, as the Water Management Board became an increasingly important partner for grassroots organizing opposing the Tía María mine, the concerns and critiques about water management were recast in terms of the mining conflict.

Starting in 2018, a small group of upstream residents led by Carlos Bernedo, an agrarian engineer from the town of La Pascana, began to hold town-hall meetings intended to establish a separate Water Management Board, the *Junta de Usuarios de Cocotea - Valle Arriba*. Though

their demands have thus far been deemed unfeasible by the National Water Association, their campaign attracted the attention of the regional press, which often interviewed the members spearheading this initiative as though they were an organization recognized by the government. In turn, the push to form a second Cocotea Water Management Board in the upstream region of the Tambo Valley not only created confusion but also publicly undermined the authority of the Water Management Board based in Cocachacra. Adjacently, given that Bernedo and many of this initiative's proponents were outspoken supporters of the Tía María mine, their project to establish a second Water Management Board became a proxy for the mining conflict in Ismael's community. Thus, during the time of my fieldwork, the prospect of the Cocotea Water Management Board produced a new confrontation around a long-standing local issue as it intersected with the Tía María mining conflict.

Nearly all of the people I spoke with in upstream towns agreed that the standing Water Management Board did not prioritize or even sufficiently respond to their needs. However, this did not mean that they therefore regarded Bernedo's initiative as a suitable alternative. While some residents supported the initiative, others, like Señor Ignacio and his family, saw it as untimely and criticized the initiative's short-sightedness. Moreover, many Valley residents—upstream and downstream—suspected that the attempt to establish a second Water Management Board could be backed by the mine through funds or legal expertise. Though no one claimed to know this for a fact, talk of the mine's spectral presence nevertheless turned my attention to the shadow that the Tía María conflict continues to cast over the relation between neighbours, particularly as it dredges local experiences of *anonymous violence*.

Since the advent of the Tía María conflict, activists contesting the project through institutional pathways have faced regulatory mechanisms moulded by corporate influence.

Meanwhile, as the conflict progressed, lived experiences of both state violence and the mine's outreach programs began to exacerbate existing fissures in community life (Pinto Herrera 2016a, 2016b, Quispe Aguilar 2022, Ugarte Cornejo 2020). As I will discuss in this section, I have come to think of these fissures partially through the lens of corporate counterinsurgency. This concept comes from human geography and refers to the use of direct and indirect counterinsurgency techniques to render a group of people amenable to an extractive project (Brock and Dunlap 2017).

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At the *pollada*, during a lull between lunch and dinner, Ismael reminded Señor Abel that his uncle had openly advocated against the formation of the Cocotea Water Management Board in the context of the mining conflict. Then, in hushed tones and with just the three of us at the table, Ismael admitted that he could not get the idea out of his head that his uncle's opposition to the formation of a second Water Management Board was related to the robbery. "Maybe," he said, "perhaps they want to punish him" (*puede ser, capáz lo quieren castigar*).

This was the only time I heard Ismael voice the doubt that someone from the Cocotea Water Management Board may have been involved in his uncle's robbery, but it was not the only time he referred to the incident as a punishment. Let me be clear. There is no evidence that anyone affiliated with the Cocotea Water Management Board has either received support from the mining company or been implicated in Señor Ignacio's robbery. And yet, beyond this forensic register, which I am not in the capacity to address, Ismael's doubt remains important because it shows how the Tía María conflict has turned fears of *anonymous violence* and

punishment into conditions of everyday life in the Tambo Valley.

In the following section, I wish to shift the angle of my analysis to address the role of the mine's community outreach programs in shaping Ismael's perception that there could be an unseen thread linking his uncle's robbery to the conflicts over the formation of the Cocotea Water Management Board, and the establishment of the Tía María mine. This part of my ethnography draws on the concept of corporate counterinsurgency to further render how elements from an extractive conflict can seep into various dimensions of a community's life.

Between Militarized Occupations and Community Outreach

Building on field research conducted in the downstream townships of the Tambo Valley at the beginning of 2018, Alexander Dunlap has described how the mine's corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives work alongside the state's strategy of conflict militarization to wear down local opposition and promote consent (2019). Dunlap's study focuses on the establishment of the "United Valley" or *Valle Unido* program in 2016. According to the mine's most recent publicly available Technical Report Summary, the *Valle Unido* initiative established three offices in the downstream towns of Cocachacra, Deán Valdivia, and Punta de Bombón, in 2017, and a fourth fourth one in Mollendo in 2019 (Wood Group USA 2022: 17-8). Staffed by a combination of volunteers and paid personnel, *Valle Unido* is tasked with sharing information supplied by Southern Peru Copper Corporation on the benefits that the mining project will ostensibly bring for the community, as well as its environmental safeguards. The program's focus lies in fostering favourable interactions and relationships between the mine and the neighboring community. *Valle Unido's* team organizes workshops and outreach events that

center on various aspects of life in the Valley, including agriculture, job skills training, vocational guidance, and education. Additionally, they play a role in coordinating walk-in clinics across the valley's diverse towns, providing residents with opportunities to see specialists and obtain complimentary medical assistance.

As I mentioned in Chapter One, the programs organized by *Valle Unido* can become a source of discord between neighbours, family, and friends. Though *Valle Unido* does not have any offices in the upstream townships, at the time of my fieldwork, it did occasionally organize events in the town of La Pascana.

In both upstream and downstream contexts, I frequently found that in speaking generally about the mine's CSR initiatives and the people who attended them, Valley residents were ready to dispense strong moral judgments against attendees. These judgments were often voiced in irreducibly personal terms, condemning those who accessed the benefits provided by the mine for disregarding both the future of the Valley and the memory of the seven Valley residents who were killed during the militarized occupations of 2011 and 2015. On a few but important occasions, I was able to have more intimate conversations in which people shared their "mixed feelings" (*sentimientos encontrados*) over the double bind that some of the mine's CSR initiatives presented to members of their community.

The mine's first large-scale attempt at community outreach began in 2013 with an initiative called "The Future Has Arrived" (*El Futuro Llegó*). The program was announced during the public hearing (*audiencia pública*) for the second Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), a stage in the licensing process, which takes place in coordination with information workshops (*talleres informativos*) that detail the project's potential environmental risks and monitoring and prevention mechanisms. The public hearing for a project's EIA is supposed to

take place no more than two months after the workshops. Unlike workshops, which disseminate information on a project, public hearings are a space for community members and interested parties to give feedback, express their concerns, and even make formal observations to a project's EIA.

On December 19, 2013, the public hearing for the second EIA of the Tía María project went quite differently than usual. As was also the case with the prior workshops, the event was held in Cocachacra and guarded by 200 police officers, who barred the doors of the venue and shut down surrounding intersections to keep protesters away. According to several reports, large groups of people unfamiliar to community members arrived in buses to participate in the event. There were rumours that these buses had been filled with workers from the nearby Toquepala (Tacna) and Cuajone (Moquegua) mine operations (Aguilar Quispe 2022: 159-162). These rumours, in turn, echoed reports from independent news platforms on the information workshops that the mine held in the preceding months, according to which a few of these unfamiliar attendees claimed to have been paid 60 PEN to attend the event (El Buho 2013). Amid such backlash and chaos, on the day of the public hearing, the mine's representatives diverted the focus from the project's EIA by revealing the company's intention to allocate 100 million PEN (approximately 38 million CAD) towards public infrastructure initiatives such as sewage systems, roads, and sidewalks, thus generating 3,000 jobs (Macassi 2018). In the coming years, however, claiming to have little support from local authorities, *El Futuro Llegó* vanished without realizing its promises.

The mine's second outreach initiative, "Reconnection Plan" (*Plan Reencuentro*), began in September 2015, and like the first, it claimed an initial budget of 100 million PEN. Instead of focusing on building public infrastructure, however, *Plan Reencuentro* took a more

straightforward tack, and sought to reach Valley residents directly. Starting in September, the mine hired teams of canvassers to go on door-to-door visits sharing the company's brochures and giving small presentations on the project's benefits for the community as well as its promised environmental safeguards and monitoring practices. According to the company's own report, these visits reached 2,700 families (Rumbo Minero 2015). In parallel, *Plan Reencuentro* also promoted events and offered community members not only temporary jobs, but also free home repair materials, fertilizer, veterinary care for livestock, internet, and—perhaps most impactfully—"medical campaigns" (*campañas médicas*). On this last point, the mine coordinated with local clinics to hold day-long events where community members could receive care from specialists and in some cases also free medication. In about two years, *Plan Reencuentro* was replaced by *Valle Unido*.

One weekday afternoon in January 2019, I listened in as Señora Antonia, Josefina and one of their friends, Señora Elsa, discussed the mine's medical campaigns. Señora Elsa, who frequently traveled through the Valley's towns selling clothes, had laid out a few button-up shirts on the metal table in the front room of Señora Antonia's house. As Señora Antonia and Josefina looked through the clothes to see if they could find anything in their husbands' sizes, Josefina mentioned that she had heard that the mine might organize another medical campaign in the town of La Pascana.

Josefina then told Señora Elsa that the previous campaign (in October 2018) had drawn a large number of people from the upstream towns at the end of the dirt road lining the river, almost two hours from the Pan-American Highway, and then asked her what she thought. Like Señora Francisca in the previous chapter, Señora Elsa refused to pass a damning judgment on people who accessed the mine's services, though she did express her own opposition.

Señora Elsa remembered that the mine organized a few campaigns providing dentistry and ophthalmology services. “Many people were very taken aback by it” (a *muchos les chocó eso muy fuerte*), she said, adding that although she could not “gaze with contempt at someone who needs a doctor” (*mirar con desprecio a alguien que necesita un doctor*), the events gave her “mixed feelings” (*sentimientos encontrados*). I asked if she had ever attended a medical campaign, or another event sponsored by the mine. She said that she tried to see a dermatologist for the sunspots on her skin, stretching out one of her arms for me to see, and then pointing to her cheeks, which were covered in dark freckles that were sometimes irregularly shaped and even fleshy. In the end, however, after making it to the event, she turned back and decided instead to see a dermatologist in the city of Arequipa. After a few visits to a private clinic, the doctors dispelled her fear that she had skin cancer and removed some of the larger spots.

I asked Señora Elsa if she could recall what she was feeling when she turned back from the mine’s pop-up clinic. She told us that her treatment in the city was expensive and that when she had to ask her son to lend her money for it, she had wondered if getting healthcare through the mine’s medical campaigns would have lightened the burden she placed on her son, and if it was “a whim” (*un capricho*) to have turned free medical care away. However, at the same time, she said that receiving services from the mine felt “as if they hit you and then gave you a gift so you won’t go around complaining. With people who have died [in the conflict], it could even be, well, making oneself part of the impunity.” (*es como si te pegan y vuelta te dan un regalo para que, ya pués, no te andes quejando. Es—habiendo muertos—hasta sería, pues, hacerse parte de la impunidad*).

Let me pause here for a moment to consider Señora Elsa’s concern that accessing the mine’s community outreach initiatives could somehow make one part of the impunity of state

and corporate violence. There is a vast range of anthropological scholarship on the subject of impunity, which engages with matters of transitional justice and the afterlives of war (Brunneger and Faulk 2016, Holston 2008, Sanford 2023) as well as corporate accountability (Gill 2008, Kirsch 2014, Welker 2014), both of which relate to current grassroots political life in Peru (Merino 2023, Orihuela Quequezana 2023). In a comparative ethnography of disaster governance in Northern Mexico, Eric Jones, Diana Luque, and Andrew Murphy define impunity as the power of "individuals or small groups of people" to skirt "punishment and thus [remain] free to consciously act without concern about negative consequence[s] to themselves" (2018: 226). This definition touches on two of the authors' related arguments: first, that impunity can present us with a technique of governance rather than a mere failure in the rule of law (*ibid.*: 220), and; second, that impunity is often enacted by prosecuting low ranking workers rather than those responsible at higher levels (*ibid.*: 242). Maxine Kamari Clarke at the University of Toronto refers to the latter possibility as an "impunity gap" (Clarke 2015). Responding to these works and to the circumstances of my own fieldwork, in this chapter I use the word "impunity" to describe situations in which the state's response to a person's death or injury involves violations of due process that create uncertainty about the underlying circumstances. In this sense, to denounce impunity is not necessarily the same as making an uncomplicated demand for punishment, despite the word's etymology. Rather, competing with this retributive demand, the word "impunity" can also express a need to account for the role of state and corporate actors in the governance of the Tía María conflict, including both its militarization and the mine's interventions in community life.

Thinking with Señora Elsa, it seems to me that the logic of impunity she described—one which joins mining executives, government workers, and Valley residents in a messy exchange

of basic services for a willful forgetfulness—is crucial in making *anonymous violence* possible.

As I mentioned earlier, many Valley residents I spoke with readily expressed their conviction that accessing the services provided by the mine showed some degree of disregard for the people killed in the context of the Tía María conflict. In addition to the four protesters who were killed in clashes with forces of the state in 2011, the militarized occupation of 2015 killed three more civilians—on April 22nd, Victoriano Huayna Nina (61); on May 5th, Jenrry Humberto Checya Chura (35); and on May 22nd, Ramón Colque Vilca (55). Though grassroots leaders and protesters have faced charges for damage to public and private property,[lxxiv] the investigations into the deaths and injuries suffered by Valley residents at the hands of the state have moved at a much slower pace (Pérez 2021a). Only the death of Jenrry Checya Chura, a construction worker from the district of Mollendo, has been brought to a criminal court in a case presented by Arturo Salas and the Civic Association Solidaria Peru against the police officer Dalmer López Cáceres. While I do not want to make light of the importance of these efforts for Jenrry's family, it is also important to point out that in individualizing responsibility for the lesions and fatalities of Valley residents at the hands of the police and the armed forces, the state security apparatus that militarized the mining conflict remains untouched, as does its relation to corporate entities like the Tía María mine. In other words, what this case presents us with an example of is - not the shortcomings of groups like Solidaria Peru—but rather the impunity gap in which it is made overwhelmingly difficult pursue an integral investigation of these dynamics.

In this context, I argue that Señora Elsa's haunting concern with impunity, like Señor Abel's suspicion that one of his son-in-law's neighbours facilitated his arrest, and Ismael's fear of punishment, all constitute partial ways of knowing the array of governance techniques surrounding the implementation of the Tía María mining project. To unpack the corporate side

of these techniques, I will now say a bit more about the community outreach programs enacted by the Southern Peru Copper Corporation to facilitate the establishment of the Tía María project in the Tambo Valley. As I do so, I will also describe how I understand them to contextualize Ismael's fear that the robbery at his uncle's house might have been a punitive response for opposing the Cocotea Water Management Board.

In a study of the 2015 military occupation, the Peruvian sociologist José Antonio Lapa Romero (2017) offers a brief history of the mine's community outreach programs, which also observes the proliferation of well-financed—yet transient and conspicuously short-handed—grassroots organizations after the approval of the second EIA. In August 2014, as the mine's first community outreach program (*El Futuro Llegó*) floundered without support from the mayors of the Valley's districts, the Southern Peru Copper Corporation created the "Pro Tambo Valley Civic Association" (*Asociación Civil Pro Valle de Tambo*). Backed by the mine, this group of Valley residents tried to liaise with the heads of government at the township level and succeeded in building a water treatment facility in El Fiscal. While the Pro Tambo Valley Civic Association was officially recognized and supported by the mine, most of the smaller groups that emerged alongside it claimed to be independent (e.g., *Frente de Jóvenes por el Desarrollo del Valle de Tambo*, *Frente de Defensa Valle Arriba*, *Frente de Mujeres de Cocachacra, Colectivo por el Desarrollo y Progreso de Islay*). Whether or not this was indeed the case, Lapa Romero notes that many residents in the Valley suspect these groups to be financed by the mine (*ibid*.: 47-9).

At the time of my own research in the Valley (2017-2019), the groups mentioned by Lapa Romero no longer had a significant public presence. However, many Valley residents remained wary of the mine's attempts to influence their communities, and indeed quite a few of

the residents I spoke with concerning the Cocotea Water Management Board suspected that this initiative received some degree of support from the Southern Peru Copper Corporation. Thus, as the robbery at Señor Ignacio's house became imaginable to his friends and family as an instance of *anonymous violence*, Ismael (like Señora Elsa) experienced the mine's community outreach initiatives as being on a continuum with the militarization of the conflict. How, then, can we understand Ismael's flashing panic that what appeared to be a robbery could instead be a form of punishment, or Señora Elsa's conviction that the services offered by the mine constituted the extension of impunity and not just a bargain for consent?

Corporate Power

In this section, I will unpack the concept of corporate counterinsurgency, which tracks strategies that combine community development programs with forms of state violence to establish situated regimes of governance around extractive projects facing widespread opposition (Brock and Dunlap 2017, Simon Granovsky-Larsen & Larissa Santos 2021). In recent years, the concept of corporate counterinsurgency has informed a growing body of scholarship on the militarization of resource extraction. Research on fracking in the United Kingdom, the Escobal Mine in Guatemala, and the Dakota Access Pipeline in the United States has used this concept to render a terrain of grassroots political action circumscribed by community development programs and counter-terrorist legislation (Brock 2020, Simon Granovsky-Larsen & Larissa Santos 2021). In parallel, research on coal mining in Colombia has argued that these mixed tactics effectively enable corporations to exercise power over life and death by proxy, thus not only making their promises of development contiguous with the fear of

state terror, but also reorganizing community life as people experience this ambivalence in conflicting ways (Jespersgaard Jakobsen 2020, 2022).

Within this body of scholarship—drawing from field research on conflicts over the production of wind energy in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec (Mexico), coal mining in the state of North Rhine Westphalia (Germany), and the construction of the Tía María copper mine in the region of Arequipa (Peru)—Alexander Dunlap argues that the "community relations" programs of these extractive projects "weaponize people" to capture resources (2023: 278). The concept of weaponization at stake in Dunlap's argument responds to the effects of corporate "[rent] payments, clientelism, …[and] social development benefits," which divide communities, eroding their resources and will to organize collectively, and thus facilitate the establishment of contested extractive projects (*ibid.*: 291). Thus, when speaking about the weaponization of "social relations," Dunlap is referring to social relations initiatives, such as community outreach programs. However, extending from this point, we might consider a literal sense in which "social relations" can become an instrument of harm—the weaponization of social relations between Valley residents themselves.

To different degrees, Ismael and Señor Abel experienced their neighbours as weapons of the mine. As I will explore in more detail below, this story is an all-too-familiar story for anthropologists of extractive development, such as Suzana Sawyer (2004) or Stuar Kirsch (2014). However, what makes my encounter with the experience of *anonymous violence* in the Tambo Valley different is that, for example, neither Señor Ignacio nor Edison was involved in the conflict as *dirigentes*. They are farmers who oppose the mining project but are not otherwise involved in the work of contesting it through grassroots organizing. One is a vocal critic of a project that was suspected of being backed by the mine, and the other an unfortunate victim of a

neighbour's attempt to divert police violence from their own home.

I understand Ismael's terror in considering the possibility that his uncle's robbery was a form of punishment for his opposition to the mine in general, and to the formation of the Cocotea Water Management Board in particular. I am not claiming, however, that Ismael's suspicions are a forensic fact. Instead, I am arguing that their very emergence as an imaginable possibility – as with the "mixed feelings" Señora Elsa has towards the mine's healthcare initiatives - reveals something important about how the fabric of community life, both individually and collectively, bears the ghostly traces of a mining conflict sustained by a continuum of corporate and military violence.

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Jerry Jacka (2018) has offered a concise summary of the corporate practices that have emerged in response to the critiques of the mining industry that gained traction in the 1990s. Largely, these practices are based on a so-called "triple bottom line" approach, a discourse that places profits alongside people and the planet (Elkington 1998). The first multi-national governance initiative based on these principles—the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI)—was announced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 (also known as the Rio+10 Earth Summit). This Norway-based non-profit organization established standards of reporting on the economic import of resource extraction to the economies of member countries, and on the sustainability practices of the corporations operating in their territories (Haufler 2010). In 1998, to prepare for the Rio+10 Earth Summit, the Executive Chair of Rio Tinto, Robert Wilson, convened leaders of the mining sector as part

of the Global Mining Initiative, setting up a think tank on the sustainability of mining practices in 2001—the Mining, Minerals, and Sustainable Development (MMSD) project. In turn, this group set up the International Council of Mining and Metals (ICMM), a corporate platform for promoting sustainable development in the mining industry. Due to these different state and corporate-led efforts, environmental impact assessments, sustainability reports, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives have become standard industry practice. Of course, there is much room for skepticism here.

For instance, Fabiana Li (2015, 2016) shows that, while environmental impact assessments can enable different forms of knowledge to render environmental damage and make it matter in terms of sanctions and compensation, the institutional terrains upon which these equivalences are contested are far from even. Given that these measures most often do not result in the revocation of extractive licenses, but rather, in fines or temporary suspensions, it is possible that rather than deter environmental damage, they indeed enable it by regulating modalities of ethical deferral rather than toxicity itself (Graeter 2020).

In parallel, critics of CSR initiatives have argued that these programs can be understood as a type of liberalization, as they put mining corporations in the position of providing the basic needs for impacted communities (Hilson 2006, Jenkins 2004, Sharp 2006). In this vein, Stuart Kirsch has argued that the CSR initiatives through which mining companies engage with their critics do very little to either curb the forms of environmental damage generated by mines or facilitate durable improvements in impacted communities. Rather, much like the *corporate antipolitics* described by Susana Sawyer a decade earlier, these programs divide local opposition to extractive projects, although now through the "the language of responsibility and sustainability" to bolster the symbolic capital of corporate actors (2014: 160). Thus, these

outreach initiatives can be understood as a corporate social technology, that is, as an array of techniques for "reshaping communities and persons" after the mining sector reforms of the early aughts (Roger 2012: 285). Though early attempts at conceptualizing CSR practices relied largely on the lens of global governmentality (Barry 2004), these approaches have moved beyond examining the discursive dimensions of this phenomenon at a global level to research the situated and often emergent character of these strategies as they circulate through sites of extraction (Kirsch 2007, Welker 2009) and investment (Welker and Wood 2011).

For example, Stuart Kirsch's ethnography of the OK Tedi environmental disaster in Indonesia tracks the life of the Ok Tedi mine, which was completed in two years and began to produce gold and copper ore in 1984. Shortly after, BHP began to dump the mine's waste and tailings into the Ok Tedi and Fly rivers, slowly yet severely affecting the environment downstream. Kirsch's ethnography and analysis focus on the strategies of grassroots mobilization used by Yonggom communities, the rise of a new management agreement between Yonggom communities and BHP, and the nationalization of the mine in 2013.[lxxv] Giving comparative attention also to contemporaneous mining conflicts (particularly in the region of Melanesia), Kirsch also tracks the use and mutation of corporate social technologies in managing extractive conflicts. He begins by noting the role of corporate science in denying claims of environmental damage, and then argues that in the wake of the mining sector reforms of the 1990s, the strategy of denial is often replaced by strategies of limited recognition and reframing (*ibid.*: 182-186).[lxxvi]

Dunlap's notion of weaponization expresses a skepticism of corporate community outreach strategies similar to the one present in Kirsch's work, yet it takes a step further by placing these social techniques on a continuum with state tactics for militarizing extractive

conflicts. Kirsch's attention to the rhetoric used by mining corporations to discredit their opponents notes the use of national security language to cast critics of extractivism as "ecoterrorists" (*ibid.*: 162). Equally, in describing other mining ventures in Melanesia, he notes that, between 2002 and 2003, Freeport McMoran paid the Indonesian military more than $11.4 million for security services at its Grasberg mine near the border with Papua New Guinea (2014: 47). Lastly, Kirsch also mentioned the conflict around the Panguna copper mine on the Island of Bougainville, which between 1972 and 1989 was operated by Bougainville Copper Limited—a company majority-owned by Rio Tinto. Unlike Ok Tedi, the Panguna conflict escalated into a ten-year armed conflict involving the state (1988-1998).

Kirsch's (2014) ethnography of Indigenous mobilizations against the environmental impacts of the Ok Tedi copper mine in Papua New Guinea builds on insights into activist and corporate strategies of contestation drawn from Suzana Sawyer's (2004) ethnography of Indigenous activism against oil extraction in Ecuador's southern Amazon throughout the 1990s. Sawyer's research documents the efforts of the Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Pastaza (OPIP) to contest the expansion of an oil concession on their land, efforts which came to establish this group as a political actor on both national and international stages. Simultaneously, she examines the tactics employed by the US oil company Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO) to undermine OPIP, which included the use of gifts and development projects to shape a relationship with Pastaza communities and ultimately contribute to the establishment of the phantom pro-oil Intercommunity Directive of Independent Communities of Pastaza (DICIP). Though the DICIP was nearly a decade and a half younger and far smaller than OPIP, the oil company sought to crudely reframe the relationship between both groups to dilute the claims of long-standing Indigenous forms of political organization. In meetings with the Ministry of

Energy and Mines, ARCO appealed to the principles of liberal democracy along with simplistic rhetorical contrasts between majority and minority groups, and collective versus individual rights to bolster DICIP's legitimacy as a stakeholder despite its being a phantom organization.[lxxvii]

Though the presence of a state security apparatus and the corporate use of state and non-state agents of violence are palpable in Sawyer and Kirsch's ethnographies, these themes are a more central focus in Dunlap's work. In turn, noting the coexistence of state tactics of militarization and corporate social technologies (such as CSR initiatives and other community outreach programs), Dunlap makes sense of their joint effects by turning to scholarship on the history of counterinsurgency tactics (Moe and Müller 2017). In particular, he focuses on two important threads in the rise of the growing emphasis on working within communities themselves to build support, also known as the "local turn" in counterinsurgency.

The first of these sources are the UN community development programs for assisting newly independent countries after World War II (such as India, the Philippines, and Indonesia), which Nick Cullather (2006) argues shaped the US's military strategy during the Vietnam war. A central link in this tract of Dunlap's story is New York real-estate developer Albert Mayer (1958), who participated in the design of India's village reconstruction scheme in the 1950s with assistance from the Ford Foundation's "package program." Mayer's operationalization of a process for centralizing village life in order to optimize the use of local resources and "folk solutions" for connecting its people to outside services and markets became a template for the practices of the Peace Corps during the 1960s (Cullather 2006: 36-7). A decade later, the US Army drew once again on this model to construct strategic hamlets during the Vietnam war. Approaching the difficulties of rural governance from within a context of guerrilla warfare,

Colonel Edward G. Lansdale drew from Mayer's development model and encouraged Ngô Đình Diệm, the president of South Vietnam (1955-1963), to design small towns around army encampments (Immerwahr 2019: 12). Lansdale's plan was to bring peasants "within reach of government services and administration," where "agronomists, clinics, housing construction, and security assistance could alleviate the pressure" of the situation (Cullather 2006: 41).

The second thread in Dunlap's account of the "local turn" in counterinsurgency tactics are the British campaigns in Malaya, Kenya and Northern Ireland. In 1971, General Brigadier Frank Kitson published *Low-Intensity Operations*, a counterinsurgency manual, which proposes a bottom-up approach to counterinsurgency that includes the tactic of counter organization:

> In its simplest form, counter organization involves putting the government's views over the population's by action rather than by propaganda. For this purpose individuals can be sent amongst the community for the purpose of doing work which will help to remove sources of grievance and at the same time making contact with people. The sort of jobs which can be undertaken range from teaching to the setting up of clinics, advising on simple construction works and working on agricultural projects (Kitson 2010 [1971]: 79)

US community development programs and British bottom-up approaches to colonial wars are important influences in the emergence of intervention strategies that combine military tactics with community outreach initiatives (Moe and Müller 2017). The *Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies* manual of the United States Army (2014) categorizes these schemes as Integrated Monetary Shaping Operations, and scholarship on the use of these methods at the intersection of corporate and military interests has addressed education programs, infrastructure, agricultural assistance, and healthcare services, and the formation of phantom community organizations and security groups (Bachmann et al. 2015, González 2010, 2020, Kirsch and

Grätz 2010, Kraemer et al. 2013)

Dunlap argues that scholarship on the "local turn" in counterinsurgency can help us understand the violence of CSR programs and other community outreach initiatives in contexts where conflicts over resource extraction become militarized (2023). Extending this argument, it becomes possible to place social technologies (Kirsch 2014, Rogers 2012) on a continuum with tactics of low-intensity or asymmetrical warfare, thus endowing them with the effects of weapons. Dunlap refers to this constellation of tactics as configuring a situation of corporate counterinsurgency in which "state and company interventions, [articulated through] strategies of coercion and reward… socially engineer the political feasibility of natural resource extraction in target regions" (Dunlap 2023: 293).

As an analytic term, the concept corporate counterinsurgency first appeared in articles Dunlap co-published with James Fairhead (2014) and later Andrea Brock (2018), where it was used to describe the joint effect of "soft" and "hard" approaches to mitigating pushback against extraction projects. Inspired by the reflections of grassroots groups resisting the UN's top-down initiatives for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) throughout the aughts (Boas 2011), corporate counterinsurgency points to the continuum between CSR and the militarization of extractive conflicts (Dunlap and Fairhead 2014). On this view, while "softer" strategies—such as training programs, the promotion of small businesses, and service and infrastructure provision (Hilston and Murck 2000)—aim to obscure the violence of resource extraction and delegitimize grassroots opposition (Brock and Dunlap 2018: 38), "harder" tactics—such as constant surveillance, criminalization, and repression—aim to foment a "culture of fear" (ibid.: 42). Uncannily, a "culture of fear" is precisely how the political scientist Jo-Marie Burt described the effects of Peru's state security apparatus implemented by

Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) and the former head of intelligence, Vladimiro Monsteinos.

As the Fujimori regime implemented the structural adjustments and institutional reforms that have become the foundations of neoliberal statecraft in Peru, government authorities liberally accused those who opposed his reforms of opposing the country's economic development (because they were affiliated with terrorist groups). In turn, these discourses were deployed to generate stigma and organize state violence against leftist social movements, giving rise to a "culture of fear," which is to say, a demobilization of civil society (2007: 155), and selective breakdown of citizenship (*ibid.*: 50-51). Though Andrea Brock and Alexander Dunlap are not in conversation with Jo-Marie Burt's work, and their publications are more than a decade apart, they are all—so to speak—looking in the same direction, that is, working in Peru, and dealing with different formations of the neoliberal state. Both echoing their observations and diverging from them, what I encountered in my own fieldwork was a waxing and waning experience of fear as an everyday reality, which clearly extends beyond the lives of grassroots activists.

Ismael's panic flashing at the thought that his uncle's robbery could be a form of punishment and Señora Elsa's conviction that the mine's pop-up clinics implicated members of her community in dynamics of impunity can both be understood as unruly effects of corporate counterinsurgency on neighbourly relations.[lxxviii] At the *pollada* held after Señor Ignacio's robbery, as Señor Abel recalled his family's experience of the night raids that took place during the 2015 state of emergency, I was able to see how an emergent notion of *anonymous violence* situated within a period of militarized intervention could bring the violence of the mining conflict to bear on everyday life at a time of relative tranquility. Adjacently, the suspicion that the Cocotea Water Management Board was somehow financed or supported by the mine showed

me that the mine's community outreach programs were felt by many to be part of a larger attempt at eroding local opposition to the Tía María project. I now want to return Señora Elsa's concern with impunity, although from a different angle.

"Botado, se ha quedado"

In the absence of a congressional investigation, a coalition of NGOs dedicated to the defense of civil rights and environmental justice conducted a series of fact-finding missions, whose findings were published in May 2015. During various visits to the Valley and the city of Arequipa, a team of representatives from the National Coordinating Office of Human Rights (*Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos*), Red Muqui, and CooperAcción met with local authorities and grassroots leaders. Additionally, for their first report, they held an assembly in the district of Cocachacra where they gathered 30 testimonies from community members. The resulting document observes that the forces of the state engaged in a "disproportionate use of force," committing "diverse abuses" (CNDDHH et al. 2015: 9-10). Equally, it mentioned complaints from Valley residents in favour of the project, who accused a group of people calling themselves "the spartans" (*los espartanos*, sic.) of blocking major roads and charging fees to let vehicles through, destroying private property, and raiding a police station on May 1 (*ibid.*: 10, 20-21). The report also mentioned the death of a member of the Peruvian National Police, Alberto Vásquez Durand, who suffered a cranial fracture during a skirmish in the town of Mollendo on May 6 (*ibid.*: 10).

Finally, in an 11-page section at the end of the report, there is a bullet-point summary of the 30 testimonies obtained at an in-person event held on Thursday, May 16 (2015) in

Cocachacra, along with seven additional testimonies received by telephone. Let me reproduce one of these texts in full, which in ten laconic notes, registers one woman's experience of loss, sorrow, and uncertainty:

> **Señora María Teresa Condori Choquehuanca - widow**
>
> - On Tuesday afternoon, her husband was with Jesús Cornejo and Pepe Julio in San Francisco Square participating in the protests.
> - He was insulting the police on the road in Chucarapi. The lady considers that it was the police who took him to the barracks between 1 and 12 at night while he was drunk.
> - She mentioned that since he sometimes went to Pampa Blanca to rest, she didn't look for him immediately.
> - Later, he was found lying on the road, with his shoe 20 meters away. His body was in rigor mortis, and his color had even changed. There was no blood around him. In that situation, I called Cocachacra's municipal patrol.
> - The expert didn't arrive to conduct the autopsy, and the body couldn't be removed.
> - He had a very large stab wound in his neck.
> - General Blanco [of the Peruvian National Police] gave an opinion in advance and claimed it was a traffic accident because they found him next to the road.
> - They did not return the clothing after the autopsy. Rosa María Torres, who performed the autopsy, did not heed the request to wait for the lawyer to arrive.
> - She left a death certificate where it states that he would have died between 6 and 10 in the morning due to a traffic accident.
> - Exhumation of the corpse has been requested.
>
> [- *El martes por la tarde su esposo estuvo junto con Jesús Cornejo y Pepe Julio en la Plaza San Francisco participando de las movilizaciones.*
> - *Estuvo insultando a los policías en la carretera en Chucarapi. La señora considera que han sido los policías los que se lo llevaron al cuartel entre 1 y 12 de la noche estando borracho.*
> - *Indica, que como él a veces iba a Pampa Blanca a descansar, no lo buscó inmediatamente.*
> - *Se le encontró luego en la carretera tirado, con su zapato a 20 metros. Su cuerpo se encontraba con el rigor mortis, incluso había cambiado de color. No había ninguna gota de sangre a su alrededor. En esa situación he llamado al serenazgo de Cocachacra.*
> - *No venía el perito para realizar el peritaje y no se podía levantar el cadáver.*

- Tenía una herida punzocortante muy grande en el cuello.
- El General Blanco adelantó opinión y sostuvo que era un accidente de tránsito porque lo encontraron al lado de la vía.
- No le han entregado la ropa luego de la necropsia. Rosa María Torres, que hizo la necropsia, no hizo caso al pedido de esperar para que venga el abogado.
- Deja certificado necropsia, donde dice de 6 a 10 de la mañana habría fallecido, por accidente de tránsito.
- Se ha solicitado exhumación del cadáver.]

I am struck by the contrast between the compact summary of Señora María's testimony and the visceral character of the experience the text describes. Bound by the demand of forensic proof, the report's language remains clinically skeptical.

"The lady considers that it was the police" feels like a jarringly understated way to report the death of a man with a stab wound on the neck, whom the police claim died of a car accident, despite being found on a stretch of road with no blood. At the same time, I am struck that the report bothers to include the detail that one of his shoes was found 20 meters away from his body, which seems to gesture to the coarse attempt at staging an impact, yet also forgets to mention what happened to the other shoe. Then, besides noting the coroner's willful refusal to wait for the family's lawyer, the report also observes that Señor Carlos' clothes were not returned to his family. This last detail implies that his clothes are being withheld because they can provide forensic evidence of a kind of death, not manslaughter, but murder. The overall effect of the report's language is not entirely avoidant, but there is still the sense, not just that a gaze is being averted, but more profoundly, that it is forbidden to look.

The notion of the psychic life of power in Judith Butler's (1997) work attends to the ways in which power structures and norms shape—rather than simply control—people's behaviour. As Lisa Stevenson observes, Butler's account of the psyche begins with a division between what is allowed and what is prohibited, which in turn shapes the subject's interiority by

separating it from an exterior world. In that sense, to ethnographically render the psychic life of a specific form of power entails attending to the particular injunctions that animate it, in no small part, through fear (Stevenson 2014: 189, see also Stevenson 2020b).

The death of Señor Carlos Enrique Rondón Rodríguez was only reported by a few small media outlets. One of these sources, Radio Uno, published a short article on his death, which includes the following details: "according to witnesses from the area, Rondón was arrested, but strangely, his name did not appear in the police records, which led to his being reported as missing. His lifeless body was found this morning. The corpse had bruises and a deep cut on the neck" (Radio Uno 2015).

Together, the minimal news coverage and the uncanny combination of detail, terseness, and doubt condensed in the summary of Señora María's testimony give us a glimpse into the psychic life of corporate counterinsurgency in Peru's mining conflicts. Moreover, in the Tambo Valley, it seems to me that the death of Señor Carlos Rondón constitutes its primordial scene (Degregori 2001) or scene of induction (Stevenson 2020b). In other words, it presents us with a different kind of death than the murder of the seven people who were shot in clashes with the police and military, and are therefore officially counted as victims of the conflict.

In March 2019, another conversation with Señora Elsa helped me think more closely about this connection. This time, the two of us sat with Señora Antonia in the Huanca family's yard. It was a warm early afternoon near the end of summer. Josefina had gone out to pick up the kids from school, and Ismael and his father were helping Señor Ignacio fumigate the rice they helped him plant at the end of December, two months after the robbery. On this visit, Señora Elsa carried no merchandise, because she was simply stopping by the town to collect payments for a few things she had sold on credit. To travel up and down the upstream

townships, Valley residents without a car—like Señora Elsa—depend on two mini-buses and two sedans, which ferry residents between the towns of El Fiscal, on the Pan-American Highway, and Carrizal, at the end of the dirt road that, splitting from the highway a few metres east of the Ventillata crossing, lines the south bank of the river. To return home, Señora Elsa would have to take one of these vehicles, then hop on a second *colectivo* at El Fiscal, and lastly, take a 25-minute walk or ride a moto-taxi to her front door. Tired after a morning of walking in the sun, she decided to stop by Señora Antonia's for a drop-in visit before waiting on the side of the road to start her journey back.

Señora Antonia diluted some instant coffee in a three-litre plastic jar, sweetened the carmel-coloured water with generous spoonfuls of brown sugar. I brought out three small glasses from the kitchen and we sat across from the house under a canopy the family built next to their bullpen. After a short chat about which neighbours were home and what they had been up to when she came by, Señora Elsa asked if I was aware of the upcoming events to commemorate the general strikes of 2011 and 2015, and the Valley residents who had been killed and injured when the conflict became militarized. The two-day event was organized by a group of community leaders (*dirigentes*) from the Valley itself, some of whom were facing a barrage of charges for the protests, ranging from disturbance of the peace and encumberment of public services to illicit association with criminal intent. Here, I only wish to touch on these events insofar as they framed a return to our conversation about impunity, subtly disclosing its relation to both epistemic murk and extralegal violence. On March 22 2019, the *dirigentes* had arranged a graveside commemoration (*romería*) at various cemeteries in the Valley and on the following day there would be a rally in the town of Cocachacra, where the recently elected regional governor, Elmer Cáceres Llica, would give a speech against the mine.

I said that I had heard about both events from my friend Daniel, who was also doing research in the Valley, and that we planned to go together. Then, Señora Elsa began to talk about the people who were killed during the protests in which she mentioned Señor Carlos Rondón. She recounted the circumstances of his death and said she knew his widow, Señora María. I told Señora Elsa that I learned about Señor Carlos and Señora María from a human rights report that included a short summary of the testimony she gave at an assembly in Cocachacra in May 2015.

I asked if she was aware of the assembly or had attended.

She said that she was fearful of going.

"And what were you afraid of?" I tried to continue (*y ¿a qué le tenía miedo?*), but she replied that she didn't know. Then, perhaps to avoid another follow-up question or maybe to give me a picture rather than an explanation, she told me Señora María had tried for some time to press the Public Ministry to exhume her husband's body so they could perform another autopsy and perhaps reopen the investigation, but after months of trying with absolutely no progress, she chose to stop. "He has been left stranded" (*Botado, se ha quedado*).

Much later, when reading my notes, I was struck once more by Señora Elsa's remark that Señor Carlos had been tossed out or stranded (*quedarse botado*) in his death, that his death itself had been made uncertain by reports of an arrest for which there were no records. I am not sure if Señora Elsa intended her words to have this effect, but they gave me a means to imagine her fear of going to an event where people would publicly testify to the violence of the conflict less than two months after Señor Carlos' death, while a police and military occupation of the Valley was still underway. When placed alongside Edison's arrest and Señor Ignacio's robbery, Señor Carlos' death reveals another layer of *anonymous violence* in the Tambo Valley.

At the beginning of this chapter, I used the phrase *anonymous violence* to describe

situations where Valley residents—like Edison—opposing the mine suffer attacks by unknown assailants, raising unsettling questions about potential collaboration between the unidentified perpetrators and the victims' community members. Practically speaking, *anonymous violence* means that, as with many other accounts of the night raids that took place in 2015, there is no record of Edison's arrest. In this way, it occupies a spectral register of reality that resembles nothing less than the register of the hours leading up to Señor Carlos' death, and the status of his death itself. They are stranded, so to speak, at the margins of what can be known for fact. This experience of uncertainty—it seems to me—is not only grounds for grief and rage, but also fear.

My colleague Daniel Quispe Aguilar has observed that during the three militarized occupations of the Tambo Valley, "residents were afraid of being detained because they feared being, as they say, 'ground up' [*molidos*] by the police. This term refers to the beatings inflicted on detainees by the police, which leave them severely injured with lasting consequences for their lives" (2021: 158). In November 2019, at the *pollada* held to support Señor Ignacio after he was severely injured in a domestic robbery, Ismael and Señor Abel's tableside talk showed me that even when troops are not stationed in the Valley, a spectral fear of punishment for opposing the mine remains, to various degrees, present. In a situation where the exact dynamics of violent incidents, such as Edison's detention and Señor Carlos' death, remain largely unknown, and where the reach of this violence seems to spread through the very actions of one's neighbours, I wager that fear becomes a way of knowing a mode of governance, where the production of impunity facilitates *anonymous violence*.

POINT OF DEPARTURE

Let me bring us back to the *pollada* that Señor Ignacio's friends and family held to help him weather the aftermath of a violent robbery. Having described how the Tía María conflict has given rise to a fear of *anonymous violence* in the Tambo Valley, I now wish to turn explicitly to the question of belonging. What does Señor Ignacio's *pollada* show us about the precarious achievement of belonging amid the techniques of governance deployed by state and corporate actors in the context of the Tía María conflict?

In the previous chapter, I described the concept of *arraigo* that I encountered through my relationship with a Señora Francisca, a resident in one of the Valley's downstream townships, who used this word to gesture to the ethical and material attachments that make a person out of a place (*hacerse de un lugar*) in ways that enable each to sustain the other's presence. As my relationship with Señora Francisca became more intimate, she used this word to describe how the possibilities of her own life were intertwined with the lives of her family and neighbours, with her husband's farmland, and with the river.

In a context beset by environmental damage, economic precarity, militarized violence, questions of how to respond to the Tía María conflict gave rise to intimate confrontations in her neighbourhood and her home, which, in different ways, put her *arraigos* at stake. In this sense, though the word *arraigo* translates to "rootedness" and roots are usually imagined as holding fast to the soil, Señora Francica's notion of belonging was anything but static. Instead, for Señora Francisca, remaining in the Valley during the escalation of the Tía María conflict has paradoxically required navigating through periods of profound uncertainty, where the very attachments that make her up as a person cannot be taken for granted. At such precarious

thresholds, she sometimes experienced the uncertain possibility of suffering life-changing losses—like becoming displaced from her home or enduring the death or serious injury of her loved ones—as a disorienting form of nausea, which she called, "being with vomit" (*estar con vómito*). By attending to Señora Francisca's experiences, I came to appreciate how the precarious achievement of *arraigo* not only entails ongoing efforts at conjugating different forms of care in uncertain circumstances, but also efforts at mourning, which make the self of what is lost. Here, I want to take up the concern with which I concluded the previous chapter, which is how Valley residents detect the limits of *arraigo.*

At the *pollada*, Ismael and Señor Abel also contended with the possibility of loss, not the loss of Señor Ignacio, who was recovering in his bedroom just a few metres from the yard, but the loss that this new encounter with *anonymous violence* suddenly made palpable. As Señor Ignacio's robbery extended the shadows of the Tía María conflict into his community, Ismael expressed his concern that the break-in at his uncle's house may have been a form of retribution for his opposition to the formation of the Cocotea Water Management Board. Wary of the caustic power of this accusation, yet apparently unable to contradict it, Señor Abel counseled Ismael to keep quiet, adding that it was enough "for people to see what has happened" (*que la gente vea lo que ha pasado*). In this way, it seems to me that Señor Ignacio's *pollada* both enacted *arraigo* and traced its uncertain limits, not only pooling together material support at a critical moment, but also making his community present to an open wound—a space of death joining the Tambo Valley to a much larger history of state violence in post-conflict Peru.

As I depart from Ismael's doubt over whether the robbery at his uncle's house was indeed a form of punishment, I cannot help but think about Señor Abel's claim. The *pollada*, he seemed to suggest, not only let their community "see" the consequences of Señor Ignacio's

robbery, but in doing so, it also made them all responsible for the possibilities that this frightening knowledge implicitly gestured to—thus working to deter violence without having to make an accusation explicit. Though this understanding of Señor Abel's words can make the *pollada* look like the pop-up clinics sponsored by the mine (both resulting in leaving violent acts uninvestigated), neither Ismael nor anyone in his circle spoke of the *pollada* itself as fomenting impunity. Thus, in the following chapter, I return to Señora Elsa's concerns with the mine's pop-up clinics by offering a way to think about the way in which they emplace the distinction between those who support the mine and those who oppose it.

CHAPTER THREE

"'THEY'RE PRO-MINING' OR 'THEY'RE ANTI-MINING:'" GRADUATED SOVEREIGNTY

Three years after the second militarized occupation of the Tambo Valley, Carlos Aranda, the social relations manager of the Southern Peru Copper Corporation declared in a public interview that he believed that the residents of the Deán Valdivia district were staunchly opposed to the mine because their very genes made them prone to terrorism (Grados 2018). Aranda's glib comment, while seemingly trivial, tapped into a charged history of political violencein claiming an essential link between the mine's opponents and the man who precipitated Peru's internal armed conflict (1980-2000), Abimael Guzmán, the founding leader of the Shining Path, who was born in the Tambo Valley and spent his early years in the downstream town of El Arenal with his father's family (Jara 2017, Roncagliolo 2007).

On May 17, 2018, Aranda participated in "Mining Thursday" (*Jueves Minero*), a weekly series organized by the Peruvian Institute of Mining Engineers (*Instituto de Ingenieros de Minas del Perú*), which consists of thematic interviews with key members of Peru's extractive sector. Aranda presented the Tía María project as per the second Environmental Impact Assessment, and then detailed the results of the mine's community outreach campaigns between January 2016 and December 2017, a period bridging *Plan Reencuentro* and *Valle Unido*. During the Q & A session at the end, he was asked why, in his opinion, "the population of the district of Dean Valdivia" showed the greatest opposition to the Tía María Project, and he answered as follows:

> Very good question. You know that Dean Valdivia is the birthplace of Abimael Guzmán. Well, I believe there's something genetic there. It's

> true, Dean Valdivia is one of the most recalcitrant areas. When we look at the polls, we see how Cocachacra has surged, with over 60% [people] approving the project. We go to Dean Valdivia, and it's around 30% - 40%. I think it's a very specific issue for them. Besides, when you visit and pass by Abimael Guzmán's house, they keep it in perfect condition, well-painted and clean. [*Muy buena pregunta. Ustedes saben que Dean Valdivia es la cuna de Abimael Guzmán. Pues creo que hay algo genético ahí. Sí es cierto, Dean Valdivia es una de las zonas más recalcitrantes. Cuando tenemos las mediciones vemos cómo se ha disparado Cocachacra, encima del 60% aprueba el proyecto. Vamos a Dean Valdivia y estamos alrededor del 30% – 40%. Creo que es un tema muy de ellos. Además, cuando uno va de visita y pasa cerca de la casa de Abimael Guzmán la tienen pero perfecta, bien pintada limpiecita.*]

Abimael Guzmán is perhaps one of the most widely despised men in Peruvian history as well as a paradigmatic example of the figure of the terrorist—one which has continued to mobilize the country's state security apparatus long after the end of the internal armed conflict. Aranda's claim draws on the wounds of Peru's war-torn past instrumentally to frame grassroots opposition to a mining project in the present.

Far from being an impertinent remark, in post-conflict Peru, it has become common for government authorities, corporate executives and reporters of mass-media outlets to liberally accuse grassroots movements of being affiliated with the Shining Path, particularly when their protests adopt measures like roadblocks or strikes. For example, in 2010, shortly after the first general strike calling for the cancellation of the Tía María project was underway, former President Alan García accused demonstrators at roadblocks of perpetrating "roadway terrorism" (*terrorismo vial*) (Miranda Delgado 2011). While the specific neologism of roadway terrorism did not stick, Alan García's administration successfully expanded the use of extraordinary policing practices against critics of extractive development, whom he frequently referred to as, "antimining terrorists" (*terroristas antimineros*) (Silva Santisteban 2016). Using this language, García not only enacted the first militarized occupation of the Tambo Valley, but also mobilized

the forces of the Peruvian state against Awajún and Wampis communities in Bagua (2009), and Aymara communities in Puno (2011).[lxxix]

As discussed in the first chapter, for García, the distinction between a social movement and a "terrorist" organization was not just a matter of protest strategies, but more importantly, of whether the demands of a grassroots group contested Peru's post-conflict mode of statecraft, which is based on procuring economic growth by incentivizing private investment. Aranda's haphazard attempt at manipulating Peruvian publics not only evoked the figure of the *terrorista antiminero*, but also the language of Peru's former Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Gustavo Adrianzén, who in 2015, compared the protests against the Tía María project to the violence of the Shining Path (Paucar Albino 2015).

In Peru, the use of state violence during conflicts over labour, resource extraction, and collective rights relies on the stigmatization of dissident communities through unfounded accusations of being affiliated with domestic terrorist groups, thus recasting their protests as threats to national security rather than exercises of citizenship (Aguirre 2011, Watanabe Farro et al. 2023). This strategy—which stigmatizes individuals or groups that challenge Peru's post-conflict economic foundations and thus turns them into targets of state violence—is referred to locally as *terruqueo*. The name of this practice derives its name from the term *terruco*, originally used to describe militant guerrilla fighters during the internal armed conflict. (Méndez 2021). Although the armed guerrillas of the 1980s and 1990s no longer exist as such, the fear they continue to evoke has become a resource for (legally) constructing and (martially) enacting extraordinary forms of policing in defense of large-scale projects of private investment and economic growth (Poole and Rénique 2003). Thus, the strategy of *terruqueo* can be understood as using talk of terrorism to evoke the sense-shattering power of the violence enacted by the

Shining Path and Peru's National Intelligence Services during Peru's internal armed conflict. In doing so, *terruqueo* dredges up a space of death (Taussig 1984, Theidon 2001) harrowed at a time of war and instrumentalizes its bewitching power in the construction and deployment of a post-conflict killing machine.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the concept of corporate counterinsurgency (Brock and Dunlap 2017), which refers to the use of direct and indirect counterinsurgency techniques in efforts to render a group of people amenable to the presence of an extractive project. This discussion focused on the psychic life of this form of power in the Tambo Valley, where it is experienced as *anonymous violence*. In turn, I used the term *anonymous violence* not only to describe attacks perpetrated by unidentified assailants, but also how these acts lead Valley residents to consider the disturbing possibility that their neighbours might cooperate with external actors to facilitate these events and their concealment. In this chapter, I will shift from a discussion of the psychic life of this form of power, to a discussion of the legal and rhetorical conditions of its enactment through the strategy of *terruqueo*. As I do so, I will draw on the concept of graduated sovereignty, which in the Peruvian context has been used to theorize the selective deployment of techniques that aim to control the conduct of citizens through projects that alternatively improve their lives and police their actions (Drinot 2014, Ong 2000, 2006). In the Tía María conflict, this differentiation is continuously enacted through the language of *terruqueo*. Let me now return to a scene from the previous chapter, where Señora Antonia, Josefina, and their friend, Señora Elsa, discussed their "mixed feelings" (*sentimientos encontrados*) regarding the forms of violence and care that make up the regime of corporate counterinsurgency that aims to set up the Tía María project in the Tambo Valley. I will then turn to Señora Antonia's reflections on this subject later that same week, which gestured to the logics

of differentiation underpinning corporate counterinsurgency, which I am here theorizing through the lens of graduated sovereignty.

Graduated Sovereignty

On a weekday afternoon in January 2019, Señora Elsa, who often traveled through the towns in the Valley selling clothing, laid out a few button-up shirts on a metal table in the front room of Señora Antonia's house. As Señora Antonia and Josefina looked through the shirts to see if they could find something in their husbands' sizes, our conversation turned to the medical campaigns and services organized by the mine. Señora Elsa was sensitive to the difficulties and costs of getting specialized healthcare in the Valley, not only from personal experience, but also through her intermittent visits to her neighbours' homes. At the same time, she also had "mixed feelings" (*sentimientos encontrados*) about these programs, as she could not separate the mine's care from the violence of the militarized occupations of 2011 and 2015. As I came to learn that afternoon, Josefina and Señora Antonia were all-too familiar with this plight. Like Señora Elsa, the Huanca family had experienced needs for medical care, which they could neither procure in the Valley nor easily afford. Although they too were conflicted about the implications of receiving care from the mine, they stayed informed on its medical campaigns and sometimes discussed whether or not to go.

After Señora Elsa described the mine's medical campaigns as a "gift" intended to minimize the violence of the conflict, Señora Antonia told us that she was worried about her husband's back pain. Don Octavio often used dolo-neurobion, diclofenac, and voltaren gel for relief, which he usually bought downstream or sometimes from the small shops that a handful of

residents upstream ran out of their homes, where it was sold at a markup. Señora Antonia kept a small stash of painkillers for emergencies, which she made sure to top up when she went downstream to Cocachacra or to the city of Arequipa, where they were markedly less expensive. More importantly, however, she worried that the pain indicated a deeper problem requiring specialized medical care to both treat and diagnose.

Likewise, Josefina said that she was worried about her youngest son who had chronic bronchial problems. She told us the staff at the public clinics were well-intentioned, but they often gave her wildly different antibiotic prescriptions, which on two occasions did not last through the boy's illness and seemed to make him worse in the long term. Ismael and Josefina's son was a few months away from turning five, and she was worried that his affliction could be more complicated than it appeared. His cough persisted throughout my fieldwork, sometimes wet and sometimes parched and rasping, and he came down with a serious fever three different times between 2018 and 2019. For Señora Antonia and Josefina, the experiences of caring for an aging husband and a young child meant that the decision to forego the medical support offered by the mine was made from scratch every time a pop-up clinic was announced.

On an evening after Señora Elsa's visit, I asked Ismael's family at dinner what they thought about *Plan Reencuentro*—the mine's second wave of community outreach programs—and the medical campaigns Señora Elsa had talked about. Don Octavio, whom I came to know as both quick-witted and cutting in his humour, responded with a joke that played on the words "hostage" and "reconnection" in Spanish, *rehén* and *reencuentro*. Repeating my question for the rest of the table, he said, "Alonsito wants to know about Operation Hostage" (*el Alonsito quiere saber la Operación Rehén, dice*). In playing with the words *rehén* and *reencuentro*, Don Octavio's joke cleverly framed the mine's outreach programs within a broader scenario of

coercion.

A few minutes later, Ismael explained that the Peruvian Army had actually been the first to carry out medical campaigns in the fall of 2015, nearly four months before *Plan Reencuentro*. Through later research I learned that he was referring to the outreach events organized by the Third Division of the Peruvian Army under General Víctor Nájar Carrera. Allegedly, these events convened over 150 doctors and nurses in mobile military clinics to provide medical care to Valley residents. Furthermore, they included free legal consultations, hairdressing services, manicures, and a clown show.

No one from the Huanca family went to these events, which were held downstream—in Cocachacra, on May 24 and June 14, and in Punta de Bombón on June 13. However, sitting around the dinner table, they remembered some of the effects that the army's community engagement initiative had on their neighbours and friends. Señora Antonia, who had just begun to eat after serving everyone else, put her spoon to pick up a handful of toasted corn (*tostado* or *cancha*) from a bowl at the centre of the table. Casting the golden kernels over the surface of her soup, she said that the army had knowingly used "the needs of the people" (*las necesidades de la gente*) to continue to "make [them] lose more trust in each other" (*hacer perder más confianza entre nosotros*).

Later that evening, while we washed the dishes and wiped down the kitchen, I asked Señora Antonia if she could explain again the point she had made at dinner, so I could understand it a little better. I set my recorder on the table and then filled a small plastic tub with water from the blue cylinder we filled up every two days using the pylon in the yard and began to soap them gently, so the clinking would not clip the sound of her voice too much. While passing a wet rag over the vinyl tablecloth and the wooden chairs of the kitchen dining set,

Señora Antonia said:

> Those fairs the government put together, my husband says it's hostage-taking because during those days, everywhere was filled with soldiers, the streets, and there was no space even in the barracks. They had us captive, [to the point] that one couldn't even go down to Cocachacra, nothing, without fearing that they are watching you, with whom you're talking, and what you're saying. That upset people even worse, it made more fights between neighbors. Already, for almost any reason, people were saying "they're pro-mining" or "they're anti-mining," "they're pro-mining" or "they're anti-mining." And with the army fairs, it got worse. [*A esos—esas ferias que hizo el gobierno, a eso le dice mi esposo que es de rehenes porque en esos días estaba todo llenito de soldados, las calles, ni había lugar en los cuarteles. Nos tenían secuestrados, que una ni podía bajar a Cocachacra, nada, sin miedo a que te estén viendo con quien hablas, que qué dices. Peor indispuso eso a la gente, hizo más peleas entre vecinos. Ya de todo decían "es minero" o "es antiminero," "es minero" o "es antiminero." Y con las ferias del ejército peor.*]

In the recording, after I throw the dish water out into the yard, Señora Antonia and I dry the dishes in silence, putting them oneby-one back on the shelf. Then, a few seconds before we finish, she sighs and says, "well, Alonsito, that's what the mine has continued for itself" (*eso, pues, Alonsito se ha continuado la mina*).

Alongside Señora Elsa's "mixed feelings," Señora Antonia's suggestion that the mine's medical campaigns are a continuation of the army's *acciones cívicas* points to a constellation of power with at least three different nodes. The state's neglect to provide reliable basic services lets Valley residents die. Meanwhile, its militarized interventions actively kill and injure those who oppose the mine. And lastly, the "civic actions" (*acciones cívicas*) and the community outreach programs enacted by the army and the mining corporation make people live—so long as they are willing to forget previous episodes of state violence and consent to resource extraction.[lxxx] In this regard, while the press claimed that the "civic actions" of 2015 benefited

"thousands of townsfolk" (El Búho 2015) and garnered "massive acceptance from the population" (Diario EP 2015), for Señora Antonia and her family, these events deepened the pre-existing divide between *mineros* and *antimineros* in their community. In other words, they contributed to making two distinct "populations" visible, not exactly statistically, but rhetorically and spectacularly. While this distinction has for many people in the Valley made relations between neighbours and family members increasingly hostile, for a general public it has served to cleave a distinction between law-abiding citizens and *terroristas antimineros*.[lxxxi]

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To understand how the language of "terrorism" is currently used to reconfigure the relationship between the person and the state in post-conflict Peru, the historian Paulo Drinot (2014) has borrowed the concept of graduated sovereignty from the anthropologist Aihwa Ong. In Ong's research on neoliberal techniques of governance in Southeast Asia, the concept of graduated sovereignty offers a framework for describing what happens as states respond to the demands of global markets by "giving corporations an indirect power over the political conditions of citizens in zones that are differently articulated to global production and financial circuits" (2006: 78). The concept of graduated sovereignty is thus concerned with the waning authority of a unified national entity in managing both a territory and its inhabitants. Consequently, it attends to the patchwork of governance techniques that emerge as state and corporate actors grapple with the complexities of achieving economic growth and engaging with global markets.

In other words, the concept of graduated sovereignty describes a mode of rule, which

combines state and corporate techniques of governance to establish—within a national space—differentiated regimes for connecting people, resources, and commodities to global markets. Perhaps special economic zones and labour regulations tailored for specific industries are the clearest instances of this graduated sovereignty (Park 2005, Holden 2017). Yet, the focus of this concept extends more broadly to state and corporate governance strategies that employ "a mix of disciplinary, regulatory, and pastoral technologies aimed at instilling self-discipline, productivity, and capacity to work with global firms" (2006: 79).[lxxxii]

Terror Talk and State Security

The anthropologist Deborah Poole and the historian Gerárdo Rénique have observed that during the internal armed conflict, the word "terrorism" became part of everyday language (2003: 153), marking the advent of inordinate "violence against civilians" along with a generalized sense that this cruelty was largely unpredictable (*ibid.*: 151). The Shining Path, intending to force the state to capitulate at any cost, instilled fear in its citizens by setting up car bombs and blowing up electrical towers, which plunged swaths of Peru's cities into darkness. During the war, a fragmented yet deeply unsettling awareness of the decentralized combat between the armed forces and two Communist guerrillas spread through the news and by word-of-mouth. As did images of abductions, assassinations, torture, sexual violence, and brutal massacres. In the crucible of war, terror's talk acquired a power to shape reality, which the anthropologist Kimberly Theidon has likened to witchcraft (2014). Though Theidon's fieldwork took place shortly after the conflict in the communities of Accomarca, Cayara, Hualla, and Tiquihua in the region of Ayacucho, I would argue that it also gives us an insight into the

workings of the state security apparatus that emerged after Peru's internal armed conflict.

Terror's talk has come to operate Peru's security apparatus with a power akin to witchcraft. But how exactly did this happen? At a time when the word "terrorism" marked the open wound of this unfolding mass atrocity, the Fujimori regime was able to contrast a present scene of generalized violence and economic instability with a project of statecraftin which a robust state security apparatus and sustained economic growth promised a way out (Poole and Rénique 2003: 158). Fujimori's first block of reforms implemented a controversial economic shock policy, which aimed to reduce hyperinflation by devaluing the national currency. The measure was accompanied by a massive privatization of public companies, the proliferation of special labour regimes that zoned workers' rights by trade, the establishment of a legal framework for regulating extractive concessions, and the drafting and implementation of a new Constitution in 1993. At a different scale, Fujimori's regime was also very effective at using the language of "pacification" to pass anti-terrorist legislation and a new penal code in 1991.

While many of Fujimori's policies were widely contested at the outset of his administration, public opposition grew increasingly quiet throughout the 1990s until his ousting in November of 2000. Peruvian scholars and political commentators attribute the rise of Fujimori's popularity both to a self-aggrandizing "triumphalism" and to his regime's punitive approach (Degregori 2001, Carrión 2006). For example, the arrest of the leader of the Shining Path on September 12, 1992, occurred independently of Fujimori's orders and outside the purview of his sphere of influence in the armed forces. However, Fujimori "capitalized on the capture to enhance his popularity" by displaying Abimael Guzmán to the press as his prisoner (Root 2012: 32-34). Adjacently, Jo-Marie Burt (2007) and the Final Report of Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR 2003: III, 121-124) have documented the systematic way in

which Fujimori's regime used allegations of "terrorism" to discredit its critics and to enable extreme forms of policing.

Examining the rise of the resulting security apparatus, Poole and Rénique have argued that during the internal armed conflict, the Peruvian state “mimicked and inscribed” the Shining Path’s tactics (2003: 152), adopting “the invisible and exceptional forms of power to which the terrorist so effectively lays claim” (2003: 162). During the Fujimori administration, those who publicly opposed the government's policies were often labeled as sympathizers of terrorist groups, subjected to surveillance and, in some cases, extrajudicially executed. These actions were carried out under the supervision of Vladimiro Montesinos, who served as the head of Peru's National Intelligence Services (*Servicio de Inteligencia Nacional*, SIN) from 1990 until the organization's dissolution in 2000, which occurred under pressure from the Organization of American States. The death squad known as *Grupo Colina* was a key element in the consolidation of the Fujimori regime. This secret organization, which operated between October 1991 and 1994, was headed by Major Santiago Martin Rivas and has thus far been deemed responsible for the murder and disappearance of at least forty-nine people (Root 2012: 33).

To offer a partial view of the power to torture and kill that the Fujimori regime obtained by instrumentalizing the language of “terrorism,” let me briefly mention a few of the operations that Peru's National Intelligence Services undertook under Montesinos' direction, beginning with the Barrios Altos massacre. On November 3, 1991, members of Grupo Colina forcibly entered a residence in the neighbourhood of Barrios Altos (Lima), where tenants were holding a *pollada* to pay for building repairs (Burt 2007: 183). Believing Shining Path militants to be present at the event, the masked and heavily armed intruders opened fire into the crowd, killing fifteen people, among them an eight-year-old child.

Less than a year later, on July 18, 1992, Grupo Colina raided the campus of the Enrique Valle y Guzmán University, also known as la Cantuta, and kidnapped nine students and one professor falsely thought to be part of the Shining Path (Burt 2007: 181-182). The case resurfaced a year later, when a group of dissenting military officers disclosed a document that linked the atrocity to intelligence services. In July and November 1993, further leaks from the armed forces led to the discovery of two clandestine burial sites in the districts of Cieneguilla and Huachipa. "After a prolonged battle to recover the remains found in the secret graves and kept by police, the La Cantuta family members were finally delivered in June 1994 fifteen tattered cardboard boxes containing dirt, animal and human bones, and trash for burial" (Human Rights Watch 1995: 45). This was only one of several acts of state terror perpetrated by the Fujimori regime,[lxxxiii] which imbued the word "terrorism" with a power akin to witchcraft and—I am arguing—remains effective in Peru's state security apparatus today.

While working with Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the region of Ayacucho, Theidon (2001) observed that in many of the communities afflicted by the violence of the Shining Path and the armed forces, the act of speaking about wartime events could indeed reshape social worlds recovering from the ravages of war. Drawing on the works of Jeanne Favret-Saada (1981), Theidon theorizes witchcraft as spoken words that draw their power to construct objects and effects from a space where the referential capacity of language becomes radically destabilized, such that "everything becomes what it is and yet something more" (Theidon 2001: 26).

Put differently, for Theidon, the concept of witchcraft offers a framework for both talking about what emerges from the gap between experience and presence, and for using this knowledge to alter what is possible. Theidon also argues that to amplify the irreducible

uncertainty between experience and presence, witchcraft draws from the power of violence to break the established connections between signifier and signified. In Taussig's work (1984), the concept of a space of death marks a situated history of cruelty and devastation, whose evocation can yet "[destroy] accepted meanings… and [assault] the sensory organs" in the present (2001: 26). Thus, when speaking about witchcraft, Theidon is referring to a particular way of wielding or becoming subject to the chaos-inducing force of inordinate violence, which in undermining the mutual attunements that constitute a shared sense of what is real, stands to enable liminal ways of knowing that reveal the latent possibilities of a relational terrain. In the communities Theidon visited while working with Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, terror's talk had the power to reintroduce the chaos of war into everyday relations, shaping how community members imagined each other and the possible afflictions and etiologies of their world.

At a different scale, the strategy of *terruqueo* can be understood as using terror's talk to dredge the space of death harrowed by the Shining Path and Peru's National Intelligence Services, and to redeploy its bewitching power in contemporary attempts at governing conflicts between grassroots activists and corporate interests. Earlier in this chapter, I said that *terruqueo* enables the intensification of the policing practices deployed to control grassroots activism, first, by constituting an unstable array of post-conflict security laws around notions of "terrorism" that are legally undefined, and second, by levying unfounded allegations of "terrorist" infiltration in social movements to enable extraordinary forms of policing. At both moments, the language of "terrorism" evokes and ultimately appropriates the space of death created by the Shining Path to materialize *regimes of punishment and impunity*, thus extending the space of death that constituted the Fujimori regime.

Through my research, it became obvious that this language of *terruqueo*—the unfounded

accusations of terrorist affiliation levied against the mine's opponents—worked differently outside and inside the Valley. While some of the people I spoke with outside the Valley were concerned with what "terrorists" could do, Valley residents and activists were far more worried about what can be done to a person once they are called a "terrorist." In 2015, as the administration of Ollanta Humala deployed the security apparatus for the second time in the Tambo Valley, the conflict crossed new thresholds of violence, which went beyond the lethal confrontations between protesters and police, which killed four civilians in 2011. The death of Señor Carlos Rondón and the night raids into the homes of Valley residents gave rise to the range of experiences, which I have been referring to as *anonymous violence*. After the robbery at Señor Ignacio's house, Ismael's sudden fear that his uncle's misfortune could signal a form of punishment for vocally opposing the formation the Cocotea Water Management Board showed me how *anonymous violence* continued to shape reality even when the conflict was not militarized, extending the shadows of epistemic murk (Taussig1987) and extralegal force into everyday life. While extraordinary policing tactics—like the night raids discussed in chapters one and two—are unlawful in post-conflict Peru, they are nevertheless enabled by the progressive loosening of the laws regulating police and military institutions.

The Laws

Since 2007, a series of laws modifying the Penal Code to diminish oversight of the force used by police and military officers have become a repeated source of concern for grassroots activists in Peru (Lovón 2020). Alternatively referred to as a "police protection law" (*ley de protección policial*), "easy-trigger law" (*ley del gatillo fácil*), or "license to kill" (*licencia para*

matar), this legal provision absolves the forces of the state from prosecution for "causing lesions or death." The first version of this law (Legislative Decree Nº 982) was passed in 2007, after Congress authorized former President Alan García to legislate for a period of 60 days on matters pertaining to "organized crime in general, and especially offenses such as illicit drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorism, kidnapping, extortion, human trafficking, as well as harmful gang activities" (Law Nº 29009). Among political scientists, this practice, whereby the legislative power endows the executive with the ability to draft laws that can be summarily accepted or rejected but not deliberated or modified, has been described as an instance of delegative democracy, or *decretismo*. Within the Peruvian context, pockets of *decretismo* have become increasingly common since the internal armed conflict, particularly on matters related to national security and economic reform (Durand 2018, García Llorens 2011). The "police protection" law decreed by Alan García in 2007 was repealed by a decision of the Constitutional Tribunal the following year (Record Nº 00012-2008-PI/TC), only to be reinstated in 2014, this time by way of a Congressional law (Nº 30151). Five years later, a plenary of the Supreme Court chambers specializing in criminal law offered a binding interpretation limiting the use of this new version of Alan García's law, which exempted cases of cruelty and torture, or situations in which the action of state forces otherwise exceeded international standards of policing and human rights (Plenary Agreement Nº 05-2019/CJ-116). Then, in 2020, with the coronavirus pandemic, the "easy trigger" law was restituted once more (Law Nº 31012) and has since remained in place.

Alongside this tug-of-war over Peru's baroque array of police protection laws, the Legislative Decree 1095—issued by Alan García to regulate the deployment of the armed forces on national territory—enables military troops to assist the police without the declaration of a state of emergency:

> in cases of illicit drug trafficking, terrorism, or protection of strategic facilities for the country's operation, essential public services, and in other cases constitutionally justified when the capacity of the Police is exceeded in its ability to control internal order, whether foreseeable or if there is a danger that it may occur. (Legislative Decree 1095 Article 4.3)

Saldaña Cuba and Portocarrero Salcedo (2017: 330-331) have argued that the Legislative Decree 1095 has markedly "flexibilized" the deployment of the armed forces and the use of war weapons against civilians exercising their right to protest. Equally, they note that Legislative Decree 1095 enables military troops to remain on the ground after states of emergency have officially ended—as was the case in the Tambo Valley in 2015, where the state of emergency lasted between May and July, yet police and military troops remained in the Valley until December. These two examples of security legislation enable the use of extralegal violence and the militarization of grassroots protests, effectively turning communities that contest the interests of extractive corporations into small war zones, and increasing the danger for demonstrators and community organizers.

The contracts that enable mining companies to hire the Peruvian National Police, known locally as agreements for the extraordinary provision of police services (*convenios de servicios policiales extraordinarios*), give us a third example of how the term "terrorism" both shapes and enacts Peru's post-conflict state security apparatus. According to the report prepared by EarthRights International and the Institute of Legal Defense, the central objective of these security contracts is to protect key infrastructure from "acts of vandalism, sabotage, or terrorism" (2019:11-12). As far as I have been able to tell, the earliest known contracts between extractive companies and the Peruvian National Police date to 1995 (Kamphuis and Ruiz Molleda 2021). However, the first set of regulations governing these agreements was the

Organic Law of the National Police of Peru (Law Nº 27238), which was approved by the Ministry of the Interior in 2002. Four years later, a new law was passed to establish and regulate police labour (Nº 28857). This legal framework allowed officers to provide individual and institutional services to private contractors during regular service, days off, or vacations. In 2012, the legal framework was upheld the Peruvian National Police Law (Legislative Decree Nº 1148) and its subsequent alteration in 2016 (Legislative Decree Nº 1267). Both laws continued to allow the police to provide extraordinary police services to entities in public and private sectors.

Further guidelines for executing these police services were established in 2017 through Supreme Decree No. 003-2017-IN. Presently, the only institutions involved in their execution are the Ministry of the Interior and the National Police of Peru, though even the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Ombudsman also have authority in matters of citizen security and internal order. Moreover, it was not until 2017 that the secrecy surrounding the security contracts between extractive companies and the Peruvian National Police began to lift, with the implementation of a digital database of the agreements for extraordinary police services, which have been in place since the 1990s.

A recent report from the independent media outlet Convoca established that between 2003 and 2020, the Peruvian National Police received at least 18 million USD from 181 security contracts with extractive companies, including Southern Peru Copper Corporation. The report included anonymous declarations from members of the Peruvian National Police who claimed that mining companies frequently demand personnel with extensive experience with "conflict zones, counterterrorism actions, and intelligence, including infiltration operations" (Pérez 2021b). With the advent of security agreements between the Peruvian National Police and the

Southern Peru Copper Corporation to protect the Tía María project as early as 2010 (Gorriti 2015), the influx of specialized state forces in the Tambo Valley have include the National Division of Special Operations (DINOES) and the Grupo Terna (Dunlap 2019). As described by my colleague Rossio Motta-Ochoa, "*ternas* are members of a squad of plainclothes policemen trained to infiltrate protests to incite violence, plant evidence, and carry out arbitrary arrests. They also gather information for uniformed officers" (2023). Notably, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has acknowledged and condemned the use of unidentified *terna* policing at protests, as it "contravenes international standards, according to which any deployment of plainclothes officers must be strictly necessary in the circumstances and the plainclothes officers must identify themselves to the persons concerned before conducting a search, making an arrest or resorting to any use of force" (OHCHR 2020: 8).

After my fieldwork, Peru's security legislation underwent yet another change. In April 2019, the San Martín Bar Association, with the support of IDL and ERI, filed a lawsuit questioning the unconstitutionality of the legal scaffolding upholding the agreements for extraordinary police services (N.° 00009-2019-AI/TC). In June 2022, the Constitutional Tribunal found the lawsuit inadmissible by way of an interpretive sentence, which acknowledged that security contracts with private corporations can "compromise the independence and objectivity of the police," and issued further norms on their regulation to guard against this possibility (Instituto de Defensa Legal, et al. 2022). It remains unclear to me at the moment how this decision will impact the landscape of policing and grassroots mobilization in Peru. However, from the purview of my fieldwork, what I can approach is the epistemic murk (Taussig1987) and extralegal force (Ralph 2017, 2020) that have thus far accompanied Peru's unstable array of post-conflict security legislation as it is deployed in

confrontations between grassroots activists and corporate interests.

In the Tambo Valley, laws on police protection, military intervention, and the extraordinary provision of police services were not only key to escalating the violence of the Tía María conflict, but to creating a situation of marked uncertainty concerning not only the possible extent of violence, but also its source. In 2011 and 2015, in addition to road blockages, marches, and rallies, the Tía María conflict gave rise to riots as well as acts of vandalism against the property of supporters of the mine. While many Valley residents who participated in the protests during 2011 and 2015 have been criminally prosecuted, most of these cases have been dismissed due to insufficient or tampered evidence. By contrast, the Public Ministry's investigations over the deaths of Valley residents at the hands of the police continue to stall (Pérez 2021a). In turn, while Valley residents critical of the mine continue to suspect that *terna* policing and thugs hired by the mine are intermittently deployed to legitimize repression (Dunlap 2019, Quispe Aguilar 2021), government authorities, mine officials and mainstream media outlets attribute the violence of the conflict to *espartambos* backed by the remnants of the Shining Path or illegal miners (Paucar Albino 2015, Pinto Herrera 2016b, Silva Santisteban 2016, Villacorta Yamashiro 2021).

This unstable array of laws on police protection, military intervention, and the extraordinary provision of police services comprises the volatile legal assemblage that underpins the security apparatus mobilized by unfounded accusations of terrorism in post-conflict Peru. Together these security laws and the rhetoric of "terrorism" that enacts their provisions make up the governance strategy locally known as *terruqueo*, which facilitates the targeted amplification of law enforcement measures and plays a crucial role in militarizing the Tía María conflict.

Having described key legal, rhetorical, and martial components of *terruqueo* as a strategy

of governance, let me now turn to the way in which Paulo Drinot's (2014) use of the concept of graduated sovereignty (Ong 2000, 2006) critically builds on Michel Foucault's theories of power, combining techniques of governance exemplifying configurations of care and violence.

Power, Care, Violence

The *acciones cívicas* that took place in the Valley in 2015—while the Valley was still undergoing a state of emergency and militarized occupation—present us with a situation where a single state entity effectively claimed the right to kill, surveil, and make live, condensing elements of biopolitical, disciplinary, and sovereign power. Moreover, the appropriation of the *acción cívica* model by the Southern Peru Copper Corporation further complicates a typological approach. If the connections between the different technologies of governance—joining bullets to pills, military Generals to company Managers—happen by degrees, the question of what *kind* of power we are looking at seems less adequate than the question of how violence and care come to be enfolded in the varying techniques of governance that make up a hybrid assemblage at the margins of the neoliberal state.

I have thus far argued that state violence in the Tambo Valley—both during and after the militarization of the Tía María conflict—is experienced as contiguous with practices of care aimed at improving the health of a self-selected group of Valley residents, as with first, the civic actions of the Armed Forces, and later, the second wave of community outreach programs of the Southern Peru Copper Corporation. Though it is tempting to think of these circumstances as an example of biopolitics, two aspects of the situation do not seem to me to fit Foucault's conceptual outline, at least not exactly. For one, the healthcare campaigns did not exactly aim to

defend society from a threat in the biomedical sense that Foucault had in mind, nor did they produce statistics to render a "problem" population, although a few newspapers did publish articles citing vague estimates of attendees. Rather, as Señora Elsa and Señora Antonia's reflections suggest, the healthcare campaigns of the military and the mining company put Valley residents in a position of having to bargain basic services for consent to a large-scale extractive venture and to the extralegal methods thus far used to repress and criminalize dissent.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the geographer Alexander Dunlap has described this ambivalent dynamic by using the concept of corporate counterinsurgency. In this sense, the mine's healthcare campaigns and other community outreach programs, though not exactly an example of biopolitics, do share an important similarity with this mode of governance, which is an organizing split separating the possibilities that are deemed worthy of enduring from those that are not. Thus, the concept of corporate counterinsurgency denotes constellations of power, which enact care to generate consent and wield violence to defend an economic order. Adjacently, the concept of graduated sovereignty refers to the strategies of differentiation that determine the degrees to which different techniques of governance—based on repressive policing and social improvement—are deployed to regulate the conduct of a group of people.

In 1975, Michel Foucault famously argued that in the transition to modernity, the medieval power over life and death that kings once exercised through the bodies of their subjects was made obsolete by the rise of the prison. As a nexus for practices of incarceration and surveillance, the prison allowed concepts of criminality to take shape, and along with them, figures of the criminal. In this sense, the sovereign power of kings to torture or even destroy the bodies of their subjects, in order to produce an effect on their souls, was displaced—the story goes—by a disciplinary modality of power in which now "the soul is the prison of the body"

(Foucault 1995 [1975]: 29). *Discipline and Punish* (1975) renders the rise of a regime of governance where the prison becomes an organizing node for an array of discourses, practices, and materialities, which render the criminal as a figure of internal enmity and a problem that has to be made legible and intervened upon for the greater good.[lxxxiv]

Through this lens, the concept of the criminal emerges as an abnormal element, whose threat to society becomes imaginable at the intersection of various (often conflicting) discourses.[lxxxv] The arrangements of power and knowledge that piqued Foucault's conceptual interest did much more than control the people whom they grouped together as subjects of intervention, and thus conceived as abnormal or deviant populations. Rather, he observed how their power lay also in a more general capacity to produce authoritative knowledge for making people intelligible to themselves and others.

Disciplinary power, biopolitics, and governmentality are conceptualized as generative (rather than repressive) insofar as they produce effects at the level of how people organize their lives through discourses and practices that make the world knowable in a particular way, rather than through the exercise of physical violence.

The Foucaultian concept of biopower refers to a logic of governance that structures strategies of statecraft seeking to improve the biological lives of groups of people who are managed anonymously as aggregate populations through interventions that generalize judgements aboutwhich ways of being deserve support, and which pose a threat, to society from within. Foucault calls these distinctions racist, insofar as they introduce varying degrees of antagonism into the relation of the state to so-conceived 'problem populations,' as both subjects of anonymous care and unruly bodies that must be left behind in order for society to improve). In Foucault's sense, the word "racism" does not refer to racialization as we understand it today,

but rather the logic that enables "the elimination of the biological threat to and the improvement of the species or race" (2003: 256). That is, "racism" denotes a split between the possibilities that are worthy of enduring and those that are not, between "what must live and what must die" (*ibid.*: 254). Rhetorically voicing the binary reasoning that drives biopolitical interventions, so to make it explicit, Foucault writes, "we have to defend society against all the biological threats posed by the other race, the subrace, the counterrace that we are, despite ourselves, bringing into exis-tence" (*ibid.*: 61-2).[lxxxvi]

Consequently, the logics that form a racist system, as described by Foucault, are supremacist, but not exclusively white supremacist. That is, they are not solely or even necessarily connected to the histories of racialization that emerged to organize the control of land and labour in the colonial projects that fostered the rise of capitalism through enslavement and territorial dispossession (Anzaldua 2010 [1987], DuBois 2007 [1903], Fanon 2007 [1952], Iman Jackson 2020, Robinson 1983, Weheliye 2014). Though I do not find it necessary to use the word "racism" in the way Foucault does, I nevertheless see the importance of conceptualizing the links between the different dynamics of binary opposition, overvaluation, and abjection that he describes as "racist." To the extent that biopolitical interventions amplify some ways of living at the expense of others, the gesture of casting "the sick, the deviant, [or] the madman" as classes of people that are harmful to society can also be seen as a matter of internal enmity (*ibid.*: 83, see also 257).

Comparing the power of the biopolitical state to the power of medieval kings, Foucault notes that while the sovereign defends their land by taking life, biopower defends society by making citizens live and letting threatening elements die (*ibid.*: 241). As I understand it, a central point of Foucault's in making this often-noted comparison is to show that the Manichean

distinction between friend and enemy remains at play as a central organizing force in modalities of power, although the process of configuring and eliminating threats has become bureaucratized with the rise of modern statecraft. To different degrees, scholars influenced by Foucault have argued that this biopolitical logic amounts to a form of passive extermination, because in defending society (from itself) by abetting the wellbeing of those who are deemed fit, it leaves the rest to endure significantly more violence unsupported (Biehl 2013, Butler 2004, Povinelli 2011).

Turning her attention to the way this modality of power is experienced, Lisa Stevenson has observed that biopolitical interventions enact the fantasy that the mere existence of the life they configure as threatening diminishes the lives of society at large. Inversely, this implies that within the purview of a biopolitical imagination, the desire to live and its vitalistic expressions are "haunted by the other side of its binary logic" (2014: 196). In this sense, Stevenson understands Agamben's (1998) claim that those who are made to live and those who are let to die both live in a state of exception—pointing to the arbitrariness of this distinction. She writes, "when society is construed as that which must be defended from biological others—others who could contaminate the body politic—the line dividing those who must live and those who must die could shift at any moment" (Stevenson 2014: 196). In other words, both those who are harmed and those who benefit from biopolitical projects have some visceral knowledge that their relation is structured by figures of enmity and supremacist thinking.

Commenting on Freud's 1915 essay, "Our Attitude Towards Death," Stevenson suggests that biopolitical desire expresses a voracity for life, whose constitutive violence is both unsustainable and difficult to avow (2014: 196), thus enabling us to live "psychologically beyond our means" (Freud 2005: 193). To different degrees, biopolitical interventions treat

death as something that can be controlled (at least at the statistical level of a population), transforming the experience of loss—for those who are made to live—into a mere fact that can be asserted and debated in operational terms, yet largely recedes from view as a lived uncertainty (Stevenson 2014: 176). In this sense, for some to live beyond their means, others have to pay the bill, and biopolitics "establishes a positive relation between the right to kill and the assurance of life" (*ibid.*: 195). Stevenson thus draws our attention to the ways in which a voracious appetite for life can create different yet interconnected modalities of unfreedom, as the terrifying hold of biopower extends across the life-sustaining and death-dealing ends of biopolitical interventions. Rather than equate positions of privilege and oppression, I take this claim as a reminder that they emerge from the same shifting ground of intertwined disparities, the same "killing machine" (*ibid.*: 196) and are thus not strangers to the situated articulations of logics that make live by letting die.

According to this reading of Foucault, becoming a viable subject of biopolitical care entails a partial estrangement from the uncertainties of affliction and death, as well as some degree of knowledge that this relative well-being depends on the suffering of others. On the shadow side of biopolitics, those who come to be conceived as a threat to society are either subjected to anonymous care or conceived as undeserving of support, and thus exposed to a continuum of violence that can encompass environmental damage, precarity, and bodily harm. Though these positions are surely not equivalent, they are nevertheless brought together in a single psychic and material landscape, composed of both fantasy and fear. Fantasies of a good life and fears that some catastrophe or threat will strip the very possibility of these promises away stand alongside hopeful desires for inclusion and the terror of abjection and its consequences (Berlant 2011, Massumi 1993, Povinelli 2011).

Stevenson paints an ambivalent picture of biopolitical subjectivation, which raises serious doubts about even the best efforts to make others live, questioning whether seemingly uncomplicated affirmations of biological life can undo the embrace of this Abraxian monster. Without diminishing the importance of critical public health and accessible healthcare, the doubt Stevenson voices suggests that finding ways to enact care that can transfigure the impasses of biopolitical desire would entail reconfiguring our relationship to loss, grief, and mourning, rather than devising more effective ways of caring anonymously.

Let me bring us us back now to both Alan García's discourse of "the dog in the manger" and Carlos Aranda's claim that there was "something genetic" linking the "recalcitrant" residents Dean Valdivia, who overwhelmingly oppose the Tía María project, to the former head of the Shining Path, who once lived in this district. In different ways, both evocations of "terrorism" iterate a wounding picture of improvement, which pictures human communities on a linear trajectory advancing from savagery to civilization. How then might we understand this background?

Peru's Ambivalent Histories of Social Improvement

Paulo Drinot (2011) has argued that the biopolitical notions of internal enmity driving Peru's modern statecraft project evinced a concern with two discursive figures, which have played a leading role in organizing modern statecraft in Peru: the Indian and the communist.[lxxxvii] Drinot is careful to point out that these discourses did not represent Indigenous life or organized labour, but rather, configured visions of problem populations whose practices and ways of being ostensibly threatened Peruvian society from within. In turn, the so-called "Indian" question and

the threat of organized labour were problematized together as indices of "backwardness," which state programs dedicated to labour arbitration, worker housing, public healthcare, and food provision sought to extinguish (Drinot 2011: 49).

By examining the short-lived welfare programs of Augusto B. Leguía's (1919-1930) administration, Drinot argues that "Peruvian elites understood industrialization primarily as an embodied project of racial improvement" (*ibid.*: 3). As such, Leguía's labour state aimed to constitute a workforce both against the threat of communist sedition (*ibid.*: 100) and as an attempt to disappear Indians through assimilation into a project of statecraft that took care of their needs as workers (*ibid.*: 237).

Drinot's argument draws from Marisol de la Cadena's (2000) ethnographic research on Indigenous life amid the pressures of *criollo* (settler) race thinking in 1990s Cusco. De la Cadena's work examines how *criollo* discourses have constructed a racialized figure of the Indian through tropes of rural impoverishment that shifted from Spanish-colonial to English-liberal imaginaries over the course of the 19th century and came to be understood as antithetical to industrialized modernity by the beginning of the 20th.[lxxxviii] In that sense, Drinot and de la Cadena's research argue that modern projects of social improvement in Peru have operated on the understanding that the process of becoming a wage worker or a professional "de-Indianizes" the body politic.

Let me briefly give one example of how this figure then enabled the suppression of Indigenous and rural life in early 20th century Peru. De la Cadena's historical research attends in part to the work of Tawantinsuyu Committee for Indigenous Rights (*Comité Pro-Derecho Indígena Tawantinsuyu*), an Indigenous-led group which, in the 1920s, dedicated itself to pursuing collective land titling and literacy in Quechua-speaking communities. This second

point was not only an attempt to combat deceitful land acquisition schemes, but also to enfranchise citizens within a system of institutional democracy, which until 1969 restricted the right to vote to only those who could read and write. For scholars and intellectuals whose understanding of Peru's national reality was shaped by the figure of the Indian as denoting a pre-modern subject, the very idea of an Indigenous middle-class was largely unthinkable. In turn, the Committee's efforts were understood as a self-serving pursuit contrived by "abusive mestizos" and "fake Indians" rather than as a politics of Indigenous self-determination (de la Cadena 2000: 88). In other words, in Peru's liberal circles, the figure of the Indian expressed an evolutionist understanding of human difference, which made it possible to identify the abuse of *hacienda* owners who usurped communal lands, but not the political agency of Indigenous communities who did not wish to assimilate into *criollo* lifeways.

Adjacently, the literacy and land titling efforts of the Tawantinsuyu Committee were met by resistance from *hacienda*-owning elites in Cusco's provinces. In 1923, *hacienda* owners in the town of Haquira promoted the arbitrary detention of a teacher involved in the Committee's literacy campaigns, and shortly after lynched an Indigenous leader named Esteban Huillcapacco (*ibid.*: 112-113). As tensions escalated in the region, the figure of the Indian—this time under the aspect of savagery—made the grassroots protests against the violence of *hacendados* imaginable both regionally and nationally as a scene of "interracial war" (*ibid.*: 113) producing an ambivalent mix of pity and terror of rural communities (*ibid.*: 116). In this sense, de la Cadena (1988) argues that the figure of the Indian organizes both overt and covert forms of racism, which imagine a type of subject that is either inherently anti-modern, or contingently pre-modern, and thus open to improvement.

In the four decades between Leguía's administration and the Agrarian Reform, mutations

of the figure of the Indian continued to play an organizing role in constituting the Peruvian state and its margins at the crossing of three major pressures: the decaying *hacienda* system (del Pozo-Vergnes 2004, Matos Mar 1976, Smith 1989), emergent commodity booms in minerals and fishmeal (Wintersteen 2021), and the grassroots projects of urban development (*autoconstrucción*) that sought to supply the housing needs of internal migrants—a process that extended throughout the 20th century (Gyger 2019, Paerregaard 1997). Then, in 1969, the left-wing military General Juan Velasco Alvarado staged a coup to depose the centre-right government of Fernando Belaúnde Terry and subsequently enact the country's largest land redistribution program.

At the outset of the self-proclaimed Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces (*Gobierno Revolucionario de las Fuerzas Armadas*, 1968–1980), 0.2 percent of landowners possessed a substantial 72.9 percent of Peru's agricultural land (Cant 2021). Over the coming six years, Velasco's controversial policies (1968-1975) transferred 45% of these holdings to more than 330,000 rural families (of total 700,000) who did not own land and lived in indentured servitude (Saleth 1991). Furthermore, they also established production cooperatives, institutionalized a scheme for supporting grassroots mobilization, nationalized key industries, and strengthened the means by which Indigenous communities could exercise their rights to land (Aguirre and Drinot 2017, McClintock and Lowenthall 1983). Nevertheless, Velasco's government has also been criticized for attempting to avoid the stigma associated with the figure of the Indian by reconceptualizing Indigenous citizens as either "peasants" (in the Andes) or "natives" (in the Amazon), thus partially eroding the grounds for mobilizing Indigeneity as a political identity (Eguren 2015, Seligmann 1993). This does not imply that Indigenous communities did not have a practice of politics during or after Velasco's government, but rather,

that their demands were primarily framed in terms of their position as small-scale agricultural producers and not their commitments to self-determination or embeddedness in distinct modes of world making.[lxxxix]

In 1975, representing the interests of Peru's elites, General Morales Bermúdez deposed Velasco and established a right-wing dictatorship, which is sometimes called the "second phase" of the Agrarian Reform despite its efforts to dismantle Velasco's programs and even destroy documentation of their existence (Lynch 1992, Cant 2012). The government of Morales Bermúdez (1975-1980) regularly employed extralegal violence to silence its opposition, and began participating in Operation Condor as early as 1978.[xc] Under the command of Morales Bermúdez, the intensification of state violence and economic instability contextualized a transition to representative democracy, which was accompanied by 20 years of decentralized guerrilla warfare. In that sense, the wounding notions of improvement articulated in de Soto's so-called "economic answer to terrorism," and García's "syndrome of the dog in the manger" present us with a colonial-modern history of thinking savagery and civilization, which has been intensified and refracted by war. Likewise, Aranda's claim that there is "something genetic," which links the "recalcitrant" opposition to the Tía María project with nothing short of "terrorism" traces the extension of these tropes and the forms of violence they mobilize into the Tambo Valley.

At different points, Peru's ambivalent histories of social improvement evoke Tania Murray Li's (2007) research in post-Suharto Indonesia. In *The Will to Improve*, Li prompts her readers to consider that the experts embedded in the design and management of governmental assemblages are not necessarily heartless or unimaginative bureaucrats bent on profit seeking or territorial domination (*ibid.*: 9).[xci] To this end, she offers an ethnographic analysis of governance

practices that identify problems that need to be solved and render them technical, that is, delimit the domain of intervention, identify the factors to be measured and reconfigured, and devise a strategy for effecting a particular transformation.

A generous reading of Li's book must consider her concern with contesting the enclosures she perceives in previous critiques of development discourse (Ferguson 1994, Escobar 1995), which she does by steering away from a monolithic reading of development discourses which construes the will to improve as a cover story for plunder, and by showing how depoliticization can—paradoxically—become a condition for political practices rather than their truncation. Li's ethnographic attention to the enactment of development programs draws from Foucault's notion of governmentality, which describes techniques of liberal governance that—like biopower—are organized by a differentiating between that which is considered to bepart of a system and that which is a threat to its continuity. However, unlike biopower, governmentality points to techniques and discourses for regulating conduct that "exceed state action and orchestrate the subject's conduct toward him or herself" (Brown 2005: 43).[xcii] Extending the concept of governmentality in a more ethnographic direction, Li attends to the ways in which rationalities, discourses, and technologies of power become retextured and transfigured through their use at different scales and in real time.[xciii] Alongside this generous reading of Li's work, I also wish to note that the power of corporations remains in the background of her story, which focuses on the work of development agencies. This work does not address what becomes of the modes of governmentality defined by the will to improve under the aegis of corporate power.

By contrast, in *Encountering Development*, Arturo Escobar offers a detailed account of development discourses as the logic of an "apparatus for producing knowledge about, and the exercise of power over, the Third World" (1995: 9). Drawing on Foucault's concept of

governmentality, Escobar (1995) observes that in the wake of World War II, the assistance programs of the newly minted United Nations, World Bank and International Monetary Fund began to conceive of poverty as stemming from a lack of technology and expertise. In his analysis, the teleological view of progress at the core of development discourses organizing these institutions' approaches to poverty hinged on overlooking the connections between the processes of industrialization and economic growth in the so-called "First World" countries and the histories of dispossession in their former colonies (Escobar 1995). Consequently, recasting various situated histories of structural impoverishment as a single kind of problem, "underdevelopment," enables the rise of regimes of governmentality that construct poverty, hunger, and illiteracy as objects of expert knowledge. Across these assemblages, Escobar goes on to claim, "the term underdeveloped—linked from a certain vantage point to equality and the prospects of liberation through development—can be seen in part as a response to more openly racist conceptions of 'the primitive' and 'the savage'" (*ibid.*: 227).

In the Tambo Valley and in the wider context of extractive development in neoliberal Peru, contemporary discourses of improvement like the ones supporting the Tía María project cannot be disentangled from terror's talk and the country's post-conflict security apparatus. Seen in this light, it appears that the rise of the Tía María Conflict has mobilized Peru's ambivalent histories of social improvement through the strategy of *terruqueo*, thus establishing a regime of corporate counterinsurgency in the Tambo Valley, where the Southern Peru Copper Corporation provides care while the Peruvian police enacts repressive violence. Indeed, for many Valley residents—such as Señora Elsa and Señora Atonia—these forms of care and violence are experienced as a single constellation of power, an entity that asserts its presence[xciv] by perpetuating a Manichean distinction between pro- and anti-mining Valley residents—those

deserving of healthcare and those against whom the local and national economies must ostensibly be defended.

POINT OF DEPARTURE

Señora Antonia worried about Don Octavio's back and Josefina about her son's chronic bronchial problems, and as I mentioned earlier, their decision to forego the medical support offered by the mine was never really settled. When Don Octavio had pain, but his family had no medicine, he could hardly get out of bed. One morning in June, Señora Antonia asked me to help her steady him on the way from their house to the bathroom in the yard. Don Octavio let out small whimpers as we brought him into the living room, out the front door, down three steps into the yard, around the house and up a small incline to a small concrete outhouse. On the walk back, he began to weep. We did not speak, and in that silence his chronic pain became more resonant to me. That afternoon, still feeling the palpable impotence of the scene, Josefina and I picked up her son from the school in the next town over, stopping by a couple of different stores in search of dolo-neurobion or diclofenac. Having no luck finding either, we left Josefina's son with his grandmother and waited for one of the three *colectivos* to take us downriver to El Fiscal and then for another car to bring us to Cocachacra so we could stop by the pharmacies. It took us nearly three hours to get a few blisters of pain killers. How could the decision to forego the mine's pop-up clinic become a foregone conclusion for Señora Antonia?

I have been arguing that the Tía María conflict has indissolubly entangled the presence of the state and the mine, and consequently given rise to discourses that categorically separate Valley residents into pro- and anti-mining groups, which legitimize militarized repression. For

people who live with chronic afflictions—like Señora Francisca, Josefina, and Señora Marta (in Chapter One)—this ethical imaginary entails a transformation in their relationship with their neighbours, strengthening relationships that can contend with the ambiguity in the constant decision—to be made again and again—to access vital medical services or not amid violent and uncertain conditions.

CHAPTER FOUR:

"NO ONE IS FREE:" PORTRAITS OF THE STATE IN NEOLIBERAL PERU

In October 2009, Inés received a devastating phone call from a classmate at the studio in downtown Cusco where she used to take dance lessons after work. A young woman from their group had suddenly died in a household explosion and her grieving family could not afford to pay for the funeral on top of the home repairs and medical costs. They had recently taken out a loan to open a store on the ground floor of their house and with much of it yet unpaid, it was impossible to access more credit. Instead, they were going to hold a *pollada* on the day after the funeral. As I described in the previous chapters, in Peru, *polladas* are community-driven fundraisers where attendees purchase plates of fried or oven-roasted chicken to help the hosts cover an expense that would be otherwise unaffordable. Some of Inés' classmates volunteered to help the family prepare the meal and set up for the other guests. Inés could not attend the funeral or help with preparations on the eve of the *pollada* because she ran a restaurant from her apartment six days a week. However, she offered to drop her son off at the neighbour's on Sunday and lend a hand with the cooking on the day of the event.

Although there were at least three different accounts of the explosion, according to other dancers from the studio, the young woman's mother said that her family's terrible misfortune was caused by a grenade that her son had brought into their home after military service in the 1990s. While at first, Inés and her acquaintances did not question the family's narrative, once they learned that neither the police nor the Public Ministry were investigating the explosion, they began to doubt it. This chapter attends to Inés' loss, her capacity to inhabit the space of uncertainty opened by the competing narratives of the explosion, and to her photographic

glimpse of the young woman's mother on the day of the *pollada*.

Though *polladas* can cover a wide range of costs (associated, for example, with healthcare, education, community infrastructure, personal life projects and even grassroots organizing) the little research that exists on this form tends to frame it primarily as a "survival strategy" that mitigates material lack and generates social solidarity in moments of crisis (Béjar and Álvarez 2010). These works link *polladas* to general notions of Andean reciprocity (*ayni*), describe their festive atmosphere, and discuss their material history and changing cultural representation (Álvarez 2018, Cuberos-Gallardo 2020, Gastellu 1994). However, though these works convincingly show that *polladas* are a collective response to situations in which some aspect of life stands to be improved or impoverished, they overlook the specificity of these events as singular lived experiences. That is, they have not yet addressed what happens as participants come together to witness precarious thresholds in the lives of community members[xcv] and contend with pressing questions about the makeup and possibilities of their shared world.

On the day of the *pollada*, after a morning of preparing food, Inés, a few women from the dance studio, and their late friend's mother stepped into the family's yard for lunch, leaving another group of women in charge of the kitchen. They set out plastic chairs onto a plot of clumpy soil surrounded by a concrete wall, and as they shared a meal in silence, Inés was struck by a glimpse of her friend's mother, whose grief, exhaustion, and hunger made her "look like a stone, eating in the yard." After more than ten years of witnessing Inés's experience of the bewildering uncertainty pervading her friend's death, I have come to understand that her momentary glimpse of her friend's mother and the rumours pervading the *pollada* that day tell a non-forensic truth about the interplay between life and death at the margins of the state in

neoliberal Peru. Given that *polladas* enable Peruvians to collectively witness moments of uncertainty that uncover the possibilities at the thresholds of their social worlds, what can the rumours and images that travel through these events show us about the forms of power that emerge at the margins of the state in neoliberal Peru?

My doctoral fieldwork has thoroughly shaped my conviction that *polladas* can help us understand the relationship between self, community, and state in Peru precisely because they make participants present to moments of great uncertainty. Between 2016 and 2019, I conducted 19 months of fieldwork with a network of farmers, market workers, and activists affected by the effects of neoliberal governance on small-scale agriculture in southern Peru. Though a period of my research also brought me to Lima, I mostly worked in my home region of Arequipa, where I stayed in the provincial capital (moving between my grandmother's house and a rented apartment near the home of two food-stand workers at the Palomar Market) and in the Tambo Valley (where I stayed with a family of small-scale farmers who produced the rice sold at the stand). Throughout fieldwork, I attended *polladas* to support friends and acquaintances with the costs of healthcare, education, agrarian loans, and community-led campaigns against corruption. Additionally, working with community journalists at an AM radio station, I documented two *polladas*, which also received extensive coverage in other regional media.[xcvi] These events were held to purchase tomography equipment at a public hospital and to test the water quality in the Tambo Valley following spills from the tailings dam of the Aruntani Mine. At these different events, I was able to observe how *polladas* gathered hosts and attendees at moments of overwhelming uncertainty, making them present to scandalous possibilities at the limits of what they could claim to know for a fact.

This chapter of my thesis, however, focuses on Inés's story. First, as I have addressed in

the previous chapters, at the *polladas* I attended, the people who participated in my research were interested in discussing the techniques of governance shaping the situations they were facing. By contrast, as of 2023, Inés and her friends at the dance studio remain uncertain of *what* exactly caused the explosion that killed their friend, and this enduring uncertainty reveals a different experience of the interplay between life and death in a world made from the remnants of war. From Inés' perspective, whatever lay behind the explosion did not have a legible order. Instead, she experienced the forms of power that emerge at the margins of the Peruvian state through a personal loss and the image of another woman's grief.

Here, I am using this word image in the sense explored by Lisa Stevenson (2014) to talk about representations that convey the very being of what they denote, in ways that exceed linguistic formulation. Thus, rather than communicate a given meaning, an image can be said to extend a singular presence in ways that can haunt, accompany, and make or unmake the self (Mattingly and Grøn 2022). In the previous chapters, I explored images that constituted the psychic life of specific forms of governance. However, in this chapter, Inés' glimpse of her friend's grieving mother presents us with an image that is much more unruly as it evokes the destructive force of war in an ambiguous space of possibility, where it is not possible to distinguish between accidents and regimes of governance. Rather than viewing this lack of differentiation as insignificant, I argue that this experience of epistemic murk is crucial for understanding the state in post-conflict Peru. In this respect, let me be clear that I will not be discussing the explosion that took the dancer's life, but rather, focusing on what unfolded at the *pollada* as people gathered amid uncertainty to help her grieving family. Consequently, I am contending that the rumours circulating at this occasion and Inés' image of her friend's mother offer us a portrait into the nature of Peru's neoliberal state.

Second, retelling Inés' story allows me to return to a shaping moment in the history of the interests driving my research. I was twenty-one years old when Inés asked me to come with her to the *pollada*, and this was my first experience of any such event as an adult. I was born in Peru in 1988 and grew up between Lima and Arequipa until age eleven, moving between the homes of my parents who were divorced. Then, in December 1999, my father and I moved to the United States where parts of our extended family had been living since the mid-1970s. Due to complications with our immigration paperwork, I lived undocumented for all of my adolescence, unable to return to Peru. After nearly a decade, I decided to give up on a future in the United States and move to Canada instead, where my mother had been living since 2007. To apply for a Permanent Residency with her sponsorship required, I had to back to my country of birth, and that is how, in August 2009, I found myself in the strange-familiar situation of re-encountering my country after the war I had only partially known as a child.

In rereading the diaries I kept while visiting family and friends for a year before acquiring a Canadian residency, I found that for all the optimism that characterized mainstream narratives of national belonging and economic growth in the wake of the internal armed conflict (1980-2000), the shadows of violence that lined the years of my childhood had decidedly changed, but were not altogether gone. When I came back to Peru, nearly ten years after the war, the proliferation and increasing militarization of extractive conflicts once again placed the threat of internal enmity at the centre of public discourse, producing wildly divergent fears of the state's increasing authoritarianism and the return of internal warfare. These anxieties came to a head shortly before my return when, on June 5, 2009 the Peruvian state massacred Awajún and Wampis communities in the region of Bagua for protesting a Free Trade Agreement with the US that would facilitate the sale of Indigenous land in the Amazon. Throughout the conflict, Peru's

former President, Alan García Pérez (2006-2011), not only extolled the virtues of private investment and economic growth, but also stigmatized demonstrators by comparing them to terrorists. Less than a decade after the internal armed conflict, the mode of governance put in place during the regime of Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) was recomposing a landscape of wartime violence at a time of peace (Bourgois 2004).

Rumours, Memory, and Portraits of the State

On the day that she received the news of her friend's death, I came to see Inés because she had asked me earlier in the week to help her carry a batch of desserts to her neighbour's oven. When I arrived, she was finishing the batter for two cakes in the kitchen at the back of the apartment. She had mopped the living room floor, wiped the tabletops, and finished a batch of cornstarch cookies, or *maicillos*, which were laid out on baking sheets and left on the counter. We wrapped the baking sheets and cake pans in plastic bags and walked outside.

Our afternoon together was remarkably quiet, and it was not until a spring downpour held us up at her neighbour's house that she told me about the phone call. As we stood at the threshold of the room containing her neighbour's oven,watching the rain move across his yard, Inés told me about her friend's death using the epithet "my friend who used to dance" (*mi amiga que bailaba*) to speak of her with affection. Then, she asked me to join her at the *pollada*.

On Sunday, Inés and I took a minibus to the dancer's neighbourhood. As we drove in the sharp light of a cloudless morning, she told me what she had thus far been able to learnabout the incident. According to the dancer's friends at the studio, the explosion had been caused by a grenade. The dancer's brother, they explained, was drafted as a foot soldier in a border dispute

between Peru and Ecuador, which militarized the Cenepa River Valley between 1995 and 1998. After the young man's service, he was said to have pilfered a hand grenade and brought it home. For more than a decade, this grenade lay stashed among his things, sometimes mentioned, never seen, and nearly inconsequential until his younger sister found it while looking through his dresser for a pair of socks.

Once at the *pollada*, Inés went to the dancer's house while I stayed outside and helped the neighbours set up. Part of the cooking had begun the day before, after the funeral, when the dancer's family and a few of their closer friends cleaned and quartered the chicken and made a marinade. In the morning, the chicken was split into trays and brought to a bakery. When the first batch came back from the oven, at around ten, it was put in a large plastic container swaddled in wool blankets and wrapped in tarp to make a thermos. Then the baking trays were rinsed, refilled with more chicken, and sent to the oven again. Inés joined a group of women, who helped the dancer's mother peel and fry potatoes, boil corn, and make batches of hot sauce.

Speaking to other guests, we learned that a few days after the explosion, the complete absence of a formal investigation into the accident began to raise doubts about the story of the grenade, allowing contradictory descriptions of the explosion to circulate. After the *pollada*, Inés and I were both disquieted by the uncertainty surrounding her friend's death. Could a military grenade blow up in a civilian home without producing so much as a statement from the armed forces? Why had the police not secured the scene of the explosion for the Public Ministry to conduct a forensic analysis? Was the young woman's family lying about her death? These are devastating questions, which neither Inés nor I have been able to answer with absolute certainty. Some guests insisted that it was caused by the cylinders of cooking gas sold at the family's store while others attributed the explosion to a load of dynamite, insisting instead that the dancer's

family transported goods for illegal gold miners in the region of Madre de Dios.

I also spoke to a middle-aged man, who simply lamented the young woman's death, trying as much as he could to bracket the noise around it. He introduced himself as one of the family's neighbours, asked how I knew the dancer's family, and when I told him that I came with one of their daughter's friends, he accepted my presence with the words, "nobody is free." *Nadie está libre.* In Peruvian Spanish, this is a refrain commonly used to gesture to the ubiquity of misfortune, communicating a sense that painful things, like loss, can happen to anyone. Then, he asked for help setting up a couple of tent-like awnings for the coming crowd.

As we worked, he recalled the mother's grief the year her son was drafted, though according to Peruvian law, as the only male adult of the household, he was supposed to be exempt. In a way, he went on, it was a good thing for the family that the police preferred to simply overlook the incident, because in the end, the person who stood to lose the most in this situation was the dancer's brother. However neglectful and corrupt the war, it was ultimately he who took the grenade, and if the matter was brought under investigation, it would likely be administered by a marshall court. Perhaps, he went on, his family even had paid the police to keep things quiet. His eyes remained resolute, gazing into mine without any hint of tears, yet expressing something I can only describe as grief and rage. I did not know how to respond. Faced with my silence, he turned away, saying that whatever caused the explosion, it was terrible that the young woman's family had no money for the burial.

Farther up the street, someone was setting up two large speakers while a group of guests arranged their chairs into a large circle, leaving an open space in the middle of the street. A white street dog cut through the crowd—six black nipples visible through its coat, paws covered in mud—and headed to the storefront where someone had just brought the first trays of chicken

from the oven. By late morning, the street was filled with chairs from the neighbours' homes and many of the guests were ready to eat. When the first batch of chicken arrived, I joined the crowd outside the dancer's house, which in just a few minutes formed into a line leading to the storefront where a few people helped the soldier, her brother, serve the *pollada*. Was the story of the grenade true, or was the dancer's family lying about the young woman's death? This is not a question I can answer, but it is one that has continued to matter to me, although in different ways.

In the previous chapters, I examined how the space of death harrowed by the violence of the Shining Path during the internal armed conflict became part of a strategy of governance known as *terruqueo*. This strategy consists in making accusations that link grassroots activists to terrorist groups, thus evoking the overwhelming impact of the violence Peruvians experienced during the war, and displacing it onto social movements in the present day to justify their repression. While the experience I shared with Inés also confronted us with the violence of Peru's wartime past—the story of the grenade brought it crashing into the present—it did not place a specific conflict or technique of governance at stake.

In the years following the *pollada*, using a few photographs and entries from my diary, Inés and I reconstructed this landscape. Different visions of the explosion layered on top of each other like a jumble of pictures in a tumultuous dream—the unruly materialities of war at a time of peace, the grim and intimate outlines of a household tragedy, and the capillary presence of an illegal gold mining ring in the fabric of the neighbourhood. How should I listen to these overlapping stories? What do they show us about the ways in which Peruvians come to know the forms of power that constitute the neoliberal state? In this context, what does it then mean to take a few rumours and a glimpse of something as ways of experiencing the presence of the state?

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Questions of how we know and experience the forms of power that constitute the state are complicated, to say the least. In the previous chapter, when I turned my attention to the governance of the Tía María conflict at the intersection of a post-war state security apparatus and corporate community outreach programs, I found a chaotic array of practices, in which both welfare and violence were enacted around a privately funded extractive project, contingently understood as necessary for the public good. In this sense, contrary to the idea that modern states inherently embody reason and minimize violence in our daily lives (Elias 1982), the state continuously emerged from an unstable amalgam of contradictory practices of welfare and violence (Singh 2015). In this account, I drew from the works of Michel Foucault and his skeptical view of modern states in which he consistently deconstructed the idea that modern institutions served some uncomplicated advancement of human reason with which to order social life.

Foucault's complex perspective on modern governance has been adopted and adapted by historians like Irene Silverblatt (2004), whose works meticulously document how the institutions of modern states are shaped, put into practice, and experienced by people with specific historical contexts, values, biases, and vested interests. In doing so, Silverblatt convincingly observes that it is through these contingencies, rather than over and against them, that the state and its impersonal systems come into existence. For example, in *Modern Inquisitions*, Silverblatt examines the nexus between statecraft and race thinking in the early Spanish Empire by delving into the trials of Doña Mencia de Luna, Manuel Henríquez, and Manuel Bautista Pérez (1635-

1639), three persons brought before the Lima Inquisition under accusations of secretly practicing Judaism. While Silverblatt's analysis of colonial race thinking turns on a variety of sources, her efforts at giving "flesh and feeling to the abstractions of history" (2004: 23) focus on the ways in which the Inquisition's bureaucratic procedures enacted the impersonal rationality of blood lineage along the all-too-personal lines of Doña Mencia's rivalries.

Silverblatt describes her approach as "a 'state' portrait in relation to the power systems it legitimates" (2004: 11). In this chapter, I draw inspiration from Silverblatt's suggestion that understanding the structures of power that make up a state entails examining specific instances when a vision of the world bound up with their functioning becomes generalized. What makes Silverblatt's *Modern Inquisitions* imaginable as a portrait of a form of power is her attention to the conditions in which race was enacted as a lived reality through the trials of three out of the 110 people who were accused of secretly practicing Judaism in what became known as the "Great Jewish Conspiracy." Thus, rather than providing a general account of how discourses on blood and heritage shaped Christian subjecthood under the Spanish Crown, Silverblatt examines how these discourses were mobilized in a trial that established their truth through uncertain confrontations that put people's lives and interests at stake. In other words, focusing on rendering the experience, conditions, and consequences of a single exercise of power allows Silverblatt to draw attention to moments when the effects of an impersonal logic of governance were yet inchoate and therefore undecidable. This emphasis on tracing what becomes of a single situation, therefore, focuses on the impersonal truth organizing a project of governance precisely as it becomes most contingent and irreducibly personal.

In that sense, the way of seeing implicated in the acts of making or beholding a portrait differs from the optic of the representative sample, which works by taking a carefully chosen

group of people or items as an illustration of a bigger group or phenomenon. The difference I am trying to make is subtle, but important. While a representative sample is analytically pertinent because it can illustrate or reveal a larger pattern, the way of knowing that I am describing as 'a portrait' attends to the singular, not as a source of proof but as an enduring capacity to open new spaces of possibility. In this way, it partially resembles a mode of critical inquiry that Lauren Berlant associates with an open-ended vision of the case study as a scholarly genre. Berlant describes the genre of the case study as "a problem-event that has animated some kind of judgment" (2007: 663). While we might typically associate the word judgment with an assessment that something is "good" or "bad," Berlant here means something closer to a description that projects an implicit way of understanding. The mode of judgment enacted by the case study is ambivalent for Berlant because, although it can (and most often does) account for singular occurrences in order to recalibrate expert understandings of the general and the normative (*ibid.*: 664), it can also "incite… altered way[s] of feeling things out" (*ibid.*: 666), that is, openings to new ways of imagining and enacting the possibilities of a social world. In turn, Berlant argues that the case study's scholarly genre can be used to depict how singular occurrences put their very possibility conditions into play (ibid.: 670-671).

Thus, one important similarity between the ways of knowing enabled by the portrait and the case—as I am describing them here—is that they bring us closer to the singular and prompt us to cultivate a sensibility for what remains unresolved and for how these uncertainties matter. The representative sample seeks to reduce the singularities of a situation to either a mere instantiation of, or deviation from, a higher norm. By contrast, Berlant's notion of the case and my understanding of Silverblatt's notion of the portrait present us with modes of describing singular processes that foreground their indeterminacies, and the power of these openings to

incite altered ways of imagining and enacting their very conditions of possibility. Both practices express a wish to extend critical inquiry beyond a description of how a singular "problem-event" emerges within a historical context, namely, by attending to the uncertainties that paradoxically also exceed historical determination. In other words, Berlant and Silverblatt wager a view of singularity, which makes any object of inquiry not only more than can be encompassed by a methodological frame, but also more than the sum of its parts.

Let me continue by considering how a group of rumours can be seen as a portrait. To do this, I will take a detour through John Berger's thoughts on the act of drawing from life. In the following excerpt from *Bento's Sketchbook*, he describes the process of rendering a visual image from a model, that is, a person or an object:

> At first you question the model… in order to discover lines, shapes, tones that you can trace on the paper. The drawing accumulates the answers. Also, of course, it accumulates corrections, after further questioning of the first answers. Drawing is correcting.
>
> At a certain moment – if you're lucky – the accumulation becomes an image – that's to say it stops being a heap of signs and becomes a presence. Uncouth, but a presence. This is when your looking changes. You start questioning the presence as much as the model. (Berger 2011: 8)

Berger describes drawing as an accumulation of signs and corrections that eventually takes on a life of its own. For him, a drawing that becomes an image succeeds not only because it registers a model's likeness to some degree, but also because it fills a piece of paper with marks (of pencil, ink, canyon, pastel, etc.) that heaped together acquire a presence, and with it, the power to incite a way of seeing.

I want to suggest that in making communities' present in moments of uncertainty about not just what might become of an individual's life but also more broadly, what is possible in a

social world, the conversation at *polladas* and its recollection can resemble the process of accretion and correction described by Berger. In the previous chapter, while this was certainly a dimension of the conversations surrounding Señor Ignacio's robbery, I focused on how Valley residents sought to understand specific techniques of governance even when they did not know who, exactly, was implicated in their enactment. Here, however, from a position of nearness to Inés, neither of these questions could be discussed in such realistic terms. It is in this sense that I have come to think of the rumours that circulated through the *pollada* and of our subsequent recollections of the event as attempts to heap signs and corrections, which rather than portraying the explosion itself, at moments, rendered the presence of the post-war state.

In *Life and Words*, Veena Das (2007) provides a careful analysis of rumour in the wake of catastrophe, conceiving it as a mode of speech that produces the very events it denotes. Rather than dismiss these stories as baseless gossip, Das argues that rumours can "actualize regions of the past" whose emergent pertinence to the current moment gives them an unfinished character (2007: 102). This entails a process of radical recomposition, where a continuous flow of previous experiences is reinterpreted from within a landscape of present concerns, producing unruly connections as disparate temporalities spiral together into a single linguistic event. Veena Das' conceptual demand—to think of memory as taking possession of a collectivity through the indirect medium of rumour—asks us to "reconstitute the discourse of memory in the key of object relations" (Lambek 1996: 240), that is, to consider what it means to be possessed by memory, rather than to possess it as a bank of discrete souvenirs (ibid.: 246). Thus, Das suggests that we can understand rumours as *uncanny knowledge* of the relationship between the present and the past (2007: 110, 132), that is, a kind of mutant memory.[xcvii]

At the *pollada*, the story of the grenade raised the spectre of a border dispute, itself

embedded within an even broader period of turmoil from which the Peruvian state was remade. In the previous chapters, I have described a few parts of this landscape in terms of techniques of neoliberal governance (that emerged during the internal armed conflict) that extend wartime violence into the present. Here, though I do not know for sure if the explosion that killed Inés' friend was caused by a grenade, I argue that the rumours surrounding it nevertheless established a relation to the recent past as a register of collective experience. Talk of the grenade brought the (whole of the) past to bear on the present, revealing a social world whose certainties could yet be torn asunder by the afterlives of war.

Though the Cenepa Conflict only involved a two-month period of active combat (between January and February of 1995), it militarized the border until a peace agreement was signed in 1998. Like many of Fujimori's ostensibly successful undertakings, this dispute was eventually investigated for corruption. In 2002, the Congressional Commission on Economic and Financial Crimes Committed Between 1990-2001 (*Comisión Investigadora Sobre los Delitos Económicos y Financieros, CIDEF*) found that the president, the head of intelligence and many high-ranking military officials profited illicitly from the war by using emergency decrees to make fraudulent or overvalued purchases of military equipment. The Commission on Economic Crimes noted that in the span of a decade, the total amount spent by the Peruvian Armed Forces through these mechanisms surpassed 1,900 million USD (CIDEF 2002: 116). In spite of the lavish spending, the Commission also remarked that foot soldiers at the border, young men like the dancer's brother, endured willful neglect.

Whether or not a grenade from the Cenepa Conflict had indeed caused the explosion, the story of the dancer's family evoked profound doubt, which ultimately destabilized the ability of the community that gathered around them to say with certainty what happened. This uncertainty,

which was indeed precipitated and amplified by the absence of a police report, opened a gap between the sign of the grenade and what it denotes. In turn, this overwhelming doubt transformed the story of the grenade into an open-ended space of signification and decipherment (Stewart 1996). In this sense, the grenade—like the cylinders of cooking gas or the load of dynamite—became a polyvalent sign in a larger heap. What I mean is that the doubt surrounding the very existence of the objects that these words symbolize unsettled their conventional uses, transforming the words themselves into vehicles for the imagination to travel in underdetermined ways. For example, the grenade was ambivalently interpreted as a sign of two mutually excluding possibilities: the family's willingness to tell their community the truth (even at the soldier's risk), and their cunning capacity to hide the truth with a narrative that was both plausible and shocking.

Of course, it is possible to note that doubt regularly puts the imagination into play in ways that put our words beside(s) themselves (Stevenson 2014), and that we regularly use language in ways that draw us beyond its symbolic dimension and constative register (Das 2007). As I will discuss in more detail below, I am not arguing that the talk surrounding the dancer's death presents us with an exceptional failure of language to hold a shared sense of reality, but rather, that it is significant because it "amplifies" (Kohn 2013) something that is ordinarily at play. Moreover, the power of the "grenade" to undermine a community's attunements can also be understood contextually, insofar as it probed the tenuous relation between memory of the recent past and a sense of what is real in the present.

Thus, over the years, I have become interested in this swirling heap of signs, not only or primarily as an array of symbols comprising a given web of signification (Geertz 1973), but rather as a scene of collective improvisation, where signification did not privilege symbolic

representation (Moten 2003). In re-reading my diaries and revisiting these conversations with Inés over more than a decade, I have come to see that the widespread uncertainty regarding the story of the grenade weakened this word's capacity to assert a fact. Consequently, when talking about the explosion during and after the *pollada*, as intense doubt shifted our conversations from a constative to a passionate register, our attention to the communicative power of words moved beyond their symbolic dimension. Let me be a bit more precise. While the word "grenade" still pointed to a conceptual object, doubts over the existence of its material referent not only displaced the primacy of its symbolic use, but also rendered latent dimensions of the word as sign. The "grenade" became important for its capacity to disclose the intentions of the dancer's family, that is, to convey radically different pictures of their desires—and with it, different pictures of the world.

In this regard, talk of the grenade mimicked and extended the effect of a physical explosion into the space of a community's mutual attunements, not destroying them altogether, but bringing us into conversations that resemble the underdetermined mode of semiotic exchange the anthropologist Kathleen Stewart has described as a gaping sociality (1996). Ultimately, with this argument, what I am trying to show is how an overwhelming experience of uncertainty made our conversations resemble drawings, and that these "drawings," in a sense, depict the presence of the state.

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In 2003, Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission published its Final Report, a document which makes a small mention of the Cenepa Conflict. In addition to the corruption

schemes documented by the Commission on Economic Crimes, this new report observed that the Peruvian Army had drafted minors to fight at the border (CVR 2003 II: 368). Equally, it noted that in the wake of the peace agreements of 1995, Fujimori leveraged the boost in his approval ratings to pressure Congress to grant an amnesty to members of the army and intelligence services sentenced for human rights violations (*ibid.*: 369). In parallel, I must mention that though the work of the Truth Commission remains one of the most important steps in determining what counts as repair in the wake of warfare and authoritarian rule in Peru, its timing, limited resources, and the ongoing and profoundly agonistic character of reckoning with the effects of violence, have marked the search for transitional justice with significant gaps.[xcviii]

Today, the Cenepa Conflict remains a controversial example of Fujimori's appropriation and instrumental use of peacebuilding processes that his administration was ultimately either a small or no part in, which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission refers to as "triumphalism." Adjacently, the Cenepa War also presents us with an instance of corruption within the country's military elite, the full extent of which remains yet known. As such, it marks one of many limits in accounting for Peru's war-torn past and its disquieting continuities with the present. Cultural theorists working in Peru often use the term "memory battles" to refer to the confrontations between different visions of the internal armed conflict and Fujimori's regime, which are currently taking place at the margins of the country's inchoate transitional justice processes (Milton 2014, Taylor 2003, Vich 2015).[xcix] The historian Pablo Drinot has argued that these clashes not only legitimate radically different interpretations of the state's justifiable (if not technically "right") use of extralegal violence but ultimately establish divergent experiences of the relationship between cultural memory and reality (Drinot 2009).

Returning now to the *pollada*, it seems to me that in this context of partial and contested

accountability, the story of the grenade traced the limits of a shared sense of reality. In this situation, the symbolic capacity of the word "grenade" to denote an object was displaced by an uncanny ability to bring the force of a fractured past[c] crashing into the present, provoking competing visions of the world and of the family's intentions.

I want to pause briefly and return to the claim that the rumours surrounding the explosion are, in a sense, a portrait of the state. Though the cylinder of cooking gas still remains too enigmatic for me to approach it in more detail here, I can briefly touch on the loads of dynamite. In 2009 and 2010, when I came back to Peru for a year after living in the states since 1999, I traveled across Lima, Arequipa, Cusco, and Madre de Dios to visit friends and family, whom I had not seen in nearly a decade. During this time, I spent about a month and a few weeks with relatives who lived at the border between Peru and Brazil, along the roadway linking both countries. About a year before its completion, the Inter-Oceanic Highway was featured frequently on nationwide news and regularly found its way into everyday conversation across the different regions of southern Peru I was able to visit. However, of all my diary entries, it is the ones from Iñapari that tell me the most about the ambivalence with which people spoke about the highway, figuring as both a manifest sign of the progress enabled by economic growth and a conduit for graft, deforestation, and illegal mining.

As Penelope Harvey and Hannah Knox (2015) have suggested, this ambivalence goes far beyond the highway itself, such that the construction of massive infrastructural projects also materializes a wider array of concerns about the possible costs of the neoliberal policies designed to stimulate rapid economic growth.[ci] Similarly, for many working- and middle-class Peruvians, the wealth that people made during the years of Peru's so-called Economic Miracle[cii] became an ambivalent object of both hope and dread (Cánepa Koch and Lamas Zoeger 2020, Pajuelo 2023).

In 2013, 2017, and 2021, when Inés and I found ourselves once again talking about the *pollada* and the rumours surrounding her friend's death, she suggested that perhaps the attempts of the dancer's family to enlarge their store may have coloured their acquaintance's suspicions.

In the next section, I turn to a moment in my conversations with Inés when our conversation turned to her own experience at the *pollada*, where—amid the rumours surrounding the explosion—she turned her gaze at the dancer's mother. The two women did not know each other, and they exchanged very few words at the event. However, this glimpse stayed with Inés, and later, with me.

Imagining a Glimpse

Four years after the dancer's death, Inés and I spoke about the day of the *pollada* in more detail. It was a weekday night in July 2013. Inés had just moved her business from the front room of her semi-basement apartment to a food stand in one of Cusco's markets, and after she closed the stall, we walked to a nearby bakery and took a table on the second floor. A dry winter breeze blew through a cracked window. Over two cups of tea and a plate of *alfajores*—round pieces of shortbread encasing a dollop of milk caramel—Inés began to tell me about her new work arrangement. She was relieved that it gave her teenage son more space at home, but it also added to the expense of running a restaurant and strained her finances. Having taken out a loan to make the transition, she feared finding herself unable to pay her bills at slower times of the year, or even worse, facing emergency expenses she could not afford. These concerns brought us meanderingly back to the day of the *pollada*.

Evidently bewildered at the contradictory stories of her friend's death, Inés exclaimed,

"Alonsito, if it's true, it's unbelievable, and if it's not true, it's also unbelievable" (*Alonsito, si es cierto, es increible, y si no es cierto, también es increible*). Her words brought an uncertain past precipitously into the present, linking together our current conversation to the *pollada* and the *pollada* to the explosion. Shaken by the force of this "chain of reactions extending in time and space… from one subject to another" (Gandolfo 2009: 37), I asked Inés what she thought caused the explosion. A wince passed across her face as she said, "I don't know. I only know that nobody is free."

Then, following her thought with an image, Inés described a memory of the dancer's mother on the day of the event, as the work of holding things together and the work of mourning cut into each other, making her appear as if she were made of stone:

> Since the morning, I had only eaten a roll of bread with butter and a cup of tea. In the afternoon, [at the *pollada*] when they gave me my plate, I was already hungry. Some of us ate in the *Señora*'s yard, where she was eating too, and looking at her, I thought, "[with] the funeral, [and] the work, the *Señora* must be tired." She had become a stone. She looked like a stone, eating in the yard. I was looking at her and thinking, "there's still so much work for later! Is it like this? Is life like this?"

To me, Inés' words suggested that the bewildering noise pervading her friend's death and the embodied presence of the mother that survived her—aggrieved and isolated—showed her something she had not yet known about the vulnerability of life in a world made from the remnants of war. Her description moves from her hunger to her gaze, passing through an observation that takes the form of a theatrical aside, a direct address asking me—us—to imagine how the grief shaping hunger in this scene was placed within particular tracts of embodied time. I want to pause over this scene and attend carefully to both its movement and to the plea that follows it.

Hearing that Inés only ate a buttered bread roll for breakfast before going to the *pollada* evoked for me a rushed scene of departure that morning, before dropping off her son at the neighbour's house, linking her hunger to a particular experience of time. That afternoon, we left the event at around three because Inés had to do the laundry and clean the apartment before starting another six-day week. Slowing down around these details, it is possible to see how Inés was turning herself into a means for imagining another woman's grief, not by merely claiming her own exhaustion as a measure of the devastation felt by her friend's mother, but by inviting my thoughts and feelings into a time beyond the frame—*so much work for later*, and so much work before.

Hours before the funeral, the dancer's mother went to the market to pay for the ingredients that she would pick up after coming back from the cemetery. Preparing a *pollada* is a laborious ordeal. It begins with buying a large number of chickens, which are relatively small and have only been partially cleaned, thus fetching a lower price per kilo at the stand. On the eve of the event, people gather to wash and split chicken into quarters before placing the pieces in brine. After the funeral, a group of neighbours and friends helped the dancer's mother bring the groceries to her house, and for the rest of the evening, she was immersed in a rhythm of work that relies heavily on a person's sensory attunements. The brine for a *pollada* is made with *ají panca*, a mild pepper known for its smoky and subtly sweet flavor reminiscent of ancho chiles or urfa bibir. It can contain garlic, cumin, oregano, vinegar, oil, beer, salt, and black pepper, and depending on the cook's taste, its appeal lies in maximizing the chili's earthy qualities without losing its floral undertones.

In remembering the moment when she was struck by the impression that the dancer's mother had been turned into a *stone that eats*, Inés carried our conversation from the realm of

rumour into the realm of paradox, that is, to the scandal of an intimate stranger's grief over a violent loss. I know that the figure of a person being turned to stone is a well-known trope for representing the diminishment of a person's responsiveness to the world in the wake of unbearable violence often evoked by a person or community who cannot imagine the person's existence empathetically, as is the case with Cavell's reading of *Othello* and *A Winter's Tale* (1999 [1979]) or Ann Cvetkovich's (2003) reading of Leslie Feinberg's *Stone Butch Blues* (1993). Here, the impassiveness of the stone can be contrasted with the passionate vengefulness of the dog, another trope for what can become of a person who is terribly wronged, one exemplified, for instance, in Martha Nussbaum's reading of *Hecuba* (1986). A wound that rather than prick the bearer to make something out of nothing, goads them to make nothing of the world (Cavell 2005). Ines' description seems to gesture to changing shades and degrees rather than a wholesale transformation. A stone that *eats*, rather than a *stone* that eats. In this sense, it stands less as a trope or figure than an image.[ciii] Moreover, rather than reach a conclusion, it introduces a question, inviting me into her doubt and asking for a response. *Is life like this?*

The details hurt, but—it bears to ask—whom? Whose pain makes itself known in these words, and how is that happening? In this section, I want to make a slightly different space for imagining Inés' glimpse as it is carried by her words.

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Famously, Veena Das's research on violence and subjectivity is framed by the claim that our knowledge of human suffering is both ethical and epistemic (Das 1996, 1998). For instance, in *Life and Words* (2007), Das explores how catastrophic events continue to shape the everyday

lives of people who survived abduction, rape, and massacres during both the Partition of India in 1947 and the riots against Sikhs in Delhi in 1984. Ethnographically, this project centres the ordinary efforts of various interlocutors to reinhabit a shared life after sundering scenes of violence, returning frequently to a concern with the expression of pain and the conditions in which it can go unseen. In her analysis, Das observes that lived experiences of suffering have a precarious standing in language, and notes that this liminality is internal to the very meaning and use of the concept of pain, part of its grammar. Thus, to voice one's pain is less like reporting a fact and more like making an appeal or demand for an interlocutor to extend their embodied imagination in one's direction. At moments when the pain of others becomes unimaginable (for example, is explicitly refused, or goes largely unnoticed), Das insists anthropologists must "beg, borrow, steal, or invent new words or tones of words" (2022: 162-3).

Thinking about Inés' description of the dancer's mother, I cannot help but wonder how to speak about such acts of borrowing, stealing, and inventing, when the temporalities of contact that make them possible are both intimate and much-too ephemeral (Dave 2014, Krauss 2019)?[civ] Thinking through this question, I have come to appreciate Inés' ability to improvise an eye for detail in such a dense atmosphere.

In the previous section, I established the specific force of this uncertainty by focusing on how the story of the grenade evoked the afterlives of war. This means that each possible alternative alongside the grenade entailed somewhat different stakes. As per my conversation with the middle-aged man who asked for my help setting up tents for people to eat in the street, if the explosion was caused by a grenade, then the *pollada* was not only helping the family rebuild their house, but also to make an extortion payment. If it was caused by dynamite, then the doubts about the family's relationship to an illegal mining network would raise the same questions about

the police. Lastly, if it was a cylinder of cooking gas, then it was not the tragedy, but the stories around it, that became the focus of doubt.

For Inés, the uncertainty surrounding her friend's death was not only a matter of truth concerning the relationship between neighbours and the state, but also a question of fidelity in a relationship with a friend. Despite knowing the dancer to be a joyful person, only knowing her in the context of the dance studio made Inés wonder if something had been amiss, which she simply had not seen. It is possible to interpret this thought as an example of the guilt a therapist might quickly identify as a proxy for grief, but doing so would explain Inés' experience away, rather than help us appreciate the shift from doubt to detail.

In "After the Fact," the anthropologist Michael Jackson (2017) attends to the experience of finding oneself unable to become increasingly responsive in one relationship without betraying an important commitment to another. Jackson then suggests that the precarious work of holding an adequate tension between the two, rather than amounting to an overly partial engagement marked by lack, can be understood as an effortful and terrestrial picture of fidelity, enabling rather than precluding connection (2017: 58). Thus, he argues that such experiences of pathlessness paradoxically give ground to what he calls a negative capability "to live without certainty, and to find the practical means of going on—shelter, food, water, and succor" (2017: 61). In some ways, Jackson seems to be describing what Laurent Berlant (2011) calls an impasse and characterizes as a situation marked by the absence of a teleological progression towards an attainable goal. Like Jackson, rather than casting the impasse as an absolute truncation of agency, Berlant uses the term 'elliptical living' to describe a range of non-teleological activity and attunement (2022). One significant difference between both concepts is that while Jackson uses the concept of aporia and negative capability to think about fidelity and interpersonal

relationships, Berlant uses the concepts of impasse and elliptical living to think about the experience of inhabiting a social world.

Inés confided in me that on the day of the *pollada*, after hearing the different stories surrounding her friend's death, she felt fear to learn that there was no police report. The conspicuous non-involvement of the police made it feel like there was very little she could do to help clear up the murk. She did not know the dancer's family and had no time to do so. It was unclear whether going to the newspapers would be effective or even responsible. Meanwhile, she feared that speaking to the police could risk exposing herself, her son, or her friend's family to violence. Like the dancer's neighbours and friends, the most she could do was listen to the stories people told, ask them what they thought, and maybe watch. And this felt like a betrayal to her friendship.

For her, then, the experience of aporia meant settling into an uncertain interval in the ethical space between two paths, neither taking charge of the murk surrounding her friend's death, nor forgetting it. Though it has taken me years to appreciate this, the texture of Inés' aporia, and so also the complicated fidelity and betrayal of her friend, is neither the same nor categorically distinct from the act of turning a blind eye. For Inés, who was grieving her friend, turning a blind eye to the murk surrounding her death was nothing short of wounding. Even if she could not do otherwise. It's from within this landscape of uncertainty that a detail revealing the pain of the young woman's mother entered her gaze. Here, I feel compelled to account for the way "a glimpse can be enough" (Taussig 2011: 125), so long as it is treated as the perpetual beginning of an effort to discover "the truth of [an] experience" (ibid.: 20) rather than a step "toward the Greater Truth of [an] Abstraction" (ibid.: 49).

In July 2006, on a cab ride through Medellin, the anthropologist Michael Taussig caught

a glimpse of a group of people lying down on a narrow strip of road along a freeway tunnel, among them, a woman who seemed to be sewing a man into a nylon bag. Unable to stop, Taussig glimpsed at the tableau and asked the driver, "why do they choose this place?" To which the driver replied, "because it's warm in the tunnel." Days later, he drew the tableau in his notebook, followed by the phrase, "I swear I saw this," perhaps marking the lack of a standing language for what he would later call, "horror," noting its scandalous movement to "banality" (ibid.: 70).

The circumstances of Taussig's encounter, however, do not fit the notion of a faithful and rational report that undergirds conventional notions of ethnographic knowledge (Paper Boat Collective 2017: 18). On the contrary, Taussig admits that he cannot always name the objects of his inquiry in advance of encountering them in the field and coming to understand them, piecemeal, through further writing (Taussig 2011: 48-9). Thus, Taussig contends that the stories anthropologists are given and participate in comprise ethnographic knowledge, not as information to be elaborated into an ironclad argument, but as sites that allow a reader to "inhabit" a region of reality (ibid.: 145) as it is imagined by another (ibid.: 52).

When Taussig writes that "a glimpse can be enough," he means enough to open up a gap between the presence of a thing and its life in language, producing a disruption that stays, "if not in memory then in the body" (ibid.: 125), enough to mark a point of departure for a possible story. As a storyteller, Taussig seems to suggest, the anthropologist is not an exceptionally reliable narrator, but rather, one that descends with exemplary courage into the uncertainty of the situations that come before them, attempting to make imaginable precisely things that most feel need to be avoided, eradicated even, "but not thought" (Stevenson 2015). In this sense, the words, "I Swear I Saw This" can be understood as a paradoxical mark of Taussig's wordlessness, and as such, the beginning of an investigation into the conditions of his experience at the

moment of witnessing a violent scene of enclosure.

Taussig's horror at the sight of the bodies lying down along the freeway does not come merely from the lack of an explanation, though it is deepened by it. Instead, his "fear and… astonishment" are expressed in his inability to speak about the tableau directly (2011: 5). He asks "why do they choose this place?" as if he already knows what the place has been chosen for, thus betraying his fear of finding out. When the driver says, "because it's warm in the tunnel," the evasiveness (or nonchalance) of his response deepens Taussig's sense that the scene of enclosure they have just caught a glimpse of can both be on display yet go unnoticed. This is what Taussig has no standing language for, the experience of horror that sustains that relation. However, despite his avoidance as the fleeting encounter unfolds, something stays.

For both Taussig and Inés, a glimpse is enough for the possibility of knowing something. But how can we talk about the exchanges that are taking place in both scenes, and moreover about what is going on when they are written or relayed in conversation? To begin thinking through this question, I will turn to Lisa Stevenson's methodological observation that acknowledging an embodied experience of the world amid uncertainty demands "an attention to the images through which we think and live" (2014: 10).

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In *Life Beside Itself*, Stevenson (2014) thinks across two moments in Canada's history where public health interventions shaped the relations between state institutions and Inuit communities in the Arctic. The first, between the 1940s and 1960s, sought to contain the spread of tuberculosis, and the second, which began in the 1980s, sought to address suicide. Across both

contexts, Stevenson unpacks the relations between bureaucratic and Indigenous forms of care, describing experiences of uncertainty that arise between biopolitical concerns with physiological life and an intimate attention to the presence of others, even after death. In this context, her ethnographic attention to the images that give thinking and living form, strives to make imaginable how the violence of bureaucratic care is experienced and what it means to say that presence can both elicit and enact care (Mattingly and Grøn 2022).

While the word "image" may primarily call to mind a range of visual objects, such as photographs, films, and drawings, I want to use it here in the sense rendered by Stevenson's work, where it refers to signs that articulate the presence of things in ways that outstrip linguistic formulation. Alongside visual images, then, we can talk about images that manifest in dreams, sensory experiences, and particular technologies or practices. This implies that this concept of the image can encompass, for example, a soundscape and its elements or the way tone communicates feeling, and even the ineffable specificities that can help us "identify a familiar voice coming out of the blue" (Berger 2011). Across these different examples, images work by establishing a "'real relation' between the signifier and the signified" (Taylor 1996: 79), sometimes by way of a mimetic resemblance or likeness, sometimes because a representation bears traces of what it represents, and sometimes a mix of both.

Thus, one way to think about what makes an image work as an image rather than another mode of representation (such as a symbol, trope, or figure) is its capacity to "[drag] the world along with [it]" (Stevenson 2014: 11). Let me unpack what I mean by saying a bit more about photographs, which—because of their ubiquity—can offer an intuitive starting point for discussing the character and significance of these connections. To different degrees, in writing about this medium, photographers and cultural critics contemplate the way photography

dramatizes the connection between a picture and what it depicts (Barthes 2010 [1980], Bazin and Gray 1960, Cavell 1979, Campt 2017, Goldin 1986, Wenders 2011, Wolukau-Wanambwa 2022a, 2022b). Among these theorists, Andé Bazin and Hugh Gray were among the first to argue that the objects portrayed in a photograph are not just copies of the world but rather, extensions of it. In a short but influential article titled, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," Bazin and Gray argue that unlike painting, photographs place the very things they *re*-present in front of the viewer, extending their being because the automaticity of the medium can efface the hand of the image maker (1960: 7-8).

As the philosopher Stanley Cavell (1979) perceptively observes, Bazin and Gray's anxiety that the painter's hand can "cast a shadow of doubt over the image" (1960: 7) voices an underlying assumption that individual subjectivity is supposed to be eliminated from the process of representation in order to get a picture of things as they are. Cavell points out that while photography and film *do* appeal to a longing to overcome the isolating doubts that can assail a partial perspective, they cannot give us a view from nowhere. Instead, he suggests, what they can do is allow us to inhabit a view of the world. Nevertheless, both philosophers are fascinated by the realization that a photograph "crops a portion from an indefinitely larger field" thus indicating the "presence of the rest of the world" beyond the frame (ibid.: 24). In other words, a photograph implies that a camera was once present in the world as it is shown in the image.

Attentive to this insight, the visual anthropologist Lucien Taylor goes on to argue that the indexical character of photographic and filmic images means that they are "permeated by the world," including (contra Bazin and Gray) that of photographer or filmmaker (1996: 75). Like Cavell, who observes the relevance of the photographer's choice to "[hold] the rest of the world away" (1979: 24), Taylor also sees the presence of the filmmaker in the countless practical

decisions that make a sequence (1996.: 89). In this sense, photographs can be said to drag the world along with them, turning each picture into a medium for the presence of more than what it visibly displays, for example, showing not just the things in front of the camera, but the desire for them (Wenders 2011: 9).

A sensibility for the indexical character of photography is at the heart of Roland Barthes's (2010 [1980]) *Camera Lucida*. Originally published in 1980, this book is a two-part examination of the medium, which advances a theory of the photographic image by linking together descriptions of his experience of particular pictures. The latter half traces Barthes' search for a "just image" of his mother shortly after her death, that is, the search for a photograph that would evoke the specific tone and timbre of her presence (ibid.: 70). In turn, the first part of the book gathers language for describing the relationship between presence and representation as it happens in the photograph.

Perhaps one of the most influential insights elaborated in this section is contrast between the *studium* or context of an image, and the *punctum*, or the striking, sometimes even wounding detail that brings the world of the photograph suddenly alive, leaving the viewer wordless or in the thrall of passionate speech. Barthes uses the term *advenience* to describe the attraction that a photograph can exercise on a spectator at moments when a detail brings the image alive by touching the viewer with the irreducibly singular presence of something or someone in the image (ibid.: 19). Though Barthes is moved by different kinds of details as he makes his way across a wide range of photographs, let me give a couple examples of the form of encounter he calls *advenience*.

The first is an image of Queen Victoria by G. W. Wilson (1863), which shows her riding a horse in a hooded coat and a large skirt that drapes over the side of the animal. A man at the

left of the frame holds the horse's headgear. Struck by the gesture, Barthes writes, "what if the horse suddenly began to rear? What would happen to the queen's skirt, *i.e.*, to *her majesty*? The *punctum* fantastically 'brings out' the Victorian nature… of the photograph, it endows this photograph with a blind field" (ibid.: 57). The second is a self-portrait by Robert Mapplethorpe (1975). It shows almost half of his naked torso leaning into an empty frame from the left as he faces the camera and stretches his arm across the picture, looking at something behind the viewer's right shoulder. In turn, the viewer can see how the bags under Mapplethorpe's eyes inflect his smile, notice his tousled hair, his left nipple and how the curve of his shoulder muscles shape his armpit. In reflecting what makes this photograph erotic rather than pornographic, Barthes writes, "the *punctum*, then, is a kind of subtle *beyond*—as if the image launched desire beyond what it permits us to see… towards the absolute excellence of a being, body and soul together" (ibid.: 59).

Across these examples, *advenience* names the photograph's power to cast the spectator's desire into a blind field where it encounters the presence of something the image holds but does not visually display, producing the experience of the *punctum*. I want to say that Barthes is presented with the apprehension and blitheness of Queen Victoria and Robert Mapplethorpe as they face the possibility of exposing their bodies to the camera. However, as I try different ways of writing this thought out, I cannot shake the feeling that my words are approaching something they cannot reach. Depending on how one reads him, it is possible to understand that as Barthes faces a similar gap, he realizes that his desire can go where his words cannot, as it is launched past them and into the presence of what the photograph can make present to him (through it). In this interpretation, desire is not merely a subjective or interior state, but rather a medium for the presence of things in the image.

If we understand Barthes' remarks about the "blind field" of the photograph to outline a viewing practice, then *advenience* names a mode of address, which brings the viewer's desire into contact with an unexpected presence, establishing a relation whose outcome cannot be anticipated in advance. What makes this address different from interpellation in the Althusserian (1971) sense is its oblique relation to language. Though desire and the body are shaped by what we say, Barthes' appeal to the gap between our understanding of context and our experience of what shows up in a particular scene can be taken to suggest that these connections are partial. Seen in this way, the gesture of foregoing further explanation is meant to hold ground for the evocative power of an indexical image to cast the viewer's desire beyond their capacity for sense, and to let itself be touched by the presence of things that are irreducibly singular and for which there is no standing language. Thus, Barthes' descriptions of the photographs in *Camera Lucida* can challenge us to grapple with the difficulty of treating the spectator's desire as two things are once: both a medium for rendering the forms of presence carried by an image, and an orientation or learned disposition to objects and others (Ahmed 2006). One possible takeaway of this reading is that photographs not only bear traces of the gazes that make them (Gamarra and Trischler 2021, Lutz and Collins 1991) but also reveal the viewer's desire for what and whom they show. In this view, the *punctum* emerges as integral to the exercise of a viewing practice that can both make the world present in ways that touch us yet escape our grasp, and teach us that "our viscera have been taught and are teachable" (Berlant 2011: 159).

But is this what Barthes is saying, or is this what I have learned from reading his work more than three decades after its publication, and in the company of much more contemporary texts? Does my reading render a strain of his thinking, or does it obscure its violence? And how does an answer to these questions and a reading of Barthes come to bear on a reading of the

image, and on my experience of Inés' glimpse as she put it to words?

Drawing on previous critiques (Moten 2003, Silverman 1996, Campt 2012, Beller 2018), the photographer and theorist Stanley Wolukau-Wanambwa (2022a) has argued that Barthes uses the concept of the *studium* to claim an unmediated access to the image and imbue an ultimately solipsistic view with the status of a universal truth. At stake for Wolukau-Wanambwa is how Barthes views a history of colonial expansion and enslavement, and a central image in his analysis—though not the only one—is Richard Avedon's portrait of William Casby, taken in Algiers, Louisiana on March 24, 1963. The photograph was originally taken for the book *Nothing Personal* (1964), where Avedon's work was set alongside four essays by James Baldwin, making a compound image of life in the US as its constitutive passions were roiled by debates over the Civil Rights Bill that John F. Kennedy would present to Congress in 1963. Casby's portrait is placed exactly in the middle.

He gazes unflinchingly into the camera, letting the viewer see the wisps of white hair on his head, his fading stubble at the end of his long, angular jaw, the creases along his mouth, and the landscape of creases stretching across his eyes, then clashing into the peak of a slightly furrowed brow. The composition draws my attention to his eyes, which reflect Avedon's outline underneath what appears to be a thin band of sky. The caption on the adjacent page reads, "William Casby, born in slavery / Adlai Stevenson, Representative of the United States to the United Nations." Underneath it, at the bottom right-hand corner, there is an image about a quarter the size of Casby's. It shows a stern man against a grey background, at a slight angle from the camera. His eyes are matted. One of them is obscured by the shadows on his face. The other one looks sideways, away from the camera, at something outside the frame. Casby was born in 1857, six years before the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 and two years before the

end of the US Civil War.

In describing his response to Casby's image, Barthes writes, "the man I see here has been a slave: he certifies this not by historical testimony but by a new, somehow experiential order of proof—a proof no longer merely induced" (2010 [1980]: 79–80). Here, Wolukau-Wanambwa notes that Barthes turns away from a historical reading of slavery, and instead substitutes a personal memory. The relevant excerpt from Barthes text reads:

> I remember keeping for a long time a photograph I had cut out of a magazine—lost subsequently, like everything too carefully put away—which showed a slave market: the slavemaster, in a hat, standing; the slaves, in loincloths, sitting. I repeat: a photograph, not a drawing or engraving; for my horror and my fascination as a child came from this: that there was a certainty that such a thing had existed: not a question of exactitude, but of reality: the historian was no longer the mediator, slavery was given without mediation, the fact was established without method. (Barthes 2010 [1980]: 80)

Noting that Barthes does not see slavery to be similarly at stake in Felix Nadar's photograph of Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza (who governed France's Central African colonies from Libreville, present-day Gabon), Wolukau-Wanambwa claims that when Barthes writes about the trace of slavery in Casby's photograph, he is not describing "a field of broken relations between people" as much as "an ontological condition that inheres… in Casby's flesh" (2022a: 8).

I am not after a redemptive or condemnatory reading of Barthes, as much as I wish to describe a way of thinking about images that lets us acknowledge the role of desire as a medium for rendering the presences particular representations can carry and charge us with. Wolukau-Wanambwa's critique raises a concern I do not want to avoid: does the concept of the *punctum* allow Barthes to assert control over photographs by imposing a solipsistic narrative that is

exterior to them, or does it help him render the experience of giving his embodied imagination over to an encounter with a latent presence on the backside of the image? Bibliographically, how one thinks about this question will depend on how one accounts for a series of small but important issues in *Camera Lucida*. For example, whether Barthes' refusal of mediation and method (2010 [1980]: 80) are meant to encourage a reader to respond to the image by letting their desire be cast into the blind field of a photograph, or to dismiss the plea for an education on the context that constitutes what and whom an image makes present. Or—to suggest only a second example—whether Barthes' refusal of historical authority asserts something like "the impossible science of the unique being" (*ibid.*: 71) or an overbearing claim to know "truth and reality without mediation" (Wolukau-Wanambwa 2022a). But what would it mean to carry the concerns of Wolukau-Wanambwa's critique into the reading I offered above focusing on the relationship between desire and the "blind field" of a photograph, irregardless of whether we can even attribute this reading to Barthes?

I think that it is possible to say both that William Casby is present in Barthes' experience of Avedon's photograph, and to allow Wolukau-Wanambwa to describe the wounding imperfections in the medium of Barthes' desire. In that spirit, I echo the desire for Casby's gaze voiced at the end of Wolukau-Wananmbwa's article, "what might his eyes have seen?" Complementary, alongside this desire, I wish to place my conviction that the search for Casby's gaze demands letting his photograph use our desire in ways that reveal not only the visceral pedagogies animating my history of sight, but also his presence.

POINT OF DEPARTURE

Four years after the *pollada*, sitting across from each other at a café, I listened as Inés once again went over the doubts surrounding her friend's death, reflected on her fear of addressing them, and then shared a glimpse of another woman's grief. Earlier, when I asked where to locate the pain in Inés' words, I was not only thinking about the gap between language and the body as a space of ethical transaction (Das 1996), but also about how my experience, hers, and the experience of the dancer's mother are linked together in a way that itself demands acknowledgement (Gandolfo 2009, Motta 2019). These indexical connections are the conditions through which the world finds its way into my story, and in my attempt to account for them, I found myself thinking about the role of desire in the circulation of the image. Though her description was not exactly an image, like a photograph, it dragged the world along with it, our words lagging behind the evident longing in her voice. Her desire moved beyond the immediate sight of her friend's mother as she ate in silence to stretches of time both before and after the *pollada*, evoking her bodily discomfort and the crushing texture of her time of mourning.

Is life like this? The detail that hurts is less the question itself, than Inés' desire to ask it, less the way stoniness works as a trope for numbness, than the way *a stone that eats* contains Inés' hunger, and the way she uses that hunger to *re*-present another woman's movement through a precarious threshold, through a country where no one is un-implicated in the violence of a war-torn past and it's atrocities. *So much work for later*. *No one is free*.

After a short silence following Inés' description of that fleeting moment, she began for the first time to describe her friendship with the dancer in some detail. They met at an evening salsa class, when the dancer approached her while they were waiting for the instructor in a room

of twenty or so other students, most of them women. Inés was in her mid-thirties and the dancer, who was nineteen, perhaps unsure of how to address her, switched clumsily between formal and informal pronouns—*usted* and *tú*. This made Inés realize that she was more than ten years older than the other people in the class and feel out of place. However, their small talk drew other students in, making an atmosphere where Inés' age lost importance and her feeling of unease dissipated.

When the instructor arrived, they were asked to get into rows and repeat his steps, and then to practice in pairs. Inés remembered that the dancer laughed easily and would sometimes exaggerate her movements, playfully putting on an air of self-importance to get a chuckle out of the other people in the class. After the lesson, on their way home, Inés and the dancer stopped at a food cart outside the studio and shared a bowl of rice pudding. As she mentioned this detail, Inés tried to remember what they might have talked about but could not. Instead, she remembered the biting highland breeze, the smell of cinnamon and cloves, and a bittersweet feeling she called "the last little moments of time without a clock." The following week, Inés and the dancer also stopped by the cart on their way out, and the week after that too, slowly turning a spontaneous gesture into a habit of dilating time together.

After the course ended, though the restaurant put a lot of pressure on Inés' time, she signed up for another class at the same schedule. The dancer, however, did not, and so, they did not see each other until the following cycle. In the next cycle, the dancer came back to the studio, and she and Inés continued to stretch the last of their free time together by sharing a bowl of rice pudding. The dancer told Inés that she had started working at her family's grocery shop and preparing for the placement exam at the Universidad Nacional San Agustín de Arequipa. She wanted to study civic engineering. When the dancer passed away, she and Inés had known

each other for under two years, and only in the context of spending a few hours together at the studio and the food cart each week. Fifteen weekday evenings. One full cycle and the first three weeks of another. Inés described her time with the dancer as a "little window into the life of someone who made themselves dear."

As I come to the end of this chapter, let me return to the beginning. What does it mean to suggest that such an intimate array of scenes could, in a way, give us a portrait of Peru's neoliberal state? As I mentioned before, not all *polladas* address misfortune, and moreover, not everyone who attends a *pollada* to help a friend or acquaintance attends to the circumstances with Inés' receptivity. Nevertheless, I take her glimpsing knowledge to exemplify a possibility that is integral to this social form, which can be a mode of witnessing violence and its traces at moments of uncertainty that unfold at the margins of the state.

CONCLUSION

When I left Lima in December 2019, I felt a combination of longing and confusion, which I am sure many people who have done fieldwork would recognize. As anthropologists, we often tell ourselves that distance gives us clarity, that we can understand things better when we're able to catch our breath and take a step back. While I think this is true, at the same time, I wonder what exactly we mean when we talk about distance or "stepping back," particularly because these ways of thinking about reckoning with our experiences, and what they reveal about the world, rely on metaphors of space. The distance needed to render the meaning or meaningfulness of what we go through is also a matter of time—and primarily clock time, but also the time it takes to depart from one picture of the world and arrive at another, which is to say, the time of mourning. In that sense, I think it's not impertinent to ask, when are we done claiming an experience?

"It's only possible to mourn half way"

On All Saints Day, 2018, Señora Valentina and I went to the Apacheta Cemetery, just a few metres away from where she herself would be buried a few months later. We left the Palomar Market sometime after four in the afternoon and took a mini bus that brought us rattling down Alcides Carrión Avenue, past the Honorio Delgado General Hospital and the rows and rows of funeral homes, pharmacies, and private clinics across the street. Then we rode along a narrow street lined with concrete buildings covered in soot and topped with water tanks before getting off a few blocks away from the cemetery, where Señora Valentina bought flowers for her

daughter and her mother, and I, for my grandfather and great-grandmother.

As we walked down the dusty paths between mausoleums, columbariums, and crowds of people eating, drinking, and playing music for the dead, Señora Valentina recounted her earliest experience of mourning. After her grandmother passed away, her father closed down his mechanic shop and stopped working for a few weeks. Then at home, he drew all the curtains, making the place dim and strange, and asked his children to be as quiet as they possibly could while their grandmother's soul departed. Standing at her mother's grave, Señora Valentina remembered his explanation, "when you slice into a loaf of bread, imagine that you are cutting into her body. When you turn on the radio or the light, imagine that you are giving her an electric shock" (*Cuando corten un pan, piensen que es su cuerpo que están cortando. Cuando prendan la radio o una luz, piensen que la están electrocutando*).

Then, as we crossed an empty lot at the back of the cemetery on the way to leave another bouquet of flowers for her daughter, Señora Valentina told me that when her daughter died, though she also wished to bring her life to a standstill, she could not. Her husband worked as a foreman at a chicken plant, and she was just starting to work at her stand at the market. With no savings, a considerable debt, and two other children to support, after a few days, she simply had to go back to work. On our way to the Avelino Cáceres market, where Señora Valentina did the nightly grocery shopping for the food stand, we stopped at a roadside stall in the small fair outside the cemetery gates, where Señora Valentina bought a plate of fermented fried breads, or *buñuelos*. It was a warm evening in the middle of spring and as we ate, reflecting on our visits to her mother and her daughter, she said, "it's only possible to mourn half way" (*solo se puede hacer medio duelo*).

At this delicate moment of self-examination, Señora Valentina was also saying something

about the world, not only that it did not afford her enough time to grieve after her daughter's death, but also that mourning itself is in some sense, interminable, that the dead do not depart.

Arraigo

As I wrote my thesis, many of my field notes, recordings, and memories, pushed me to think about the pertinence of mourning to the regeneration of the bonds that connect the self to others and to changing social worlds. For example, Señora Francisca's care for her family, their land, her neighbours, and the river emerged from relationships that could unravel under the pressures of the environmental crisis, economic precarity, and militarized repression that shape life in the Tambo Valley today. These different bonds both sustain her life and, in turn, demand her responsive attention. Thus, when she described *arraigo* as a kind of "rootedness" *that makes the self of a place*, she was not claiming a fixed attachment, but rather gesturing to the exchanges that both sustain her life and make it a necessary means for other lives and part of her world to matter as they do. Observing and participating in the lives of Valley residents in upstream and downstream townships during my fieldwork allowed me to see how these relations of mutual care, far from being uncomplicated, are also fraught with violence.

In the Introduction, I used the phrase *intimate poisons* to describe these forms of harm, which cannot simply be picked out from the conditions of our lives in the way we might pick something off a plate. With this concept, however, rather than lapse into a resigned fatalism, I mean to point out that the possibility of change, when speaking about something as vast and intricate as a social world, is largely a long and uncertain process. There is no single thing that residents of the Tambo Valley can do to once and for all remove the boric acid and arsenic from

their land. People, of course, can and do organize different strategies to contest the forms of governance that allow mining companies to appropriate natural resources and slowly destroy the environment. At different levels, these efforts entail not only contending with wealthy lobbies that bend and break the norms of government institutions to suit their interests, but also with increasingly brutal repression.

In the meantime, there are ways of farming that can mitigate the harm.

In the meantime, the distinctions between endurance and transformation blur.

In the meantime, the process of making a change possible gets acutely uncertain.

Thus, as roadblocks, rallies, and general strikes calling for the cancellation of the Tía María project depended on mobilizing and concealing everyday reciprocities between neighbours, friends, and family, it became impossible to uphold a categorical distinction between ethics and politics as different kinds of values. Rather, as I described in the Introduction, I came to see the ethical and political as entangled ways of judging how the conditions in which life unfolds are enacted. Moreover, while some of the people who were part of my fieldwork used this vocabulary to talk about their concerns, the words “ethics” and “politics” were not, so to speak, the lingua franca of care. Rather, I became familiar with the things that mattered to people by participating in their attempts to respond to difficulties in their relationships with family, friends, and neighbours, and at moments of self-examination, when they thought about the *intimate poisons* folded into their lives and expressed desire for things to be otherwise. Here, I wish to note that in their different efforts at enduring and enacting change, the farmers, activists, and market workers,who were part of my fieldwork also reckoned with loss.

In that sense, within the context of the Tía María conflict, Valley residents have experienced three prolonged periods of militarized occupation, which have forced them to

reckon with different scenes of loss. As Vresidents and activists began to show their opposition to the Tía María mine by holding strikes and road blockages, government authorities claimed that anti-mining organizing received support from illegal miners and remnants of the Shining Path, a Maoist guerrilla that ravaged the countryside in the 1980s and early 1990s. Drawing on the fear produced by these unfounded accusations, two separate presidential administrations deployed an influx of police and military troops in the valley, producing clashes that have killed a total of seven residents, and injured hundreds more. Moreover, in 2015, the conflict's second episode of militarized occupation took a particularly harrowing turn as the state mobilized 2,000 police officers and 3,000 soldiers under a state of emergency that began in May and lasted for five months.

Alongside these grief-striking experiences of loss, state violence in the Tambo Valley has also confronted the people living in downstream townships with terrifying night raids perpetrated by the police during the state of emergency. Throughout my fieldwork, I spoke to several Valley residents who described enduring or witnessing scenes of forced entry, where unidentified—"nameless [and] faceless" (*sin nombre, sin cara*)—police officers broke into their homes or the homes of their neighbours to detain men, who they claimed had participated in violent protests against the mine. Across many of these testimonies, the reported lack of arrest warrants, public prosecutors, and records of detention mean that the night raids described by Valley residents present us with plausible cases of state abduction and temporary disappearance. In time, I also learned that the fear surrounding the raids echo the horror of the death of a Valley resident, Señor Carlos Enrique Rondón, whose body was found lifeless after a reported altercation with the police on March 25, 2015. With the intermittent militarization of the conflict, Valley residents experienced the radical vulnerability of their homes and bodily integrity to the punitive violence

of the Peruvian state. For farmers like Señora Francisca, this meant a daily confrontation with the terror that the people they loved could be arrested or even killed, making the possibility of their deaths continuously present until the occupation ended.

Alongside Señora Francisca's story, I have told the stories of Señora Ambrosia, who desperately begged her sister-in-law to take her son in, and of Señor Abel, who offered his daughter's family shelter long before her husband was detained. For some families, the search for shelter was complicated by the inherent difficulties of asking close relations to share risks and resources in a crisis and by the need to care for their crops. The militarized occupations of 2011 and 2015 overlapped with the last three months of the rice season, which put farmers at a difficult impasse as they could not simply go elsewhere without abandoning their fields. This was the case for Señor Abel's son-in-law and for Señora Francisca, whose husband and nephew stayed with a relative in a nearby town where the violence was less pronounced and returned home only occasionally to tend to their crop. When they needed to stay in town for a few days, the men slept in their fields to avoid being captured if their home was raided. During this time, Señora Francisca feared both what might happen to her husband and nephew if they were caught, and to her family's precarious economy if they could not sell their crop of rice. This intense fear, she said, "put [her] soul at the mouth" (*el miedo me puso el alma en la boca*).

Señora Francisca's use of the word "soul" is not gratuitous here, but rather, echoed previous conversations on the power of loss and grief to unmake the attachments that make the self alive by connecting them ethically and materially to a place. Significant losses—she had explained—can cause a person to become unresponsive to a surrounding world, as they become suddenly cut off from relations that are crucial to their psychic and physical integrity. In such circumstances, a person remains "uprooted" (*desarraigada/o*) until their soul returns to their

body and becomes reacquainted with the places where that person matters and makes things matter. Thus, in saying that living through the militarized occupation of the Tambo Valley in 2015 *put her soul at the mouth*, Señora Francisca was describing her experience of an extraordinarily violent and uncertain situation, which continuously placed her at the threshold of coming undone. Señora Francisca's talk of grief and *desarraigo* clearly evoked the concept of soul-loss, which in some Latin American contexts, can offer a way of rendering the sundering impacts that overwhelming duress can have on the self, producing an array of physical illnesses and social isolation (Rubel 1964, Theidon 2014).

However, when saying that fear *put her soul at the mouth*, Señora Francisca was using the language of "soul-loss" to tell me that during the militarized occupation of 2015, she had felt her soul perched at the limit of her body without yet becoming lost. Her words undoubtedly pointed to an impasse that confronted her with devastating loss, that is, with the constant worry she felt that her husband and nephew might be abducted by the police, and perhaps injured or worse. At the same time, without diluting the visceral character of this anguish, her words also spoke to the losses already folded in her life in a place intermittently besieged by militarized repression, and harrowed out from the inside by environmental crisis and economic precarity, and to her continuous effort at calling her soul back through the piecemeal efforts at mourning, which she called *learning how to live*. I have come to think of these phrases as marking different experiences of uncertainty in the attachments through which a self and a place sustain each other's being. In that sense, while *having one's soul at the mouth* seemed to refer to impasses that confront the self with devastating loss, *learning how to live* seemed to denote the piecemeal work of mourning that makes it possible to call one's soul back.

With this in mind, I want to return for a moment to the conversation I had with Señora

Valentina on All Saints Day, at a roadside stall between the market and the cemetery. *It's only possible to mourn halfway*, she said, expressing what seems to me a certain ambivalence about the way life goes on in the wake of loss.

In part, the thought that we simply do not recover from some losses, that is, that we can't but fail to mourn all the way seems to recall Sigmund Freud's early understanding of melancholia (1957 [1917]). Roughly, the story goes something like this: when faced with a significant loss, Freud explains that a grieving person tends to invest a lot of emotional energy in their memories of this now-absent relationship, until gradually, the desire that previously suffused it begins to fade away. Over time, this process enables the mourner to withdraw their emotional energy and allows them to form new connections with the world. In essence, mourning helps the grieving person put themselves back together. By contrast, melancholia is a concept Freud uses to describe what happens when this process of detachment is not accomplished as effectively. Unresolved attachments to something or someone that no longer exists, he claims, become a constant source of emotional pain, and this suffering prevents the person from fully engaging with a reality that lacks their lost object.

As Lisa Stevenson puts it, "this is Freud at his steeliest" (2014: 122), someone whose picture of recovery has not yet been unseated by the destruction of World War I. On the heels of this observation, Stevenson remarks that *Mourning and Melancholia*, though published in 1917, was indeed written in 1915, and that nearly a decade later, in 1923, Freud would go on to suggest quite a different view of the place of loss in the making of the self, in *The Ego and the Id*. In this later essay, the concept of 'introjection' describes a process that constitutes the self through the assimilation of relational objects charged with importance. Significant attachments, Freud explains, become constitutive of a person's psyche through images that, depending on how he is

read, bear traces of the presence of the people, places, and things they represent. Thus, when these attachments are, in a way, severed through loss or death, they also remain—not as mere representations, but as forms of presence and company, which, in a different way, continue to animate the self. In that sense, interminable experiences of mourning can be understood as a condition of life for finite creatures, which is not in itself a problem, though it can at times and to varying degrees, become isolating.

Placing Señora Valentina's experience of mourning alongside Freud's later insights into mourning, I am tempted to say that in losing her first daughter, she too came to understand that a lifetime is simply not enough to mourn *all the way*. I don't think that saying this is incorrect, though it doesn't seem quite enough to fully appreciate Señora Valentina's point, who was doing something slightly different than simply voicing an experience somewhere between the concepts of melancholia and incorporation. She was not only saying that remembering the dead keeps them—and *us*—alive, she was also making a judgment about a rhythm of interruptions, which textured this experience. She was saying that it was painful to visit the cemetery with the scraps of time she pilfered from the work she could simply not stop doing.

Borrowing Señora Francisca's words, the process of making oneself of a place—which she called *arraigo*—entails participating in rhythms of encounter, company, and exchange that constitute this social world, and also introjecting the presence of the human and non-human others whose presence also matters to its making. In that sense, the prospect of *learning how to live* seems to gesture to the possibility of remaking these constitutive attachments between self and world as they tear, tatter, and break. In a sense, it means taking up the work of mourning again and again, even amid the forms of violence that interrupt it, and at least in partial knowledge that nothing guarantees that, or how, one's efforts will persist.

By the end of my fieldwork, the disagreement between Señora Francisca's husband and her son over whether to sell the family's land meant that Javier, who lived in the city of Arequipa, had stayed away from home for nearly two years. Though the pandemic brought him back for a few months (between 2020 and 2021), and though he has come back to visit since, the conflict between Javier and his father continues, as do the different pressures that have given rise to it. The Pasto Grande dam continues to capture water from the Vizcachas River, and with no alternative irrigation project in sight, the environmental crisis in the Tambo River delta continues to deteriorate. The import taxes on rice and other basic staples, which were briefly removed in 2021 are, less than a year later in 2022, being gradually reinstated, extending a dynamic of debt and economic precarity that continues to stifle small-scale agriculture. And lastly, the threat of militarized violence and the atmosphere of growing hostility and mistrust associated with the Tía María conflict continue to wax and wane as the company—now with a construction license and in an increasingly authoritarian political climate—gears up to bring their project into existence.

Of course, in attending to the efforts through which Señora Francisca and other Valley residents tried *learning how to live*—which is to say, the interruptive return to a complicated attempt at mourning, which makes *arraigo* possible in the wake of loss—I have tried to keep in mind that making oneself of a place also means making oneself of its *intimate poisons*.

Here, I am not only thinking about the accumulation of arsenic and boric acid in the river—and therefore, the land, the crops that are grown on it, and the bodies these crops feed—but also about the experience of *anonymous violence*, which have accompanied the increasing militarization of the Tía María conflict.

Thus, to understand what it means to belong at the margins of the state in neoliberal Peru, it's particularly important to remember that the process of living in conditions shaped by layered

forms of violence is not categorically distinct from the experiences of mourning the losses that catastrophic and ordinary scenes of violence incur, or of yearning for a change (Povinelli 2011). In this context, it is through the work of *learning how to live* in a wounded valley filled with *intimate poisons* that its residents avail themselves of the means to imagine and enact transformative ends, always at great risk and with limited control over the consequences of the steps they choose to take. It is in this sense—it seems to me—that Señora Francisca's notion of *learning how to live* can not only describe her nephew's mourning and her family's efforts to bring him into their world, but also her own attendance at the protests of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, as something other than a "political thing."

In the following section, I want to offer a rough outline of the increasingly authoritarian climate of institutional politics in Peru, as it has rapidly accelerated in the wake of my fieldwork.

December 7, 2022

With the rise and extraordinary toll of the coronavirus pandemic in Peru, which as of yet has endured an extraordinarily high number of recorded deaths, the political and economic model enacted by the Fujimori dictatorship has once again become a matter of visceral contestation. Throughout 2020, as private hospitals began to charge exorbitant sums for ICU beds, and public hospitals collapsed—often opening tented spaces for in-patient treatment in their parking lots—people bought medicinal oxygen to treat themselves at home (Fowks and Alonso 2021). In a national market dominated by pharmaceutical monopolies and lacking centralized price controls, the cost of medicinal oxygen soon became inaccessible, not only making the prices soar, but also causing nation-wide shortages.

During the general elections of 2021, the so-called "Miracle," which began to die in 2016 and was for a significant number of Peruvians all-but dead five years later, and in that sense, the elections seemed to be about what would come next. With the catastrophic failure of the public and private sector to provide reliable healthcare for a majority of Peruvians, and an increasingly acute crisis of food security affecting a growing number of households, previously marginalized concerns about the inequalities produced by the country's post-conflict economic model became the central axis of debate.

In this context, some political parties expressed their support for a Constituent Assembly as a means of structural transformation, which could help undo the political and economic legacies of the Fujimori regime. Among them was Peru Libre, a Marxist party, which placed Pedro Castillo as its presidential candidate—a rural teacher, who became well-known for his successful participation in a 2017 strike against austerity measures enforced by the Ministry of Education, as well as for being a member of a peasant patrol (*ronda campesina*) in the highland region of Cajamarca. The run-off elections amplified the rifts that have come to define political life in post-conflict Peru, as they opposed Peru Libre and Fuerza Popular, a far-right party led by Alberto Fujimori's daughter, Keiko Fujimori (Isacson and Burt 2021). In turn, with the support of corporate media outlets, Fuerza Popular ran a campaign that cast Castillo and his supporters as supporters, or even former affiliates, of the country's Marxist guerrillas.

After losing the run-off election by a narrow margin of 44,058 votes, Keiko Fujimori falsely claimed that there had been electoral fraud, targeting specifically Indigenous, peasant, and rural communities, which voted overwhelmingly for Castillo (Burt 2021). Though these allegations were disproven, the conflict between the nation's elites and the possibility of a plurinational Constituent Assembly extended into a protracted antagonism between the

Executive and the Legislative, which resulted in a lame-duck presidency. Castillo has faced a total of three motions to vacate him from office.[cv] The grounds for the claims of the first two were wide-ranging and included the following claims: generating economic instability by dissuading private investment through talk of reforms; making questionable choices when appointing cabinet members; suggesting that the question Bolivia's access to the ocean by way of Peru's coast could be put up for a citizen referendum; lying; and charges of corruption pending investigation by the Public Ministry.

On December 7, 2022—the day of the third scheduled vote on a motion to vacate the presidential office on grounds of moral incapacity—former president Pedro Castillo appeared on national television to decree a series of emergency measures. In addition to dismissing Congress, Castillo established a curfew and called for the general election of a new legislature with Constituent faculties.

Less than an hour after Castillo's announcement, the Constitutional Tribunal (Peru's highest court) declared his act unlawful and exhorted the armed forces and state institutions not to recognize his decrees. That morning, Congress convened as planned, and after declaring his measures unconstitutional, voted on the motion to vacate him from office, thus, leading to his destitution and arrest. Then, in the second session of the day, former vice-president Dina Boluarte was sworn into office.

On December 8, Dina Boluarte met with delegates from various political parties. Among them were members of Avanza País (founded by Hernando de Soto, the neoliberal economist whose academic work and direct advising were instrumental to devising the Constitution of 1993, and much of Fujimori's economic policy) and Fuerza Popular. In the wake of these meetings, Boluarte announced that her government no longer took the project of a Constituent

Assembly to be a priority and called its feasibility into question, giving rise to massive nation-wide mobilizations, which continue intermittently until today.

From the start of these protests, their demands have been plural and heterogeneous. In addition to contesting Boluarte's administration by demanding her resignation, the dissolution of Congress and new general elections, some demonstrators also call for a Constituent Assembly, and others, for Castillo's restitution. Recasting this plurality as a shortcoming, Dina Boluarte has repeatedly claimed the demands of demonstrators to be unclear, claiming furthermore that many of them have been "manipulated" (*manipulados*) or "goaded" (*azuzados*) into protesting. More egregiously, however, Boluarte's administration has unfoundedly accused grassroots protests of being financed by "terrorists" and "narcotraffickers" in order to justify declaring a nation-wide state of emergency, and thus militarizing the state's response and suspending basic rights (Amoretti 2023, Turkewitz 2023).[cvi] These measures have led to the extra-legal execution of at least 49 civilians between December 2022 and March 2023, leading demonstrators to also demand justice for the victims and their families, calling for investigations, sanctions, and reparations.

Alarmingly, on December 19, in her first televised interview, Boluarte claimed that civilian deaths during the protests would be investigated by a military court (*fuero militar*) (Cuarto Poder 2022). In less than a week, however, she had to retract the claim, as the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) expressly prohibited this practice in its decisions on two massacres, which took place under the Fujimori regime, *La Cantuta* and *Barrios Altos*. In both cases, investigations within the opaque forum of military courts were used to gain impunity for the perpetrators.

On January 13, 2023, concerned once again with the evident rise of political violence in

Peru, representatives from the IACHR held a press conference in Lima to share the findings of two rapporteurship visits. Among various other observations, Commissioner Stuardo Ralón noted the role of ethnic discrimination in human rights abuses; the reckless use of terrorist allegations made by institutional authorities; and the lack of serious and expedient investigations into the use of militarized violence, which were not being handled by prosecutors specialized in human rights. This last matter pertains to a Resolution issued on December 15 by the Attorney General, which requires prosecutors specialized in organized crime to investigate violent incidents during protests.[cvii] Within the context of Peru's mining conflicts—such as the 2015 protests contesting the Tía María project in the Tambo Valley—the presence of prosecutors specialized in organized crime, rather than human rights, has contributed to the criminalization of grassroots activists and the impunity of the police and the armed forces.

In May 2023, Amnesty International (2023) issued a report noting the state's use of lethal weapons as a mechanism of repression rather than crowd control and the unlawful use of undercover police officers at protests. On this last point, it bears noting that the Peruvian state has explicitly contravened the recent recommendations of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2020: 8). In the current protests, undercover police—members of the so-called "*Grupo Terna*"—have been found to escalate the use of violence during demonstrations and to threaten and even attack journalists (Motta-Ochoa 2023, Rafaele 2022). Equally, affirming the IACHR's earlier claims, Amnesty International's report also condemned the markedly racist character of the state's violence.

Importantly, the people most heavily affected by the recent wave of militarized repression live in Quechua and Aymara-speaking regions of Peru's southern Andes, which have experienced the duress of two incommensurably deadly landscapes of violence over the past four

decades, the first, during the internal armed conflict between the state and two Marxist guerrilla groups (1980-2000), and the second, during Peru's neo-extractive era (1992-present). Human Rights organizations in Peru have identified three major massacres in the departmental regions of Apurimac (on December 11-15), Ayacucho (on December 15), and Puno (on January 9). The casualties include minors, bystanders, and a medical student who was working as a first-aid volunteer. The first two civilians who lost their lives in these protests were high-school students from the resource-rich yet impoverished region of Apurimac. David Atequipa Quispe went to school, worked as a moto-taxi driver, and took on occasional work in construction and agriculture. Beckham Romario Quispe was a local soccer star. Forensic examinations have revealed that both were killed by police gunshots.

Faced with this unprecedented escalation of violence in a post-conflict context, regional communities across Peru have been helping some of their members travel to Lima, where they can voice their demands more effectively and in relatively safer conditions (Ragas 2023). Often referred to as "delegations" (*delegaciones*), these groups of people travel to Lima in trucks and buses, making journeys that are largely sustained by solidarity networks, which also organize collective meals (*ollas comunites*), safe shelters (*albergues*), and grassroots fundraising campaigns. In Lima—and in some regions, such as Puno—as a measure against police brutality, protests are accompanied by volunteer first-aid brigades, and even, tear gas deactivation squads.

In the introduction to my dissertation, I asked, how does one write a killing machine, and the ways life that go on even alongside it? As I finish, I want to say that in trying to write a killing machine, I have found just how closely thinking can resemble mourning.

In October 2020, I learned from Milagros, Señora Valentina's daughter, that the people who scammed and killed her mother had cracked a deal with six police officers to encumber the

investigation over her death. After our conversation, I read a news article that also claimed these six officers were suspected of helping the racketeering group cover up other scams and extortions. They evidently had an agreement. Later, when researching the contracts that enable the Peruvian National Police to essentially sell their services to mining companies like the Southern Peru Copper Corporation, I couldn't help but remember this detail. Of course, it is not *because* the Peruvian Police has a practice of establishing contracts with extractive corporations that some of its officers make agreements with racketeering groups. If I give up on making such a claim, however, I can simply observe that both are the case and that this same institution massacred at least 49 people in protests calling for an overhaul of the neoliberal state. Belonging in this context entails nothing less than making *arraigo* matter amid the violence of its killing machines, both *having one's soul at the mouth* and *learning how to live*.

NOTES

[i] The names of all the people who participated in my research have been changed or omitted. Equally, identifying details have been deliberately obscured, such as the names of the towns where they live. Concerning the names of grassroots groups and civic associations, I have taken a mixed approach. I did not change the name of the Cocachacra Water Management Board (*Junta de Usuarios de las Aguas del Rio Tambo - Cochachacra*), or of well-known activists involved with the Tía María mining conflict. Nor did I change the names of the people affiliated with the controversial project to establish an alternative Water Management Board, or of the civic associations rumoured to be affiliated with the mine. While these matters surfaced in my own fieldwork, they were also already the subject of academic and journalistic publications. I did, however, alter the names of smaller activist groups contesting the mine.

[ii] Grupo Mexico is a Mexican-based conglomerate founded by Jorge Larrea and is currently chaired by his son, Germán Larrea, whose family holds 60% of the corporation's stocks. In 1999, Grupo Mexico became a majority shareholder of the Southern Peru Copper Corporation when it purchased ASARCO—a US-based company that specializes in mining, smelting, and refining—for $2.2 billion USD (see Bernal and Guizar 2018).

[iii] Peru's mass media landscape is widely criticized for being owned and managed by a few corporations. According to a recent report by North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), "eight of the 10 largest conglomerates in the country are owned by members of the same families, with some major shareholders holding ties to multiple media groups" (Tipismana 2023). The concentration of media ownership in Peru, coupled with the strong connections between mass media conglomerates and mining and banking corporations, has been extensively documented by organizations such as Reporters Without Borders (*Reporters Sans Frontières*), *Instituto de Defensa Legal* (IDL), and *Ojo Público*—two internationally recognized independent news platforms based in Lima (Castilla 2016, Castilla et al. 2016).

[iv] People in the valley usually referred to Jenrry Humberto Checya Chura as "Humberto." In some news reports and in the documents appended to the criminal investigation that sought to construe the grassroots leaders (*dirigentes*), who participated in the 2015 protests as a criminal organization (*Expediente 02545-2015-18-0401-JR-PE-01*), his name, however, appears as "Henry."

[v] Given that the forms of policing used in the Tambo Valley are not only recurrent but also exemplary of the relationship between social movements and the Peruvian state, I must clarify that when I say they are "extraordinary," I do not mean that they are exceptional or somehow beyond the conditions of Valley residents' experience. Rather, when I refer to these forms of policing as extraordinary, I mean to acknowledge their intermittent and intense character as it is folded into the events and quasi-events that texture everyday life (Das 2007, Povinelli 2011).

[vi] By contrast, the community leaders (*dirigentes*) prosecuted on criminal charges after the protests of 2015 attended the hearing for their terminal appeal in February of that same year.

[vii] See the decision on *Expediente 02545-2015-18-0401-JR-PE-01* issued by Arequipa's 1st Criminal Appeals Chamber, Central Headquarters, *1° Sala Penal de Apelaciones - Sede Central*. Importantly, the charges of illicit association were ultimately disproved. However, both rhetorically and instrumentally, they served as the centre of gravity in a process of stigmatization and criminalization, which mobilized a specialized prosecution team and enabled longer terms of preliminary detention in which defendants deemed to be at risk of flight.

[viii] The three former *dirigentes* convicted by Arequipa's 1st Criminal Appeals Chamber, Central Headquarters (*1° Sala Penal de Apelaciones - Sede Central*) were Pepe Julio Gutiérrez Zeballos, Jesús Cornejo Reynoso, and Jaime de la Cruz Gallegos. Gutiérrez Zeballos received a confirmation of his 16-year sentence for attempted extortion against the State, disturbances, and obstruction of public services. After deducting the period he spent in preventive detention, the effective prison time totals 13 years and 3 months. In parallel, two other ex dirigentes were found guilty of different accounts of disturbing the peace and obstructing public services. Cornejo Reynoso, former member of the Cocachacra Water Management Board (*Junta de Usuarios de las Aguas del Rio Tambo*), received a sentence of 7 years and 4 months while de la Cruz Gallegos, ex-mayor the District of Dean Valdivia, received a sentence of 12 years and 4 months. The judges also ordered all three dirigentes to pay civil reparations totalling 635,000 PEN (see Red Muqui 2022). This is roughly 215,500 CAD, or 165,600 USD by the average 2022 exchange range of PEN to CAD (2.9465) and USD (3.8340).

[ix] The Regional Government of Arequipa (*Gerencia Regional de Arequipa, GRA*) built a hospital in the city

of Cocachacra in 2022, less than three years after my fieldwork.

[x] I am redacting the names of places here and marking their absence with em-dashes "——" to keep Señora Ambrosia and her son from being easily identified.

[xi] The Ministry of the Interior authorized the entry of military troops into the Tambo Valley on May 9, 2015 by way of a Supreme Resolution (R.S. N.º 105-2015-IN) The state of emergency was declared on May 22 by way of a Supreme Degree (D.S. N.º 040-2015-PCM). On May 26, the Ministry of the Interior authorized the deployment of military troops in the neighbouring regions of Apurimac, Ayacucho, Cajamarca, Cusco, Moquegua, Puno, and Tacna, as protests emerged in solidarity with the Tambo Valley (N.° 118-2015-IN). In July, the Ministry of the Interior authorized the deployment of a second military contingent by way of a Supreme Decree (R.S. N.° 146-2015-IN). On August 20, the Ministry of the Interior prolonged the presence of police and military troops from August 22 to September 20 (R.S. Nº 158-2015-IN). On September 9, the Ministry of the Interior prolonged the presence of police and military troops from September 21 to October 20 (N.° 191-2015- IN). On October 17, the Ministry of the Interior prolonged the presence of police and military troops from October 21 to November 19 (R.S. N.° 214-2015-IN).

[xii] Rather than argue that these acts ought to be conceived as such, I wish to suggest that the descriptions of extralegal force in the accounts of Valley residents and academic research presents us with a situation at the threshold, where there is marked uncertainty about whether or not these forms of violence, as those endured by Valley residents like Edison, indeed qualify as "torture."

Moreover, let me note that the men who participated in my fieldwork more frequently used the word "torture" to describe their experiences of state terror during the militarized occupations of the Tambo Valley in 2011 and 2015 when they were drinking. This presented me with a few dilemmas as an ethnographer. First, the difficulty of reporting in detail what people describe and the words they use while participating in a drinking circle. Second, Ismael's drinking was—ambivalently—an intermittent concern for his family and a privileged site of intimacy and bonding. This was particularly the case with all-men drinking circles, which usually began as social gatherings ended. In a conversation with a worker at the Palomar Market who struggled with her husband's drinking, I was advised, at these moments, to do as the women do (*tú, has no más, lo que hacen las mujeres*). Third, at the outset of my fieldwork, while drinking with Ismael and other men, I was sexually harassed on more than one occasion by one of his neighbours, who was violent in this way also when sober. I soon chose not to participate in these spaces and opted instead to partake in drinking only when it was a mixed-gender affair. However, the few times I did attend all-men drinking circles, I observed that the conversation was saturated by their sexual experiences, military service (for those who were reservists), and the violence of the Tía María conflict. I do not mean to suggest that these themes present anything like a representative sample of "taboo" topics, nor do I naively take them to be forensic reports (as opposed to expressions of desire to be seen or treated in particular ways, for example). However, though I cannot say exactly what kind of knowledge it produced, I note that this is one of the contexts in which the word "torture" circulated much more fluidly during my fieldwork.

[xiii] The NGOs that conducted two visits to the Tambo Valley in 2015 are the National Coordinating Office for Human Rights (Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos, CNDDHH), Red Muqui, and Cooperacción. The first took place between May 12-14, and visited the town of Cocachacra for a day to gather personal testimonies from residents. The second was conducted between June 1-4. I have thus far only been able to access the report of the first. Four years later, during my fieldwork, a coalition with some of the same actors conducted a third visit. On July 9, 2019—after ten years of conflict—the Ministry of Energy and Mines surreptitiously granted the Southern Peru Copper Corporation a construction license. This decision rekindled grassroots mobilization and precipitated a third period of state violence, which lasted from July to December of that same year. The NGOs that conducted the third in-site visit to the Tambo Valley, which took place during July 22-23 of 2019, were the CNDDHH, Red Muqui, Amnesty International, and the National Association of Centers for Research, Social Advancement, and Development (*Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo*, ANC). This visit did not produce a report, but rather, a public statement, urging "the parties, particularly the executive branch... to cease the use of mechanisms of violence, pressure, and/or stigmatization that may affect the exercise of people's rights." Compared to the two previous instances of militarization that shaped the Tía María conflict, in 2019, the state deployed roughly 900 police officers (La República 2019), significantly less than the more than 3,000 members of the national police and 2,000 soldiers deployed in 2015. Another important difference of this still troubling episode of militarization is that there were no deaths.

[xiv] According to Silva Santisteban (2017), the title of this second report is, "Informe de Misión al Valle de Tambo II. Visita in sito a Cocachacra, Dean Valdivia, Punta Bombón, Mollendo y Arequipa (Cecilia Serpa, Javier Jhancke, David Velazco y Rocío Silva Santisteban), 1-4 de junio de 2015." Unlike the first report, I have not found it on the CNDDHH's website, and when I asked friends at Red Muqui if they could help me find it, they were also puzzled that it is not in their files. As of the completion of my thesis, I have not yet been able to speak to anyone at the CNDDHH about the matter. Though I understand that the absence of the second report can be read in multiple ways, I think the most likely reason behind its (perhaps temporary) disappearance is that these organizations are understaffed, underfunded, and consistently overwhelmed with more cases than they can manage.

[xv] Rocío Silva Santisteban (2017) mentions three separate cases of torture. Here, I will describe the oldest case in more detail, and then give a rough outline of the other two. Knowing that it is profoundly unresponsive to reduce the reality of torture to a listing of facts, in doing so, I wish to insist on the possibility of occupying the (form of the) fact as another kind of mark. Here, I wish to use facts to mark three different and uneven entry points into lived experiences of the violence that undergirds large-scale mining in Peru and elsewhere, each a possible portal for the reader's imagination, each an array of open wounds.

The first case took place during the conflict over Minera Majaz S. A., a mining project, which was at the time managed by Monterrico Metals (today Río Blanco Copper S. A.), and located near the townships of Huancabamba, Segunda, and Cajas, in the region of Piura in northern Peru. The events occurred on August 1, 2005, when a group of people gathered outside the mine's facilities to rally against the prospective construction of the project's open-pit copper mine near the communities. In response, the police fired tear gas and live rounds at the protestors and then chased them, capturing 28 people. The detainees were then taken to the mining facilities where they were bound up, covered with black plastic bags, and subjected to abuse, which included beatings, the forced ingestion of rotten food, and being left out in the rain on a scaffolding used for animal slaughter (*ibid.*: 120). One of the detainees was killed by the police, seven were wounded by firearms, one lost an eye, and two women were sexually abused, all with the awareness of company staff and a public prosecutor, Lorenzo Félix Toledo Leiva. In 2012, Toledo Leiva was found guilty of dereliction of functions, disabled from his post for a year, sentenced to three years in jail, and ordered to pay a S/. 6,000 fine (*ibid.*: 119). In 2016, the two separate investigations against a total of 17 police officers, officials, and security personnel for torture and aggravated kidnapping were unified into a single file (*ibid*.: 119-120), joining *Expediente No. 201-2013* to *Expediente No. 30-2011* (Red Muqui 2016). The first hearing for people accused of abetting the police's extralegal use of force and encumbering the subsequent investigation took place on May 17, 2017 (Silva Santisteban 2017: 120). As of yet—after more than 18 years—there are no sentences on any of these cases.

The second and third cases referenced by Silva Santisteban involved the cluster of mining projects surrounding the expiring Tintaya mine in the southern province of Espinar, Cusco, and the Conga mine in Cajamarca. Tintaya is an open-pit mine that has been in operation since 1985. In 2006, it came under the control of Xstrata, which later merged with the Swiss-based multinational Glencore. In 2012, the company's failure to adhere to its agreement with surrounding communities fueled a rapidly escalating conflict. The community demanded the replacement of community relations managers, whose retreat during conflicts prompted the deployment of a thousand police officers, resulting in violent clashes, deaths, arrests, and torture (*ibid.*: 53). In May, the Peruvian police detained two human rights defenders at the Tintaya Marquiri mining camp who had come to check on the state of nearly 30 protesters held at this site. The police detained the observers, who were subsequently handcuffed, beaten, and subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment (*ibid.*: 156). Also in 2012, in relation to protests against the Conga gold mine—owned by Yanacocha S. R. L., and operated by Newmont Mining Corporation—two defense lawyers, who went to a police precinct to support a group of protestors that had been detained, were themselves held in police custody and beaten (*ibid.*:111-112).

I know that pain calls for the empathetic gesture of allowing one's embodied imagination to share a wound without claiming it as one's own (Das 1996, 2022, Stevenson 2014). Part of my education in finding the words to make that feeling alive to others draws from Elaine Scarry (1985) and Michael Taussig (1984, 1987), who argue that extreme violence and particularly torture can destroy our capacity for meaning, even as it intensifies other registers of sensation and semiosis. I have also been educated by the works of Veena Das (2007, 2022), who—in response to her own fieldwork and in conversation with the works of Stanley Cavell (1999 [1979]) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (2009 [1953])—has observed that attending to the particular ways in which pain interrupts the relationship between language and the body is not only a conceptual undertaking, but also an ethical one (see also, Das et al. 2000, 2001,

Reynolds 2012). Thus, rather than either trying to "tame" an inordinate reality (Das 2020) or giving myself over to a more portrait-like way of seeing, which acknowledges not only a person's suffering but also the fullness of their presence and its latent possibilities (Campt 2017, Stevenson 2020a), I have opted here for using facts to trace the space portraits might yet go.

[xvi] These omissions from her account can be understood in terms of methodology, rather than critically, as an act of erasure, and thus as an instance of what ethnography can reveal

[xvii] I focused on the months of May through October, which correspond to the "Social Conflicts Reports" Nº 135-140 (*Reporte de Conflictos Sociales*). Keeping in mind the absence of any mention of the night raids, let me highlight a few elements: A team from the Defensoría visited the province of Islay on June 10 and 11 to ensure residents' rights during the state of emergency and conducted interviews with local officials, law enforcement, and education experts. The commissioners confirmed the commercial, transportation, educational, and administrative activities had been "normalized," and noted the presence of the army in specific areas (Report Nº 136, page 42).

[xviii] The Ministry of the Economy approved a salary increase by way of a Supreme Decree issued in January 2018 (DS N°006- 2018-EF). The budget adjustment was announced in a public statement by the Ministry of Health (NP-051): "To comply with the new salary scale, the Ministry of Economy and Finance authorized a budget modification of S/ 700 million, using institutional budget resources without requiring additional funds from the public treasury. Of this allocation, S/ 407.9 million is directed towards the National Institute of Health, the National Institute of Neoplastic Diseases, and the 25 regional governments."

[xix] Though I maintain the real name of this group, as it is the most public, I have changed the names of others. I will further contextualize this group and my relation to it in the "Fieldwork" section below.

[xx] Allow me to flesh out the claim that the Peruvian Constitution of 1993 is at the heart of a process of institutional capture, as Francisco Durand and John Crabtree (2017) suggest, by briefly registering five of the critiques of the Constitution of 1993, which I heard most often mentioned in grassroots activist circles. This descriptive analysis is by no means intended to be a comprehensive account of the life of the current Peruvian constitution (which indeed would take one or more ethnographies of its own), but rather, as a curated and incomplete transmission of the critiques I found in activist circles critical of Peru's "Economic Miracle." For the sake of clarity, I will proceed with a dry list that moves in the order of the constitutional articles. First, the Constitution of 1993 prohibits the state from operating a public enterprise without an exceptional permit, wherever a private entity is primed to compete in the provision of a given good or service (Art. 60). For activists like Señor Aurelio and other members of Arequipa's Anti-Corruption Civic Association, the limits on the "subsidiary role" of the Peruvian state severely limits the sustainability of the state's capacity to provide basic services without the involvement of private investment. Second, the Constitution of 1993 introduced the feature of legal stability agreements, or so-called "Law Contracts" (*Contratos Ley*) (Art. 62), provisions that enable Congress and the President to establish agreements with private investors, which cannot be canceled or modified for periods of 15, 20, 30 years—even when the non-state party is in breach of their conditions. For the past 30 years, Peru's *contratos ley* have been effectively working as the most basic regulatory framework holding together regimes of extractive concessions, infrastructure, and corporate provision of public services. These contracts have been used by national and transnational corporations such as Odebrecht (construction), Telefónica del Perú (telecommunications), and Las Bambas and Cerro Verde (mining), and—scandalously—they have endured through proven cases of corruption, breaches of tributary law, and even human rights violations. Third, the Constitution of 1993 accords foreign and national investment all the same rights (Art. 63). Fourth, this document also retains an ambiguous and increasingly controversial figure from the 19th century, which enables congress to vacate the presidential office on grounds of "moral incapacity," as an alternative to a much more strictly regulated impeachment process (Art. 117). This much more recent critique has arisen in the wake of an increased instability in the checks and balances between the executive and legislative powers, which began in 2017. In 2021, the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) issued a public statement expressing its concern over this measure, which stressed its "lack of an objective definition of presidential impeachment for permanent moral incompetence." The IACHR's statement echoes the arguments presented by the Peruvian jurist Abrahám García Chavarry (2013), who expressed concern over the legal implications of the use of this measure in November of 2000, when the Peruvian Congress refused to accept Fujimori's resignation and invoked this measure to hold a vote to remove him from office instead. Noting that the concept of "moral incapacity" had not been used in this way since 1914 and was couched in language proper to the 1800s, when the definition of "moral" in the 19th century condensed psychological and ethical criteria (making it

roughly akin to "madness"), García Chavarry argued that this measure should either be removed or further defined. Though the procedural dimensions of article 113 of the constitution have since been given explicit dimensions, the concept of "morality" at stake (the crux of the concerns voiced by the IACHR and García Chavarry) remains, as of yet, undefined. Lastly, the last item on my list of grassroots critiques of the Constitution of 1993 is the delegation of legislative powers to the executive in situations that are deemed urgent and thematically and temporally demarcated by a Congressional law (art. 118). The anthropologist Mariel García (2011) has documented how this presidential power to "govern by decree" (*gobernar por decretazo*) was extensively used by former president Alan García (2006-2011) to unilaterally build on the carapace of Fujimori's reforms and further entrench Peruvian statecraft around corporate power. Most notably—as documented by the human rights lawyers Jorge Portocarrero Salcedo and José Saldaña Cuba (2017)—Alan García's laws have facilitated the militarization of grassroots protests through a Supreme Decree that laxly regulates the deployment of the army in national territory (D.S. Nº 1095).

[xxi] Though James Ferguson published *The Anti-Politics Machine* in 1994, neither Degregori nor Lynch reference his work.

[xxii] Here, Ralphs cites a speech Hillary Clinton gave in 1996 in support of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, where she addressed the need to punish Black urban youth by saying, "…they are not just gangs of kids anymore. They are often the kinds of kids that are called superpredators—no conscience, no empathy. We can talk about why they ended up that way, but first, we have to bring them to a heel." The speech surfaced again in the context of her 2016 presidential campaign.

[xxiii] The italics are found in the original. For a more detailed account of the historical use of the word "terrorism" in Peru, beginning in the 19th century, please see "The Paths of Terrorism in Peru" by the historian Cecilia Méndez (2021).

[xxiv] The original text says "summary justice" (Poole and Rénique 2003: 160).

[xxv] In reflecting on how to represent and therefore reckon with lived experiences of violence, the anthropologist Philippe Bourgois makes a range of observations, which I find pertinent to the current discussion on the afterlives of a militarized occupation in a small rural community (2004). There are two dimensions to Bourgois' reflections, which have become important to my own writing. First, Bourgeois invites his readers to remember that the conditions in which a particular mode of violence becomes possible exceeds a single analytic register. This means that as the violence of a particular situation becomes thinkable in one way, other views of its causes and effects inevitably remain implicit, and may yet surface in temporally, geographically, and conceptually distant ways. Secondly, Bourgois also invites his readers to attend to the ways in which one violent situation can slide into another over time. The peasant woman who suffocated her own child to avoid being detected by enemy soldiers while fleeing her village at a time of war not only endured the suffering of this terrible loss, but was moreover held in contempt by her husband and then abandoned at a time of peace. Giving attention to this and other concatenated scenes of devastation and loss, Bourgois turns our attention to the "the scars of the structural and political violence" (2004: 430). Thinking of violence as being composed of political, structural, symbolic, and everyday strands gives Bourgois a useful frame for comparative and etiological analysis. However, when used to account for lived experiences of violence in pre-established terms and only for the sake of arriving at an explanation, Bourgois' insights can risk overshadowing emergent analytics as well as intimate demands for acknowledgement. In making this claim, I do not mean to imply that in the practice of ethnography, a researcher is either committed to explaining how violence works or to transmitting the force of its effects and attending to the presence of those who endure it. Rather, I want to suggest that this tension is an irresolvable pull, which ethnographic projects are called to grapple with at every step of the way. With this view of violence in mind, I consider the connections between wartime violence of Peru's internal armed conflict and the peacetime violence of neoliberal governance, particularly in the context of extractivism.

[xxvi] I want to briefly situate my thinking in relation to the ambivalent language of political identity that emerges alongside discussions of belonging. In 1977, the Combahee River Collective—a Black feminist grassroots organization, which was active in Boston, MA from 1974 to 1980—published a statement outlining its political vision. This document is a particularly pertinent source for talking about the use of the category of identity in the elaboration of anti-colonial projects of mutual liberation. While there are undoubtedly different ways of understanding the work and words of the Combahee River Collective, it seems to me that the ethical and political use of the concept of identity at play in their statement is not to reify the monolithic representation of a group of people as an ahistorical fact. Rather, the language of identity in this text opens a space for conversation and

collective action, which responds to lived experiences of oppression in a context shaped by situated histories of race thinking, class formation, and patriarchy. Thus, the language of identity offers less the outlines of a human type than an appeal for collectivizing experiences of a world built on supremacist logics in order to better understand, and thus more effectively change it. In this tradition, contemporary forms of identity politics in the Americas have become a way of rendering the enduring impacts of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and Indigenous dispossession, which undergird capitalist modernity (Hartman 1997, Quijano 2000, Robinson 1983). Oftentimes, these efforts emerge from collective experiences of environmental crisis, resource extraction, policing, incarceration, and border imperialism, taking the form of institutional and economic critiques that point to the colonial history and uneven dynamics of these forces as they continue to shape our world (Gilmore 2007, Nixon 2011, Walia 2013). Scholars like Paul Gilroy (1995) have questioned whether notions of collective identity such as race are indeed the most adequate means to organize shared experiences of oppression in struggles against their underlying dynamics, wary that this approach can reproduce the very forms of essentialism it seeks to undo. Indeed, in this line, Jasbir Puar has similarly argued that identitarian discourses can replicate statist modes of knowledge production based on the logic of the population, although at fractal and overlapping scales (2017 [2007]: 162). Under this pressure, some contemporary scholars have de-emphasized the stress on identity and turned their attention to the emergent character of modes of self- and world-making that contest, exceed, and escape the enclosures of Eurocentric imaginaries and colonial institutions (Jackson 2020, Coulthard 2014, Moten 2003, 2017, Weheliye 2014, Wynter 2003). In my own work, I strive to acknowledge the polyvalence surrounding the language of identity by attending to the tension between its strategic use in collectivizing a response to structural oppression (which can be aimed at its disarticulation and not just its reform), its ability to convey attachments to specific modes of self- and world-making (or repudiation), and its susceptibility to essentialism. In none of these cases do I argue that identity is inherently oppressive (i.e., essentializing) or liberatory (i.e., undergirding projects of self-representation and collective action against oppression).

[xxvii] This emphasis on hospitality and presence offers a counterpoint to the notion of belonging that the philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, whose theory of hermeneutics is concerned not just with the interpretation of texts, but also with understanding human experience. Though Gadamer does not offer an explicit definition of belonging, in *Truth and Method* (2013 [1960]), he associates this concept (Zugehörigkeit) with the historical situatedness of human understanding, and thus, the capacity to be addressed by someone else's concerns and picture of the world as they are expressed in language. Therefore, for Gadamer, belonging comes to denote the accomplishment of understanding one's interlocutor (whether a person or a text) through a shared connection with the linguistic tradition that facilitates this understanding. Ultimately, he argues, this connection extends also to the world whose possibilities are expressed in this medium in a particular way. I do not want to downplay the ethical importance of the effortful work of understanding, nor to make light of language as a medium for sharing our concerns and examining how they are connected to situated pictures of the world. However, I do wish to insist that Probyn and Muñoz present us with a glimmer of insight into the capacity to be addressed by another, which has an importance of its own: the relational ground between self and other also matters at the thresholds of language.

[xxviii] As mentioned above, for Puar (2017 [2007]), nationalism denotes the construction of a collective identity through discursive practices that establish and rigorously police the parameters of an imagined community, as well as the degrees of difference it will tolerate. Elaborating on this theme, though not explicitly citing Puar, Elizabeth Povinelli (2011) uses the term "social belonging" to refer to the authoritative discourses that govern the forms of interior difference an imagined community can tolerate (whether this be a nation-state or a community of liberal democracies)

[xxix] The Southern Peru Copper Corporation presented two separate Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for the Tía María project. As I detail in the following chapters, the first EIA, in 2011, was dismissed as massive protests erupted in response to a corruption scandal. The second was submitted for review in August 2014, and according to the licensing processes had to be reviewed within a period of five years, resulting in the approval or denial of the project's construction license. During my fieldwork, as the deadline of August 2019 loomed nearer, grassroots collectives began to form and to reactivate in anticipation of another wave of strikes and marches calling for the project's cancellation.

[xxx] *Etnocacerismo* is a nationalist movement founded by Antauro and Ollanta Humala. In the late 1980s, as members of the Peruvian armed forces, Ollanta Humala and his brother Antauro opposed the state's counterinsurgency strategy to combat the Shining Path in the Andes due to its violent abuse of highland

communities. Over the two decades following the internal armed conflict, however, their politicss had turned increasingly conservative, and the *etnocacerista* movement, increasingly autonomous. Perhaps one of the most important elements holding together this volatile movement is the experience of army reservists (with a critical view of their deployment) in grassroots protests contesting the economic interests of national elites. As such, *etnocacerismo* can be understood as enacting a visceral critique of neoliberalism. The group's name pays homage to Marshall Andrés Avelino Cáceres, a 19th-century military leader from the region of Ayacucho who, as part of Southern Peru's regional elite, went on to become president on two occasions (1886-1890 and 1894-1895). For some of the *ethnocacerists* that I met during fieldwork, it was important that Andrés Avelino Cáceres laid claim to Indigenous heritage on his mother's side, spoke Quechua, and led guerrillas of mestizo and Indigenous peasants to fight for the Peruvian Republic during the War of the Pacific (1879-1884). As a contemporary political current in Peru, the *etnocacerista* project relies on a rhetorical identification with the interests of Indigenous and mestizo communities, whom Isaac Humala's political theory interpellates (and I would say, subjectivates) as the "copper race." Though the popular appeal of the *etnocacerista* movement is nothing to scoff at, particularly in the south of the country, its history of militaristic tactics and homophobic discourses have placed it at odds with the more liberal groups in Peru's broad array of social movements contesting Fujimori's legacies and Peru's neoliberal reforms. For readers unfamiliar with the Peruvian context, it is also important to note that Ollanta Humala won the 2011 presidential election. However, over his five-year term, though he widened the scope of social security programs offered by the state, his economic policies did not differ from those of previous presidents. Moreover, he continued to enact extraordinary forms of policing against grassroots organizers, often relying on the figure of the terrorist. Today, the word, *humalización* ("humalization") is used to describe the shift in the position of a political leader or social movement from a radical rejection of Peru's neoliberal model to its gradual embrace.

[xxxi] In the year 2000, having grown vocal in his rejection of Fujimori's regime, the Humala brothers led a group of around 60 soldiers in an occupation of Southern Peru Copper Corporation's Toquepala mine near the town of Locumba. Locally known as the *Locumbazo*, this rather abrupt event took place on October 29 and ended with the flight of the Humala brothers and a few of their followers, who took four workers hostage, exchanged their release for supplies, and fled as 500 soldiers surrounded the mine.

The Locumba uprising took place in the context of a major scandal, which eventually triggered the fall of Fujimori's ten-year regime. The scandal began in the middle of September, with the public discovery of an elaborate bribe and extortion scheme organized by the head of intelligence services and Fujimori's second-in-command, Vladimiro Montesinos. The *vladivideos*—as they became known—are a collection of tapes taken at the headquarters of Peru's intelligence service offices, where Montesinos negotiated extralegal agreements with congressional representatives, government officials, businesspeople, media executives, and well-known TV personalities. To date, more than 350 of these videos have been deposited and digitized at the *Lugar de la Memoria* ("Place of Memory"), a public institution overseen by the Ministry of Culture, which has been given the mission to house the archives of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and disseminate its findings. On November 19, mired in the scandal of the *vladivideos*, Fujimori resigned from his duties as president of the country while on an official trip to attend the Asia-Pacific Cooperation Forum. Montesinos, finding himself at the very epicentre of the *vladivideos* scandal, escaped the country two weeks before Fujimori by taking a private yacht to the Galapagos Islands, and once out of the country finding his way to Venezuela, where he was captured less than a year later.

After the collapse of Fujimori dictatorship, Humala brothers were pardoned for the events at Lucumba, which henceforth came to mark their rise into a national scene of social movements and institutional politics. In 2005, Antauro Humala staged a second uprising in the province of Andahuaylas, Apurimac, for which he was sentenced to 19 years in prison, and pardoned in 2021. In 2022, Antauro Humala also lost support from the *etnocacerista* movement, when he expressed his public support for the right-wing ruling coalition, which came into power on December 7, 2022.

[xxxii] Though it may appear that I am setting up Señor Ricardo as a stand-in for politics and Señora María as one for ethics, I neither wish to flatten their presence, nor to conceive of ethics and politics as different spheres.

[xxxiii] Rancière uses the term "politics" (or la politique) to refer to acts or practices of policing that—as Elizabeth Povinelli notes (2011: 198)—not only discipline bodies, but also the very terms on which the relations that constitute selves and social worlds come to be perceived and intelligibly formulated. In this view, seen as a practice rather than a government institution, policing upholds dominant ways of doing and knowing through situated modes of exclusion. In parallel, Rancière uses the term "political" (or le politique) to refer to the dynamics of contestation

that enable new possibilities to emerge, rather than arbitrate between the implementation of given alternatives (2004 [1998]: 100, 104). In this sense, the political (i.e., le politique) denotes a transformative moment, when a force that would otherwise be eliminated or minimized comes to restructure a relational ensemble. For the sake of clarity, when I refer to the political (unless clarified with a parenthetical note, as is the case in the previous sentence), I am referring more broadly to the relationship between situated modes of power and the possibilities that constitute a particular context, thus including the concerns expressed in both terms, la politique and le politique.

[xxxiv] For example, in *Life in Debt*, Clara Han (2012) draws inspiration from the work of Arthur Kleinman (2006, 2010) when describing the mutually constitutive relation between the ethical and epistemic dimensions of ethnographic knowledge making as a matter of "implication." Han's project traces the effects of Chile's ongoing history of neoliberal reforms as experiences of precarity and state violence texture the lives of the people living in the neighbourhood of La Pincoya, north of the capital city of Santiago. When unpacking the method structuring her inquiry, Han explains that it was "because [she] became implicated in the lives of others… [that she] had to engage norms in their lives: to appreciate the work of domestic relations, the stakes in concealing need, the delicate struggles over intimate relationships in which the body was staked, or the small neglects and denials that also made up everyday life" (2012: 26).

[xxxv] In a context where 72.9 percent of agricultural lands belonged to 0.2 percent of landowners, perhaps one of the most important legacies of the self-denominated *Gobierno Revolucionario de las Fuerzas Armadas* (1968-1980) was its ambitious project of Agrarian Reform. The policies of land redistribution and social mobilization enacted under Velasco Alvarado's rule remain a point of contention in Peru today. They were life-changing for both rural communities, who until then had been living in semifeudal conditions, and for national elites, who lost 45 percent of their landholdings (Cant 2021). Moreover, the projects of Velasco Alvarado's *Gobierno Revolucionario* had a wide range of consequences across the various regional and institutional contexts where it unfolded (Aguirre and Drinot 2017, Mayer 2009).

[xxxvi] In addition to Radio Frecuencia 1330, many of the members of Arequipa's grassroots groups, who participated in my fieldwork also listened to or had contacts at Radio Victoria (92.9 FM / 1470 AM). Let me offer a brief sketch of the radioscape that was part of my fieldwork. One of the places where I listened to the radio frequently was the house of Señora Valentina, the owner of the prepared food stand at the Palomar Market where I sometimes helped out. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, between four and seven in the morning, I would go to Señora Francisca's house to help her cook for her stand, and while we worked she usually put on news radio such as RPP (02.3 FM / 1170 AM), Exitosa (95.5 FM) or Radio Yaraví (106.3 FM / 930 AM). Alternatively, sometimes, we would also listen to La Inolvidable (107.1 FM / 770 AM) and Radio Felicidad (103.5). These five radio stations were also regularly playing at my grandmother's house. Lastly, while working at the Palomar market itself, I usually listened to Nueva Q (34.3 FM), Karibeña (101.7 FM), or La Kalle (99.1 FM), which usually played on the loudspeakers.

[xxxvii] Despite its colloquial name, Peru's so-called "police protection law" or *ley de protección policial* (Nº 31012) applies to both members of the police and the armed forces.

[xxxviii] Previous versions of this writ had been passed and revoked on grounds of unconstitutionality, when they were implemented by Legislative Decree in 2007 (Nº 982) and 2014 (Nº 30151).

[xxxix] For more information on Article 117 of the Peruvian Constitution of 1993, please see Note 17. To the growing concern of institutions like the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (2021), between 2017 and 2022, this mechanism has been invoked seven times, more than doubling its use since the foundation of the Peruvian Republic in 1821.

[xl] Over the course of my 14-month period of fieldwork that began in October 2018, I split my time alternating two weeks at a time between the city of Arequipa and the Tambo Valley, where I stayed with a family of farmers in one of the upstream communities. However, I visited townships downstream once or twice a week to see family friends and Señora Francisca.

[xli] See introduction.

[xlii] In this murky context, both the Peruvian National Police and grassroots leaders (*dirigentes*) alleged that the acts of vandalism were caused by "undercover agents" (*infiltradas/os*), using this word in an equivocal sense. While government officials associated *infiltradas/os* with terrorist groups and illegal miners (Villacorta Yamashiro 2021), grassroots leaders used the word *infildtrada/o* to refer to police informants or plainclothed police officers who escalated violence at peaceful marches. Additionally, in the context of the licensing process for the second

Environmental Impact Assessment, Valley residents reported that the mine paid people from outside the Valley to attend the information sessions that the mine is obliged to hold for the communities within the project's area of influence. Importantly, in 2014, the Ministry of the Interior established an undercover police squadron known as the Grupo Terna. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2020: 8) has expressed concern over the extralegal use of *terna* policing during protests. In my experience, activists in the Valley have been increasingly wary of *terna* policing since 2015. The operationalization of this new police unit took place under the direction of Daniel Urresti, who headed the Ministry between June 2014 and February 2015. Urresti, a former brigadier general of the Peruvian army, was deployed in the highlands during the internal armed conflict and entered the world of institutional politics in the post-conflict period. On April 13, 2023, he received a 12-year prison sentence for the premeditated murder of the journalist Hugo Bustíos while he commanded an army patrol in Castro Pampa, Ayacucho in 1998.

[xliii] The average exchange rate of Peruvian soles (PEN) to Canadian Dollars (CAD) 2019, was 0.3977. In parallel, at a rate of .2977 to US Dollars (USD).

[xliv] Silversides are small, inexpensive, and oily fish, which are usually battered and fried and eaten whole, either next to a bed of white rice or in a sandwich.

[xlv] The FDA's 2016 report on arsenic in rice and rice products states that "compared with other cereals, such as wheat and barley, rice has much higher levels of arsenic. The elevated arsenic is due to rice being the only major cereal crop grown under flooded conditions, leading to high arsenic availability and high concentrations close to the root" (7). As I understand it, this paints a painful picture of the consequences of neoliberalism in Peru. In a context where the Altiplano-Puna plateau, where the Tambo River originates, contributes geogenic arsenic to some of the rivers in the region (Murray et al. 2023), the 1992 expansion of the Pasto Grande Dam has contributed to the increased presence of arsenic in the Tambo Valley (MIDAGRI 2019). Thus, when farmers attempt to mitigate the accumulation of boric acid and arsenic in their land by planting rice during the rainy season, it appears that while the boric acid is dissolved in the fresh(er) rainwater and washed out to sea, the arsenic is absorbed into the rice itself.

[xlvi] The protests did not succeed in repealing the Supreme Decrees issued by the Ministry of Economy and Finances (*103-2015-EF 055-2016-EF*). However, these economic policies were temporarily suspended in 2021 to help small-scale farmers recover from the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. As of 2022, they are being gradually reintroduced.

[xlvii] In the Tambo Valley a *jornal* is divided into two four-hour sections, from 7am to 11am and from 12pm to 4pm. The difference in the range of payment depends on the kind of work, which is in turn gendered. "Lighter" work, such as weeding rice fields, harvesting crops, sorting produce by quality pays around 60 PEN and is usually done by women. Work that is considered "heavier" usually entails shoveling, fumigating, and fertilizing, and it pays around 80 PEN. To fumigate crops, *jornaleros* use knapsack sprayers, plastic tanks filled with chemical solutions mixed to treat and prevent different pests. Known as "pumps" (*bombas*), this equipment can carry 20Lt (and weigh 20 kg or 44 lbs when full). Its contents are dispersed through a pressurized nozzle, which (when not electric) requires continuously cranking air into the equipment using a side handle. Bags of seed and fertilizer usually weigh 50 kg (110). Dear reader, consider that at the time of fieldwork I weighed an average of 130 lbs, and was only able to do "women's" work, when accompanying project participants into their farming plots.

[xlviii] Señora Francisca had three cows, a mother and two calves (one older than the other). They were all raised for meat, not dairy, and the mother cow produced between 3-5 litres a day. Like the Huanca family who is at the centre of Chapters 2 and 3, Señora Francisca either consumed the milk at home (as fresh cheese, in rice porridges, or as a beverage) or gifted it to family and friends. As I indicate above, she used cleaned soda bottles to store the milk. During fieldwork, I was told that bottles that had originally kept clear sodas would make the stored milk sseparate, whereas bottles that stored black sodas would not.

[xlix] As a teenager, Señora Francisca moved to the Valley to live with the family of her paternal uncle, who had been working as migrant labourers there since the 1960s. Though she was not a *tambeña* by birth, Señora Francisca married Señor Melchor at 19, and settled in the Valley for the rest of her life, traveling occasionally to Puno to visit her mother until she passed away in the 1980s.

[l] I am aware that the story of Señora Imelda's plight after her husband's death must have more dimensions than I have been able to attune to during fieldwork. For instance, I know that she and Señora Francisca have a brother who lives in a small town in Puno, and that they became estranged from him after their mother's death. Moreover, when I asked Señora Francisca why her sister's children were separated as they were—trying to understand what might be the thought behind leaving the oldest girl with her father's family while asking her sister

to take her son—I did not receive a detailed answer. She simply said, "that's how it took place" (*así sucedió*).

[li] As I discuss in more detail below, my reading of Freud's perspective on mourning and attention to the transition between his earlier and later work on the subject, as elaborated in his 1923 essay *The Ego and the Id*, is in conversation with Lisa Stevenson's work (2014).

[lii] Nor, as Gananath Obeyesekere (1990) points out, does Freud's initial view of mourning take into account the different ways in which the experience of loss can be differently woven into the shared sense of reality that connects a group of people to a wider existence.

[liii] Elsewhere, I have implicitly drawn on Freud's theory of mourning to describe the ways in which the experience of change is inextricably bound with loss, such that becoming different entails, to different degrees, undergoing the ordeal of coming undone (Gamarra 2019).

[liv] Señora Francisca also noted that it took the family extra time to get him enrolled in school, partly because of the paperwork, but also because he continued to fight with other kids. The transition was not smooth, but gradually Mateo became more available to the world around him.

[lv] The fieldwork for *Lugares Parientes* took place in the region of Cusco. Two of his sites were the peasant communities of Japu (Hapu, Paucartambo) and Ccamahuara (Qamawara, Calca), where Salas Carreño conducted research in 2007 and 2008, and the third site was the town of San Jerónimo, where he worked intermittently in 2002, 2003, 2007, and 2008. In this time, San Jerónimo was incorporated into the east end of the city of Cusco, along La Cultura Avenue.

[lvi] Señora Francisca's understanding of *arraigo* differs in subtle but important ways from the definition and examination of this term in Ginno Martínez Tuesta's MA Thesis in Development at the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO, Ecuador). Working also in the Tambo Valley, Martínez Tuesta defines "an economy of rootedness" as a mode of production and exchange "that is part of the social, political, and cultural sphere, in other words, when the economy is embedded in social institutions, or, to put it differently, when these institutions interact with the economy" (2017: viii).

[lvii] This lack of control over the circumstances of one's life touches on a second, perhaps less intuitive use of the word "unhandsome," drawing from the writings of the philosopher Stanley Cavell (1990). For Cavell, moments when the possibilities of a social world escape the overly shrewd manipulations of the human mind and hand present us with what he calls the "unhandsome conditions" of our existence, which is to say, their changing (not given) character.

[lviii] Let me reiterate that I do not view the ethical and the political as separate domains, but rather, as registers for making public judgments on the interwoven dimensions of action, practice, and the systems within which situated ways of living and dying become possible (see Dave 2012, Fassin 2015, Lambek 2015).

[lix] In Peru, the standing framework for citizen participation in the licensing process of an extractive project was established in 2008 (through a ministerial resolution and supreme degree from the Ministry of Energy and Mines, MS N° 304-2008-MEM-DM and DS N° 028- 2008-EM). This mechanism requires that the Environmental Impact Assessment necessary to construct, operate, and expand an extractive project be presented to the communities in the project's direct area of impact in two public hearings, the first to introduce the project's risks and benefits, and the second, to respond to the community's observations. This mechanism, however, does not referendum on the community's consent. In 2011, under the pressure of protests from Aymara communities in the region of Puno contesting the Bear Creek mining project in the province of Huacullani, the Peruvian Congress passed a law (Nº 29785) intended to regulate the process of prior consultation in Indigenous and peasant communities, which was then operationalized by the Ministry of Culture in 2012 (DS Nº 001-2012-MC). Importantly, this mechanism also abstains from mandating a community-wide referendum as part of the licensing process, and rather establishes mechanisms for community leaders to negotiate with mining officials. The people living in the Tambo Valley do not claim this territory as ancestral Indigenous land, and the prior consultation mechanisms mandated by the Law Nº 29785 do not apply. Nevertheless, in addition to the standard citizen participation mechanisms, government authorities have responded to the local rejection of the Tía María Project by establishing platforms for negotiation (*mesas de diálogo*), which crucially do not allow participants to refuse the project altogether, but rather aim to negotiate the terms of its approval (Quispe Aguilar 2021). In this ambiguous context, where it is not clear what exactly counts as a "social license" and whether this mechanism applies, many Valley residents are wary that accessing the mine's services can erode their community's right to refuse extraction. Additionally, the following chapter addresses a related concern with the mine's community outreach programs, which is their role in normalizing state violence.

[lx] This allegation enabled a public prosecutor specialized in organized crime to head the investigation. In its

final stage, the case involved 14 *dirigentes* in a group trial that encompassed five different charges, including illicit association with criminal intent, disturbance of the peace, extortion, and two separate counts of obstructing public services. Not all imputations involved all 14 defendants. (For more information, please see the decision on *Expediente 02545-2015-18-0401-JR-PE-01* issued by Arequipa's 1st Criminal Appeals Chamber, Central Headquarters, *1° Sala Penal de Apelaciones - Sede Central*.) Though Gutiérrez was found guilty of extortion, the Public Ministry could not sustain the claim that he and the 13 other *dirigentes* were part of a racketeering group. In February 2022, Arequipa's Superior Court ratified a previous decision issued by a lower criminal court, which found Gutiérrez and two other *dirigentes* guilty of rioting and encumbering public services and disturbing the peace during the protests of 2015. In addition to a sentence of six years and six months for extortion, Gutiérrez was also sentenced to an additional twelve years and four months. Jesús Mariano Cornejo Reynoso (ex-president of the Water Management Board of the Tambo River) received a total of seven years and six months for both charges, while Jaime de la Cruz Gallegos (ex-mayor of the Deán Valdivia district) received twelve years and four months. Additionally, Jesús Cornejo was mandated to pay 35 thousand Peruvian Soles in civil reparations, while Pepe Julio Gutiérrez and Jaime de la Cruz were ordered to make a joint payment of 500 thousand, and all three were issued a joint payment of 100 thousand. An important aspect of this decision is that the charges were imputed using the modality of "non-executive coauthorship" (*coautoría no ejecutiva*), which Peruvian organizations dedicated to the defense of civil rights have condemned for violating the due process of *dirigentes* in anti-extractive struggles (Red Muqui 2022). For a detailed account of the *pepeaudio* scandal, which delves into its impact on the criminalization of grassroots activists and the negotiations over the second EIA, please see the work of my colleague Daniel Quispe Aguilar (2022: 177-183). Though it is important to note the emergent techniques of criminalization that shape grassroots politics in contemporary Peru, here, I am concerned with establishing a contrast between the way betrayal is understood in activist circles and in neighbourhood life.

[lxi] In contrast to Señora Francisca, who at the time of my fieldwork refused to publicly claim a position, Señora Marta established a connection with *both* the mine *and* the protesters calling for its cancellation.

[lxii] Singh observes that people from neighbouring communities in Shahabad had competing accounts of the ecological degradation of the surrounding forests, which became more pronounced throughout the 1990s. While conversing with Saanwlia, a Sahariya man residing in the forest village of Mandikachar, Singh discovers that the issue of diminishing regrowth is attributed to the grazing activities of nomadic pastoralists. According to Saanwlia, Sahariya practices of shifting cultivation used to allow for fallow patches to replenish in roughly four year intervals until changes in the routes of Rebari and Raika herders brought camels and sheep to graze in the region (Singh 2015: 63). Soon after, Singh receives a similar account from a Forest Conservator while discussing a dispute over a group of herders, who broke into a forest management enclosure. Contrastingly, in speaking to Rajaram Raika, a local school teacher from the camel-herder caste, Singh learns that some pastoralists have been moving their animals through Shahabad for nearly eighty years. Rajaram's account of the decline in forest life gave a more central place to the practice of logging for firewood, which sustains many Sahariya livelihoods (*ibid.*: 64-5). While Shahabadi residents can legally gather dead branches or trees from the forest floor, the logging that partially sustains some Sahariya households and local wood consumption can involve piecemeal arrangements with members of the Forest Department who tolerate illegal felling (*ibid.*: 66-7).

[lxiii] Disputes over the use of water characterize the relations between neighbours in various small-scale agricultural settings across Peru (Araujo Raurau 2013, Gelles 2000, Paerregaard et al. 2020)

[lxiv] Please see the Introduction of my thesis for more context.

[lxv] The exchange between the philosopher Juan Gines Sepúlveda and the Dominican friar Bertomolé de las Casas on the expansion of the Spanish Empire across the Atlantic, also known as the Valladolid Debate (1550-1551), is a formative moment in the history of race thinking in Latin America, and in the fantasies of internal enmity that buttress colonial and modern-colonial projects of governance (Hanke 1974, Wynter 2003). Sepúlveda, inspired by Friar Francisco de Vitoria's Aristotelian interpretations, argued that non-Christians in the Atlantic could be considered "natural slaves" due to their perceived lack of reason. De las Casas strongly disagreed with this perspective, considering it heretical and asserting that nothing in nature, being God's creation, could be inherently imperfect. Thus, de las Casas called for an end to territorial conquest and advocated a peaceful conversion process. Gonzálo Lamana has argued that Sepúlveda's and de las Casas's stances represent the extremes of a colonizing perspective, where Indigenous people are seen "as either nice, little brown people to be converted, or as evil creatures (sinful, irrational, traitors) to be policed" (2008: 155). Orlando Bentancor (2017) has argued that the Valladolid debate shaped colonial perceptions of Indigenous subjects by refracting Aristotelian notions of matter and workmanship, such that under an evangelizing logic, forced labour was at first

understood to civilize Indigenous subjects. As the emphasis of viceroyal administration shifted from evangelization to providing resources for the expansion of Spain's Christian Empire, Bentancor argues that work came to be understood not only as producing a pastoral effect on the subject (imagined as being in a productive tension with inherent degrees of savagery) but also as expressing their "proper place" in a divinely mandated project (2017: 302). By contrast, under the administration of the Spanish Empire, the enslavement of Black people was justified by withholding such notions of work on the grounds of a substantial difference in their physical being (Jackson 2020). In this context, the legal standing of persons living under the Spanish Crown became administered through discourses on "pure" and "mixed" blood that combined with descriptions of physical appearance and behaviour to create a hierarchized field of racialized identities (O'Toole 2012, Silverblatt 2004). As Inga Clendinnen (1987) and Kenneth Mills (1997) have observed in their respective analyses of 16th-century campaigns against idolatry in the Yucatán and the Andes, the regime of subjecthood established in the Spanish Viceroyalties of New Spain (1521-1821) and Peru (1542-1824) was policed in part by notions of internal enmity. Across Latin America, regional variations of these biologized notions of race and moral personhood have endured well beyond independence (Segato 2022, Taussig 1987), largely through nationalist discourses on mestizaje and hybridity, which perpetuated evolutionist understandings of savagery and civilization in emergent configurations of "mixed race" identities (Alonso 2004, Navarrete 2015, Vasconcellos 1925). In late 19th and early 20th century Peru, colonial notions of blood lineage—which conceived of race as being biologically determined (though improvable through pastoral efforts)—began to overlap with Liberal discourses of "decency" and "respect," and notions of education as a civilizing agent (de la Cadena 2000, Drinot 2011). In this emergent conceptual landscape, race was understood as being morally produced both through a person's efforts at self-cultivation and the modernization of the state.

[lxvi] Chantal Mouffe's (1999) concept of agonistic pluralism theorizes the importance of conflicting perspectives in communities that aspire to nourish egalitarian forms of governance, insisting that political conflicts are inevitable and that attempting to address them solely through established mechanisms of consensus will systematically avoid examining their constitutive exclusions. Thus, as an alternative, Mouffe advocates for practices of open confrontation, which do not discredit the legitimacy of an actor's mode of contestation (for example, accepting that blocking roadways is a legitimate way to protest under certain circumstances while taking over a public or private facility is categorically unacceptable), but does, however, make an important distinction concerning its ends.

[lxvii] Here, thinking with Marilyn Strathern (2004 [1991]), I am using the concept of scale to mean more than scope. The forms of violence organized through the figures the *infiltrada/o* or the *terruca/o* take place in separate domains and mobilize mechanisms of different form and magnitude, though their aims are both exclusionary.

[lxviii] After harvesting their rice, the family decided not to plant any more crops in 2015. This year, they barely made enough to repay part of their agrarian debt.

[lxix] It seems to me that Señora Francisca's trust in me had not only grown from my willingness to bring her packages to her daughter Roxana, but also from my deliberate restraint in listening to her, which entailed avoiding a forensic register of inquiry.

[lxx] Between October 2018 and July 2019, I traveled between the city of Arequipa and a small town in the upstream section of the Valley people call *valle arriba*, and during this nine-month period, I spent two weeks at each place. In the city, one of the places where I conducted participant observation was a prepared food stand in the Palomar Market, where I accompanied the owner and her neighbour on their work routines three to four times a week. During a preliminary visit in 2017, the stand owner, Señora Valentina, introduced me to the farmer who grew the rice she used at the stand, her *compadre* Señor Manuel. A middle-aged man dedicated to businesses and farming, Señor Manuel brought me to Tambo Valley, where he owns and rents a few farming plots. There, I met the Huanca family, who at the time of my fieldwork occasionally worked his land and looked after his crops. As I mentioned in the Introduction, the Tambo Valley is located in the province of Islay, one of the eight different provinces that make up the region of Arequipa. The Tambo Valley is comprised of five separate districts, four of which immediately surround the river and depend on it to irrigate 15,000 hectares of agricultural land and for domestic use. Roughly 24,000 people live in these four districts surrounding the river, which are Cocachacra, Deán Valdivia, Mejía, and Punta de Bombón. To get from the city of Arequipa to the district of Cocachacra, I took a *colectivo* that would connect the Gratersa Terminal in the city's Industrial Park to a stop in the town of Fiscal, crossing the La Joya Plateau. Then, I would wait for a *colectivo* to take me *valle arriba* along a winding dirt road that split from the Pan-American Highway and passed right by the doorstep of the Huanca family, with whom I stayed.

[lxxi] There is not a lot of scholarship on *polladas*, but the little that exists often describes them as a "survival strategy" associated with Andean practices of kinship and reciprocity (Béjar Rivera and Álvarez Alderete 2010). For the most part, *polladas* have been documented by sociologists and analyzed through the lenses of precarity or economic instability (Cuberos-Gallardo 2020), though they also help cover the costs of collective and individual

projects of improvement as well as grassroots activism. Across their many variations, *polladas*, to differing degrees, make a community present at moments of uncertainty, enabling situated ways of knowing the possibilities at the limits of a social world.

[lxxii] By the time I began my research, protests against the Tía María Mining Project had already escalated into militarized occupations of the Valley on two separate occasions, in 2011 and 2015 (Pinto Herrera 2016a, 2016b). On both instances, government authorities, mine officials, and mainstream media outlets claimed that Valley residents protesting the Tía María Project were financed by "terrorist" groups, sometimes even going so far as to insinuate that they were affiliated with a contemporary version of the Shining Path—the brutal guerrilla group at the heart of Peru's internal armed conflict in the 1980s and early 1990s (Paucar Albino 2015, Silva Santisteban 2016, Villacorta Yamashiro 2021). The police and military occupations of the Tambo Valley in 2011 and 2015 endangered the lives and livelihoods of Valley residents and fundamentally altered the dynamics of the conflict. As a result, seven civilians and one police officer lost their lives, numerous documented injuries were reported, and many demonstrators and dirigentes (community leaders) faced criminal charges (Pérez 2021a, Quispe Aguilar 2021). Additionally, in 2015, ex-president Ollanta Humala declared a state of emergency between May and July, though a large contingent of police and military remained in place until October 20, 2015, and the last contingents left at the end of the year (Pinto Herrera 2016a, 2016b). On this occasion, the state's repressive tactics were largely attributed to the emergence of community defense groups called espartambos, who used slingshots and shields made of wood or sheets of metal in confrontations with forces of the state, who themselves were equipped with armoured tanks and live ammunition. Moreover, under the state of emergency, Valley residents suspected of participating in the protests experienced night raids into their homes, producing a significant number of arbitrary detentions and reported incidents of excessive use of force (Dunlap 2019). During the violent encounters with police and military personnel—that came to characterize life in the valley at this time—state forces frequently covered their faces and obscured or falsified the identification on their badges.

[lxxiii] Alan García approved the incursion of the armed forces in the Tambo Valley by way of Supreme Resolution RS-113-2011-DE.

[lxxiv] Please see notes 6 and 55 for more information on the criminalization of community leaders (*dirigentes*) in the context of the 2015 protests calling for the cancellation of the Tía María project in the Tambo Valley.

[lxxv] Stuart Kirsch's fieldwork with the Yonggom communities affected by the OK Tedi mine began in the 1980s. Less than a decade after Papua New Guinea gained its independence from Australia in 1975, the Ok Tedi mine became the country's first extractive concession with the multinational corporation Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd (BHP) as the project's manager. Located in the Star Mountains near the border with Indonesia, the terrain was not easily accessible to construction equipment. Ten years after the mine opened, in 1994, BHP was sued in the Supreme Court of Victoria, and the case was settled two years later. Then, in the year 2000, a group of landowners presented a second lawsuit against BHP and the mine for a breach of settlement, which was once again settled out of court in 2004. Before this second settlement, BHP merged with Billiton, and in 2002, BHP Billiton established an independent trust based in Singapore—PNG Sustainable Development Program Limited—to which it transferred its 52% share in the Ok Tedi mine. This was the result of an agreement with the government of Papua New Guinea, which granted BHP Billiton legal immunity in exchange for granting the government use of the trust's revenues for development programs and future closure expenses (Kirsch 2014: 118-119).

[lxxvi] In the fifth chapter of his book, Kirsch explores six techniques that enable corporations to steer conflicts once the denial of damages is no longer possible: engaging selectively with critics, appropriating the language of their denunciations, establishing or endorsing oversight mechanisms that legitimize the mine's practices, circulating alternative narratives, discrediting opponents, and amassing prestige through gifts and service provision.

[lxxvii] Building on James Ferguson's notion of *antipolitics* (1994), Sawyer uses the concept of *corporate antipolitics* to describe the array of tactics the oil company uses to both demobilize and dismiss long-standing Indigenous political actors (2004: 120). Whereas Ferguson originally used the term to make sense of the discursive framing that undergirds development projects that frame sites of intervention ahistorically in terms of technical problems and solutions, Sawyer's elaboration both centres the role of actors and attends to a new range of strategies, some of which include: ARCO's efforts to obscure its support for DICIP (particularly when using this small community group to enact violent acts of intimidation); its use of material benefits and services to exploit rifts within and between Pastaza's communities; and its persistent attempts at controlling the framing within which the demands of Indigenous communities could be presented, so as to limit their reach.

[lxxviii] This can also be said of the moment in the previous chapter, when Señora Marta's neighbours stop speaking to her for procuring healthcare at the pop-up clinics sponsored by the mine. Concretely, that implies that corporate counterinsurgency in the Tambo Valley is shifting the thresholds of agonistic intimacy (Singh 2015).

[lxxix] In 2009, Awajún and Wampis communities in Bagua were contesting both PetroPerú's oil development projects in the Peruvian Amazon as well as a two Legislative Decrees (Nº1064 and Nº 1090) that aimed to loosenthe regulations around private ownership of land in the Amazon as per the requirements of a Free Trade Agreement with the US. The protests culminated with the catastrophic confrontations between Indigenous communities and the Peruvian police on June 5th and 6th, where 23 police officers and 10 Indigenous people were killed. These events have become known as the *Baguazo* (see Castillo Fernandez 2021, Surrallés 2011). At the end of Alan García's administration, in 2011, Aymara Communities in Puno protested the establishment of an unlawful mining concession in the district of Huacullano, which was granted to the Canadian corporation Bear Creek Mining. The *Aymarazo* resulted in the revocation of Bear Creek's license, which in turn gave rise to an international arbitration process that resulted in an indemnity payment for the mining corporation, as well as the establishment of a prior and informed consent protocol during Ollanta Humala's administration through Supreme Decree N° 001-2012-MC (issued by the MInistry of Culture) and Congressional Law N° 29785 (see Terán Toledo et al. 2019).

[lxxx] The anthropologist Eric Hirsch (2022) has used the concept of 'extractive care' to attend to the ethical imaginaries and practices of care that emerge in this triad of relations (which are otherwise marked by abandonment, repression, and even state terror). Hirsch's ethnography is partially based in the province of Espinar (Cusco), where a regime of corporate counterinsurgency also employs extraordinary forms of militarized violence alongside community outreach programs. Hirsch's analysis of the semiotic construction of "growth" as a moral discourse that enables practices of corporate and state care that are compatible with the devastation of extractivism is an important part of understanding the situation I am describing here. However, my work emphasizes the role of fear and state violence as techniques of governance. Partly, this stems from a commitment to not obscuring the legacies of the internal armed conflict in the governance of resource extraction in Peru, and partly, it also stems from the methodological demands of cultivating relations of trust with grassroots activists, which prevented me from cultivating in-depth relations with people who worked for the mine.

[lxxxi] As disputes over land and labour continue to intensify at the margins of the post-conflict state, the unstable array of security laws mobilized by the figure of the terrorist enable government authorities to implement extraordinary forms of policing, which paradoxically stand outside the law to enforce a situated vision of order. Peru's current Penal Code and security legislation were established during the regime of Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000). These bodies of law were partially modified throughout the 1990s to remove elements condemned by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (e.g., the use of martial courts to try civilians) (Burt 2007). Nevertheless, both during and after the conflict, notions of internal enmity have continued to play a central role in laws that curtail civil rights and expand the powers of state forces to surveil and repress grassroots groups (Lust 2019, Merino 2023, Saldaña Cuba and Portocarrero Salcedo 2017). Peru's post-conflict array of security laws is highly unstable, not only because it is continuously changing as controversial bills are intermittently passed and repealed, but also because the word "terrorism" itself remains undefined across these documents (Méndez 2021). Consequently, within a post-conflict context, this undefined threat of "terrorism" has been repeatedly cited in legislation aiming to grant the forces of the state immunity from sanctions for extralegal or disproportionate uses of force. Similarly, the language of "terrorism" is frequently used to establish and enact extraordinary legal frameworks for policing, which, on the one hand, delegate discretionary power to militarize protests to appointed positions within armed forces and the presidential cabinet, and on the other, enable extractive companies to make security contracts with the police and the military. In 2011 and 2015, these security laws were enacted in the militarization of the Tía María conflict as state and corporate actors levied unfounded accusations of "terrorism" to stigmatize Valley residents who opposed the mining project, thus enacting a strategy of governance known as terruqueo.

[lxxxii] The term graduated sovereignty entails a broad patchwork of governance techniques—from policing and punitive measures to healthcare initiatives to programs designed to improve people's aptitudes and living environments in particular ways. However, the fact that these techniques exist on a continuum does not mean that people navigate through them in commensurable ways. Rather, Ong observes that the complex arrays of governance techniques that emerge with neoliberal statecraft "overlap with preformed racial, religious, and gender hierarchies and further fragment citizenship for people… of the same country" (2006: 84). This means that their accessibility

and enforcement produce and reproduce uneven conditions of subject formation. Constructive critics such as Kathy Powell have argued that the concept of graduated sovereignty does not present a radical disjuncture with pre-existing patterns in the relationship between private capital and the state, but rather their intensification (2008). For Drinot, Ong's analysis offers a conceptual space for unpacking the fractal logics through which projects of neoliberal statecraft selectively deploy techniques designed to promote welfare and exert violence in efforts to link labour and resources to global markets, which "reproduce and reassert other forms of exclusion" (2014: 171). More specifically, Drinot uses the concept of graduated sovereignty to theorize the figures of internal enmity that distribute at least three different forms of violence and care within a constellation of corporate and state power—letting die, killing and making live. In the following section, I want to attend more closely to the force of this figure and the bewitching terror talk that animates it.

[lxxxiii] In addition to the Barrios Altos and La Cantuta massacres, *Grupo Colina* also targeted social movement leaders who contested the Fujimori regime. On December 18, 1992, the *dirigente* Pedro Huilca Tecse—a member of the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers (Confederación General de Trabajadores del Perú, CGTP) and a vocal opponent of the economic reforms of the 1990s—was gunned down as he left his home after breakfast (Burt 2007: 204). At first, government investigators and the media ascribed Huilca's murder to the Shining Path, while his close circle accused Fujimori's regime. The government's failure to investigate Huilca's death along with the murder of two other CGTP leaders raised suspicions of its involvement. When the existence of *Grupo Colina* became public in 1993, activist groups and victims' families called for investigations of the military's responsibility in these and other murders. While at first Fujimori and his supporters, once again, accused their opponents of attempting to weaken national security and of supporting terrorism, amid growing international pressure, the regime was forced to acknowledge and deactivate the death squad, and to prosecute some of its members. This process, however, was guarded from public scrutiny and carried out by a military tribunal, rendering sentences that were soon nullified by an amnesty law passed by congress in 1995 (Burt 2007: 182-3). Members of *Grupo Colina* would not face another trial for more than a decade. Moreover, despite growing scrutiny, Peru's National Intelligence Services continued to rely on extralegal violence to send "[a message] to society at large that dissent would not be tolerated" (Burt 2007: 210). On March 29, 1997, the mutilated body of former intelligence agent Mariella Barreto Riofano was found by the side of a road on the outskirts of Lima. Not long after, Leonor La Rosa, who had worked alongside Barreto, appeared on television while recovering in a hospital from brutal physical violence. La Rosa claimed that she and Barreto had been tortured as punishment for disclosing information to the media regarding a plan hatched by the National Intelligence Services to initiate an intimidation campaign against opposition journalists and politicians. These are the rough outlines of the context in which Poole and Rénique argue that the Peruvian state adopted extraordinary forms of policing, which were characterized by epistemic murk and the widespread use of extralegal force, and mimicked the violence of the Shining Path itself (2003: 159). Adjacently, as Burt further explores, the Fujimori regime was able to claim and defend its right to torture and kill citizens—to make them die in spectacular ways—by brazenly wielding unfounded allegations of "terrorism" both to silence individual opponents and to undermine "civil society's ability to challenge the authoritarian reconstitution of the state" (2007: 17).

[lxxxiv] Like Foucault's other efforts at theorizing power in the mode of control and domination, his research on disciplinary power aims to describe the conditions in which bodies, selves, and different scales of community come to be constituted through historically situated arrangements of knowledge and power. In other words, this is a theory where power is not just exercised in a top-down manner, but also spread out between sites that produce and operationalize knowledge. Roughly, this means that power, as Foucault theorizes it, is built into the very conditions that make thinking and action possible within a particular context, rather than possessed by a king-like individual, who simply gets to decide on what is to be done.

[lxxxv] Methodologically, to uncover these discourses, Foucault undertakes a meticulous examination of documents across various related domains, whose overlapping concerns with understanding and managing a problem come to constitute a terrain for knowledge and action, or episteme. However, rather than reading these texts to find a narrative of historical progression from ignorance to mastery, Foucault's genealogical approach aims to render the transitions between landscapes of emergent possibilities, which become imaginable through specific tools and amid situated conflicts (1977 [1971]).

[lxxxvi] On this view it is possible to speak of ableism as a kind of racism because it entails a split between normative modes of embodiment that ostensibly deserve cultivation and care, and deviant or abnormal bodies that

do not.

[lxxxvii] In *The Allure of Labor*, Drinot (2011) offers a historical analysis of the policies implemented in the 1920s and 1930s to shape the conduct of an emergent working class under the eleven-year administration of Augusto B. Leguía (1919-1930).

[lxxxviii] Synthesizing seven decades of social science scholarship, *Indigenous Mestizos* (de la Cadena 2000) charts the rise of two parallel imaginaries, which transposed earlier hierarchies from a biologized plane to a moral one while nevertheless retaining an evolutionist distinction between savagery and civilization. De la Cadena's research identifies the rise of two overlapping moral discourses, which displaced the notions of race that developed during the colonial era around concerns with "purity of blood" and lineage (Burns 1999) but retained a preoccupation with the distinction between savagery and civilization. Therefore, she examines the ways in which Peru's situated forms of race thinking are influenced by the evolutionist moral imaginaries of overlapping publics rather than essentializing interpretations of a person's physical attributes (de la Cadena 2000: 263). At the outset of the 20th century, discourses of *decencia* organized racialized moral imaginaries around a gendered code of conduct. While for women, *decencia* entailed living a domestic life and practicing chastity outside of marriage, for men, it entailed maintaining a balance between courtly refinement and masculinity, exercising discretion and pursuing civic leadership. After World War II, as urban working class communities grew through internal migration, an alternative array of discourses emerged. Organized around the word *respeto*, these discourses valourized striving to improve the well-being of one's family, and consequently reframed submissiveness and exploitation as signs of racialized and moral inferiority. In both of these imaginaries—constructed around the notions *decencia* and *respeto*—a formal education stood for progress, while rurality and pre-modern backwardness were conflated in the construction of the figure of the Indian. Moreover, early notions of *decencia* claimed the civilizing virtues of education only for urban elites, condemning the migration of people from rural communities to Peruvian cities on the grounds that undermining their "proper places" would lead to "degeneracy" (de la Cadena 2000: 24).

Extending this analysis into a more recent context, de la Cadena's 1991 ethnography of *respeto* in the Cusco examines notions of personal improvement in communities whose members identify as both Indigenous and mestizo: Corpus Christi celebrants in the neighbourhood of Almudena and grassroots dance troupe members (*comparsas*) throughout the city. A variety of rhetorical strategies enable both groups of people to dismantle the figure of the Indian and proudly bring Indigenous lifeways into public space. However, de la Cadena observes that in the process of delegating the necessary tasks for carrying out the Corpus Christi celebration, community members also establish their relative status by displays of responsibility and wealth, which are ultimately ranked according to a racialized moral imaginary, where the stigma of anti-modern backwardness remains attached to representations of rural poverty. In these examples, while the will to improve cannot be reduced to a fantasy that attaches people to projects that stifle their wellbeing (Berlant 2011), it must, nevertheless, be understood in relation to the legacies of evolutionist thinking and concomitant figures of internal enmity that have come to define the terms on which improvement in Peru becomes imaginable (or not).

[lxxxix] The Peruvian political scientist Roger Merino Acuña (2015) has noted that Velasco Alvarado's government faced criticism for approaching matters concerning Indigenous land tenure by operationalizing a categorical distinction between individual and collective ownership, thus failing to account for the diverse property relations in Andean communities (Del Castillo 2004, Miguez 2010). Similarly, in the Amazon, Velasco's refusal to establish mechanisms for the Peruvian state to engage with a federal system of Indigenous nations led to individual engagements as per the Andean context (Chirif and García Hierro 2007, Espinosa 2010, Surrallés 2009). Thus, the paradigm-shifting policies enacted during the first six years of the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces ambivalently echoed both Leguía's labour state and the Tawantinsuyu Committee's radical grassroots politics (albeit from a markedly different position and at a different scale).

[xc] Though the exact extent of the violence that the Peruvian state enacted under his command remains unknown, in 2017 he was tried in absentia by an Italian court for the killing of over 20 dual citizens within Peru's borders, receiving a life sentence. This verdict was reaffirmed in 2019, and all subsequent appeals were terminally rejected in February 2022. Additionally, the International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights in Argentina conducted an inquiry into a collaboration between Morales Bermúdez and the Videla dictatorship in the kidnapping of 13 Peruvian activists who were extradited to Jujuy in May of 1978. In 2009, the survivors filed a criminal accusation against Peru's former president. However, all efforts to investigate state violence under Morales Bermúdez's command have persistently been stifled in Peru.

[xci] Tania Li's *The Will to Improve* (2007) builds on a constructive criticism of James Ferguson's (1994) work—and Arturo Escobar's (1995)—though she only engages with him minimally. Rather than chart "a narrative of governmentality rising" (Li 2007: 32), Li aims to provide a layered description of the contradictions in which experts, planners, and authorities take responsibility for the welfare of others.

[xcii] Foucault's concept of governmentality is spread across several lectures and numerous interpretations. Here, I use it to denote strategies of rule that induce particular types of subjects by discursively and materially shaping the terms in which selfhood is experienced. As such, I understand this process to have two interconnected dimensions. One aspect concerns the diffuse mechanisms that put rationalities of rule into play, which aim to improve life beyond a biomedical purview, encompassing adjacent registers of life within modern imaginaries, such as the social and economic (Foucault 2003: 108-9). In this sense, the concept of governmentality focuses on the authoritative discourses, institutional practices, and materialities that together produce determinate effects on conduct. This aspect of Foucault's concept of governmentality is then linked to a second aspect: the processes of subject formation as it shapes a person's desires, habits, and convictions on the model of a pastorate (Foucault 2003: 184-185). Thinking of Foucault's concept of governmentality as indexing these two registers allows us to read each one as implying the other, whether this connection is made explicit or not. As Stevenson notes, "Foucault's concept of governmentality allows us to broaden our conception of colonial power to include forms of social control embodied in institutions like schools, prisons, and even therapeutic settings" (2014: 5).

[xciii] Alongside Tania Li's concern with attending thought in motion rather than seeking general descriptions of power, some constructive critiques of Foucault's scholarship have observed that his deep skepticism of normalizing institutions, particularly those associated with the state, overlooks the ways in which state and corporate forms of power are entangled (Dean 2014, Dean and Villadsen 2016, Gago 2017, Zamora and Behrent 2015). In parallel, others have noted that the institutions through which Foucault theorizes the arrangements of knowledge and power underlying modern techniques of governance do not account for the forms of power that accompanied Europe's colonial expansion (Escobar 1984, 1995, Silverblatt 2004, Slack 2018, Stoler 1995). Lastly, partially building on this point, a range of critical responses to Foucault's work also attend to modern regimes of governance, which employ repressive techniques aimed at inducing terror by way of physical violence, torture, and death (Mbembe 2003, Povinelli 2011, Rechtman 2021, Taussig 1987, 1992, 1997).

[xciv] Let me offer one last reflection by turning to the work of the anthropologist Bhrigupati Singh (2015), who—from a less typological angle—also attends to modes of governance that interlace welfare and violence. Singh suggests that the Vedic deities of Mitra and Varuna constitute an understanding of welfare and violence as mutually constitutive registers of governance both in the context of his fieldwork in India and beyond it. Singh's argument arises as he tries to better understand the fluctuating degrees of power that the minor deity of Thakur Baba exerts over life and death in the sub-district of Shahabad in rural Rajasthan—a deity which has the power to appease the spirits of those who died prematurely, facilitate childbirth, and heal the sick (ibid.: 39). To examine these different facets of Thakur Baba's power, Singh draws on Georges Dumézil's (1988) essay on two Vedic deities, Mitra and Varuna, who stand as divine embodiments of opposed yet complementary aspects of rule. While Mitra embodies negotiable bonds characterized by various forms of exchange, Varuna represents coercive force (Dumézil 1988: 46). Thus, Singh suggests that Thakur Baba's presence in the lives of the people living in Shahabad is experienced as both forceful punishments and unstable agreements, whose asymmetrical benefits have to be continuously revisited and modified (2015: 45-46). Beyond the context of Thakur Baba's relationship with the residents of Shahabad, however, Singh also invites his readers to extend Dumézil's analysis of Mitra and Varuna and think more generally about contract and force as the irresolvable pulls of sovereignty (ibid.: 44). So far, I have used this word—"sovereignty"—in two related ways without explicitly elaborating on its meaning. It first came up in my discussion of Paulo Drinot and Aihwa Ong's concerns with the use of the various techniques of governance that constitute a single regime, as these come to be deployed with varying degrees of intensity to control the conduct of different groups of people. Ong's concept of "graduated sovereignty," in turn, specifically alludes to the selectively incremental use of "sovereign power"—the right to let live and make die, which Foucault associates with Europe's medieval monarchs. Let me turn, then, to this equivocal term, less with the intent of giving an authoritative or operant definition than of unpacking some of its valences. As Lauren Berlant observes (2011: 96-8), scholars across many disciplines use the concept of sovereignty in polyvalent ways to account for the constitution of autonomous entities (such as the state and the self). Berlant argues that, to different degrees, dominant strains of this concept centre the decision-making activity that effectively establishes the limits of an agent's control (Agamben 1998,

Bataille 1973, 2001, Mbembe 2001). In this regard, contemporary critical thinking concerned with the persistence of violence across liberal and authoritarian modes of governance, Berlant points out, responds to the work of Carl Schmitt (2005 [1922]), a German jurist whose critique of liberalism was aimed at buttressing the rise of National Socialism during World War II. For Berlant, these contemporary efforts at accounting for the emergence and maintenance of autonomous forms (such as the self and the state) are troubling. For one thing, they argue that decisionistic understandings of sovereignty tend to "overidentify" the maintenance and exercise of a person's agency with the techniques of governance that constitute a state apparatus, largely ignoring significant differences across scales (Berlant 2011: 96). After noting that the terms "sovereign power" and "sovereignty" are used in related yet markedly different ways by each of these authors, Berlant (2022) makes the further observation that their monoptical focus on violence and decision-making obscures the forms of embedded relationality that make situated configurations of power possible. The result is an unclear and lop-sided concept of sovereignty, which explains the formation of independent entities without considering interdependence as a necessary condition of autonomy. To my understanding, Berlant's argument aims to transfigure the concern with sovereignty elaborated in the works of Agamben, Bataille, and Mbembe by making the conceptually uncomfortable move of examining the constitution of relational terrains by relating violence to interdependence and care, without assuming, however, that any one of these three terms has a transcendental value. Whether or not it is put in terms of "sovereignty," this concern with the ways in which care and violence can blur is at the heart of ethnographic research that attends to imminent practices of world making in conditions marked by layered forms of historical inequality (Allan 2014, Das 2007, 2022, García 2010, Graeter 2020, Han 2012, Povinelli 2006, 2011, Stevenson 2014, Ticktin 2011). In this vein, Singh's notion of "sovereign power" encompasses the modalities of interdependence (contract) and unilateral wagers for control (force). Compellingly, he notes that Dumézil was one of Foucault's mentors and moreover suggests that "Foucault's career can be seen as an extended study of the modern transformations of Mitra (as welfare, health, and biopolitics) and Varuna (as force, disciplinary apparatuses, and punishment)" (ibid.: 60).

[xcv] See footnoteote 33 on the use of the phrase "precarious thresholds" in Chapter 1.

[xcvi] Here, I am referring to my fieldwork with anti-corruption activists who were part of regional and national press guilds and aired both daily and weekly shows on Radio Frecuencia 1330. The *polladas* that were held to raise funds to pay for water testing in the Tambo River (Arequipa) after repeated spills from the Aruntani Mine (Puno) were held in the town of La Curva. In documenting these events, and the subsequent water analyses of the river that they helped to finance, I collaborated with the journalist Daniel Toranzo, who lives in the Tambo Valley itself.

[xcvii] When placed in conversation with psychoanalytic and psychiatric theory, such reenactments of the past are often explained in terms of trauma, and so, understood as compulsions to repeat unclaimed experiences (Caruth 1991). One of the main assumptions underlying this model is that direct experience of violent events can at times be so unbearable as to threaten a person's psychic integrity (Freud 1955 [1920], van der Kolk 2014) and outstrip a community's standing language (Pillen 2016). Critiques of the cultural life of the concept of trauma have argued that framing suffering as "structurally unknowable" risks overlooking the historical and political specificities of situated experiences of violence (Cvetkovich 2003: 18-9). In turn, accounting for the use and limits of the concept of trauma raises irreducibly situated concerns with the divergent (therapeutic, ethical and political) stakes of describing how violence and its afterlives are folded into particular forms of life (Buch-Segal 2018, Fassin and Rechtman 2009, Hérvouet-Zeiber 2023, Young 1997). For one thing, the etiological focus on an originating event makes it possible to overlook the psychic life of less-discrete forms of violence—such as the rhetorics of extermination that underpin genocidal regimes (Rechtman 2006), the murderous effects of bureaucratic care (Stevenson 2014), and the pragmatics of surviving in social worlds routinely damaged by ordinary crises (Allan 2014, Han 2012, Povinelli 2011). At the same time, making room alongside the therapeutic concern with unseen wounds, we can also see the act of witnessing as a perennial point of departure for processes of existential transformation and social critique (Das et al 2001, Dave 2014, Han 2020, Han and Brandel 2020, Thomas 2019).

[xcviii] Though the efforts of the Truth Commission have been laborious, it also made significant exclusions, among them, the sterilization of more than 200,000 women from Indigenous and racialized communities, many of whom claim that they were not adequately informed of the procedures they underwent as part of a state-sponsored family planning initiative (Boesten 2007, Carranza Ko 2020, Kovarik 2019, Stavig 2022, Vasquez del Aguila 2022).

[xcix] These debates often concern matters such as the narratability of the lives, motives, and ethical transformations of the people who joined or were conscripted into the Shining Path, as well as questions concerning situations where the distinction between "perpetrator" and "victim" becomes ambiguous (Aguero 2021, Gavilán Sánches

2015).

[c] The phrase "fractured past" is Cynthia Milton's (2014).

[ci] In writing about the Iquitos-Nauta road and a tract of the Inter-Oceanic Highway, Penelope Harvey and Hannah Knox describe a similar tension, where the construction of these roadways both promised connectivity and stirred concerns about "theft, embezzlement, nepotism, and shady dealings of one kind or other" (2015: 135). Moreover, at a national scale, they argue that while illegal mining and logging were present in the region before the road construction, the controversies surrounding this large-scale infrastructure drew public attention to these phenomena (2015: 23). After the publication of *Roads*, two of the companies involved in the construction of the Inter-Oceanic Highway became embroiled in high-profile corruption cases (Durand 2018).

[cii] In Peru, the phrase "Economic Miracle" is used to refer to the country's rapid economic growth under the waves of institutional and economic reforms implemented by Fujimori's regime and subsequent administrations during a period spanning the commodity booms that took place in Latin America between the 1990s and the mid-2010s.

[ciii] Here, I am using the word image to mean a representation that articulates some kind of presence instead of merely referencing it (Stevenson 2014, Mattingly and Grøn 2022). Crucially, images instantiate presence through signs of likeness that denote their referents by mimicking them in form or effect (icons) and through traces that are connected physically or causally to the very thing they represent (indices) (Kohn 2007). By contrast, a trope or figure presents us with a symbol that is meant to denote and thematize a class of people or phenomena. These distinctions, however, raise a further question as to whether we are talking about different *kinds* of representations or different *dimensions* of representation. My response to this follows from Eduardo Kohn's (2013) reading of Terrence Deacon's (2006, 2012) argument that these semiotic properties emerge from each other in "nested" ways, such that symbols emerge from indices, and indices from icons. Following this reasoning, it is possible to say that words can have indexical and iconic registers, while some icons and indices can be entirely separated from language (as is the case with the semiotic activity of plants and animals). I extend this conceptual framework when borrowing Kathleen Stewart's (1996) concept of a gaping sociality to describe how talk of the grenade at the *pollada* moved into iconic and indexical registers. In this sense, it is possible for a figure or a trope to work *imagistically*. I would argue that to do so, the symbolic dimension of the figure or the trope has to be undermined by doubt in a way that renders the indexical and iconic dimensions of its use within a particular scene. At such moments, I go on to contest, conversation can work more like a drawing (Berger 2011), a heap of signs that—if successful—can render the presence of their otherwise unseen model, making an abstraction viscerally concrete. Throughout my research, I have discovered this mode of listening (to a conversation as if it were a drawing) as a method for occupying, documenting, and hopefully re-presenting processes of attunement that call on collectivizing imaginative power to approach an otherwise "unbelievable" reality.

[civ] Here, by "temporalities of contact" I mean moments of attending to the presence of another. The question of what is the importance of such fleeting moments of contact emerges ethnographically in Naisargi Dave's (2014) discussion of witnessing as a paradoxical effort to remain put in the face of a violent scene and to subsequently continue to move in response to what one has seen. For Dave, the scar becomes a way of thinking about how acts of witnessing can mark and remake the subject. Adjacently, Amy Krauss's (2019) raises an important question about the relationship between time and the capacity to understand the significance of one's actions. Working with Fondo María, a grassroots collective that helps people seeking abortions in Mexico advocate for their rights in the two public clinics that offer this service in Mexico City, Krauss expresses her bewilderment about the ephemeral and nearly anonymous yet profoundly intimate character of accompaniment in the following words: "My heart sped up and my thoughts began to race – what if they are in danger in Leo´n; what kind of situation are they going back to? What if they are involved in a terrible mess that this abortion doesn't come close to solving? Why didn't I ask her, why didn't I find out more? Somehow it hit me then, sharply, that Marisol must have been through something awful." (2019: 44). Ultimately, Krauss argues for the importance of extending the concept of political action beyond Hannah Arendt's description, attending not only to what people do "to make a new world" but also to the ways in which they strive "to make this world livable" (2019: 48).

[cv] Between the founding of the Peruvian Republic (in 1821) and the end of the Fujimori dictatorship, there have only been four congressional motions to vacate the president from office. However, over the past six years, this provision has been employed seven additional times, leading to the resignation of Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (2018) and the destitution of Martín Vizcarra (2020). These critical moments and their aftermaths have resulted in Congress swearing seven different people into office. In March 2022, the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) stressed "its concern about the repeated, discretionary use of this legal procedure by the Peruvian Congress" for its lack of "due process… based on precisely defined behaviors." The motion to vacate the president from office on grounds of permanent moral incapacity

establishes that for the motion to pass on site, it requires a positive vote from 104 out of 130 Congressional seats, or a vote of 87, which needs to be ratified on a second occasion in the following legislative period. However, it does not establish what, exactly, counts as "moral incapacity," and has been critiqued for equivocating on the very sense of this word, as its use in Peru's constitutions dates to the 19th century, when its denotation was closer to "madness" than "corruption" (García Chavarry 2013). Across the three separate attempts to vacate Castillo from office on grounds of moral incapacity, the allegations of corruption appended to the third motion stand the most serious. However, the high plausibility of petty corruption in Castillo's government does not address some equally serious questions about due process. As mentioned above the legal content of "permanent moral incapacity" remains yet undetermined. Additionally, while serious independent journalists (like the Insituto de Defensa Legal, IDL) have documented indices of corruption in Castillo's administration, the matter remains under investigation in the Public Ministry. At the same time, it is important to note that across corporate media outlets, all three processes were not only highly sensationalized, but also that their reporting reiterated the racist and classist tropes of the run-off elections.

[cvi] On December 15, 2022, the Executive issued a national state of emergency for 30 days, as outlined in Supreme Decree No. 143-2022-PCM, a measure that has been selectively extended across different regions for much longer.

[cvii] Please see, Resolution Nº 2673-2022-MP-FN issued by the Public Ministry of Peru.

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