The Silent 'Cosmopolitics' of Artefacts: Spectral Extractivism, Ownership and 'Obedient' Things in Cañaris (Peru)

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This chapter explores the terms by which an Amerindian group establishes its relationship with the land in a local context marked by extractivism and the forms in which this relationship emerges in the Peruvian Andes today.[1]

The practices of exacerbated extractivism—as they are currently lived and suffered in this part of the world (Bury 2005; De Echave 2011; Sotelo and Francke 2011)—rest on the presumption, both implicit and explicit, of a situation in which a 'natural' land-object lies inert and is, above all, susceptible to being used and appropriated according to human needs and aptitudes (or at least those of people whose resources and means grant them 'priority' over others). What happens, however, if the Amerindian forms, as often described by Andean ethnography, by which 'nature' is experienced and understood stops being interpreted as mere belief or superstition? What do the practices of extractivism in the Andes become if we take seriously the idea that the environment is 'living' to the point that it constitutes a subjectivity (or maybe even a person) with its own will and

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with whom a relationship in 'social' terms is unavoidable? What happens if we distance ourselves from the narrative of Peruvian presidents who speak of the 'absurd, pantheistic ideologies' of the *indígenas*—those who usually emerge as part of the 'social' or 'socio-environmental conflicts' (Howe 2015; Handelsman 2002; Merino 2015; Ombudsman's Office 2014; Huamaní and Macassi 2011; Huamaní et al. 2012) that seem to be an ever-growing consequence of extractivism—and leave open the possibility, in the Andes, of what Cesarino calls 'an ontology of multiplicity that is radically distinct from western conceptions of private property and metaphysical monisms' (2016: 192)?

These are just some of the questions that have been addressed by anthropology in the most recent debates concerning extractivism and the Amerindian peoples of South America. What interests me here is the exploration of a possible hypothesis relating to one particular part of the problem: the indigenous regimes of land ownership in contemporary rural Andes. With that aim, I examine a specific ethnographic case based on my own fieldwork: the practices and conceptions relating to the access and control of the land in the area of Cañaris, a Quechua-speaking region in the Peruvian Northern Sierra (approximately at the intersection of the departments of Lambeyeque, Cajamarca and Piura) which is currently influenced by a huge open-pit mining project. From this study, a nonhuman entity emerges that is much less 'natural' and 'indigenous' than those usually proffered by anthropological studies dedicated to 'Cosmopolitics' (Stengers 1996); this entity could be called a 'Catholic temple'.

Finally, my questions throughout this chapter concerning the land reveal the need to initiate an ethnographic reflection on the relevance or usefulness of some key concepts in Andean anthropology (such as *comunidad campesina* or 'communal lands'), and the ways in which they have conventionally been understood.

ON THE TREATMENT OF LAND OWNERSHIP AND CERTAIN NONHUMAN ENTITIES IN CONTEMPORARY ANDEAN STUDIES

As space constraints do not permit a comprehensive survey of Andean studies related to land, mining, and *comunidades campesinas* (nor do I consider myself equipped to do so), I limit myself to making some brief references to one particular aspect of these studies: their more or less tacit

agreement as to what constitutes the land in the indigenous Andes. That is, to use a term that is somewhat in vogue, to its 'ontology'.

The literature on the use of land in one of the main Andean indigenous organisations recognised by the Peruvian state, called *comunidades campesinas* (Diez 2012), is without a doubt plentiful (Urrutia 1992). Studies into the struggles over access to the land involving indigenous peoples are also copious, as much in the case of historical battles against estates and big landowners (Blanco 1972; Malpica 1984), as in the more recent confrontations with large multinational corporations (Salas Carreño 2008; Lanegra 2008; De Echave et al. 2009; Bebbington and Bebbington 2012; Bebbington and Bury 2014).

Among the different problems explored by both groups of studies (those dedicated to the daily or structural use of the land and those concerning the conflicts over access to or ownership of the land), one can usually find references to: negotiations over access to the land, the administration of its use (e.g., whether for livestock or for agriculture); accompanying ideological or ritual support structures (boundary demarcation rites, for instance, or issues concerning the distribution of water for irrigation purposes or pasture for grazing cattle); the legal status of the rights of indigenous peoples; the dynamics of indigenous social protest movements (or the ones in which indigenous people participate); and the speeches and 'performances' of activists, leaders or intellectuals involved in national politics or the public sphere.

Despite considerable differences between the above-mentioned studies, one can find common ground in both viewpoints concerning land in the Andes. This common ground can be found even in those approaches, which make significant attempts to get closer to indigenous perspectives. It is present even as concerns the understanding of an Andean 'logic' or 'rationality' (cf. Golte 1987 [1980]), whether in analyses of the 'kingdoms' or pre-Columbian political entities (Murra 2002) or in studies of *comunidades campesinas* (Fonseca Martel and Mayer 1988; Golte 1987 [1980]; Urrutia 1992). It goes without saying that those studies dealing with agrarian reforms or mining disputes in the Andes usually leave unproblematised a certain understanding of what constitutes the land. In fact, few of the studies mentioned above question the appositeness of the elemental terminology of their basic conceptual tools—that is, a specific relation between a subject (whether a human person or a mixed collective such as the '*ayllu*' or the 'community') and an object (whether that be as a continuous extension of land or as a discontinuous whole divided into

'ecologic floors'). Indeed, even in the intelligent proposal of Murra's 'vertical archipelago', there is not much hint of a debate on anything that might be considered more fundamental than an 'ideal of complementarity' enabling the control of a maximum number of ecologic 'floors'. This fundamental level that I refer to, in the case of the Amerindian Andes, is the existence (or not) of a relationship that can be considered similar or translatable to the 'ownership' of the land.

Recently, Salas Carreño proposed that 'humans must be understood as products of sustained relationships with places. Humans emerge as persons—in a material, as well as moral, sense—through this web of social interactions with named places' (2016: 833); 'the relations among humans and the places where they live are built upon exactly the same notions through which [Quechua] human social relations are constructed' (2016: 815). Although Salas Carreño does not make explicit the issue of ownership nor if what he means by 'places' would include things such as buildings—but see the quick mention of a 'house' (2016: 828)—he highlights an important feature of Andean socio-natural worlds: 'places themselves … emerge as intentional agents' (2016: 821) which are members of collectives entangling humans and nonhumans. The code, one could say, used with these agents is food; in fact, as the vast ethnography about this topic shows, food production, circulation and destruction are constantly used not only as part of good will offerings but also of straightforward threats (Rivera Andía 2000). In this chapter, I will expand this suggestion into places that are constructed by humans, while I specify the mode of human social relationship that emerges in the case of the land in the Cañaris area. In this specific relationship, feeding intervenes but in a reversed direction, as proposed by Salas Carreño (2016: 825–827), from places to humans.

As mentioned above, the questions that this chapter raises around the 'ownership' of land in an extractivist context permit the visibility of a nonhuman entity that has a tenuous relationship with the subject at hand: a Catholic temple called *Iglisya*.

The Cañaris Catholic temple, whilst a nonhuman entity attributed with agency, may appear, at least, slightly 'peculiar' in the general context of the nonhuman entities described by studies of indigenous cosmologies of the Andes.

This invisibility in the Andean ethnography of buildings such as the *Iglisya*, which have been erected and used by indigenous peoples for centuries, seems to stem from being both Catholic and constructed. On the one hand, the *Iglisya* is something that is an emblematic part of

the 'Christian' cult, in contrast to the nostalgic reconstructions proposed by those studies in search of 'Andean thinking' as something opposed to (or hidden beneath) something that is imagined to be completely 'western' or 'modern'. An ethnography of a Christian temple would allow us to question the subtle persistence (sometimes countered, other times avoided) of that image of the native or indigenous (inherited from the romantic Indigenism of the first half of the twentieth century), in the contemporary anthropology of the Andes.

On the other hand, the *Iglisya* constitutes an entity that is clearly 'artificial'. That is, it consists of something that is obviously man made, in contrast to the ideal of the 'untouched' which usually awakens notions of the 'natural'. The *Iglisya* then differs from other entities, which are usually (more) directly connected to the earth and are considered to be a constituent part of the environment (for a remarkable exception, see Tomasi 2015). Past and current ethnographies of the Andes usually speak of the mountains—under the name of *apus*, *awkillos*, or *wamanis*—of the lakes—called *encantos* (Larco 2008)—of the water itself (cf. Stensrud, this volume) or even directly of entities that seem to completely overlap with 'nature', such as the *Pachamama* or *Pachatierra* (Gow and Condori 1976). I have alluded elsewhere (Rivera Andía 2015b) to the anthropological perspectives of Tim Ingold on mounds and buildings. It suffices here, therefore, to recall the problems associated with the distinction between that which is made by human hands and that which has grown in the environment: 'Do we not rather have to conclude of things made or built, as much as of things grown, that they are originating all the time' (Ingold 2013: 81)? It would be rather more useful to analyse the reasons behind the frequency or persistence of 'natural' (or nonartificial) features in the nonhuman entities highlighted by the studies regarding the cosmologies of the Andes.

The *Iglisya,* however, quite apart from being Christian and artificial, has a third characteristic that accentuates its outlandishness or peculiarity. This building is also a political entity to the extent to which it constitutes an alternative to one of the key assertions of extractivism concerning the ontology of land and the relationships extractivism establishes with it. The relationship with the land as a natural object is, silently but constantly, provoked by the spectre of extractivism in Cañaris: it could be said that the mining project and its governmental allies *need* that type of land (i.e., as natural object) to exist heedless of how troublesome its emergence might be (Blaser and de la Cadena 2017: 186). It is indeed this situation that converts a temple into a device for political intervention. How does the

temple interfere, interrupt, or disturb the extractivist relationship with the land-object? As I show, the temple not only allocates and controls access to the land (which I refer to below as its *administrative* quality) but also emphasises those qualities of the relationship with the land that I would describe as those that sustain 'the living' or what Gan et al. call 'livability' (2017: G9). The *Iglisya* does so from two sides: by its generative or life-giving dimensions (which I call the *condensing* aspect of the temple) and by its quality as a living entity dependent on human care (which I designate as its *obedient* quality).

Nevertheless, although it is involved in the local political game, the temple of Incahuasi remains invisible (Rivera Andía 2013, 2015b) or 'non-existent' (Escobar 2016) not only in the relationship between Cañarenses and *La Minera* (*The Mining*, as it is called by the people of Cañaris) but also in the subtle ethnographic explorations that try to distort or broaden the elements usually allowed within their scope (de la Cadena 2014; Schavelzon 2016: 118–119). Some of the causes of the scant visibility or existence of nonhuman entities, such as the *Iglisya*, can probably be linked to what I have pointed out: the temple is obviously artificial and explicitly Christian.

The political role of the *Iglisya*, moreover, involves neither its direct and explicit intervention nor overt demands on the public platforms that promote negotiations to resolve 'social conflicts' between the indigenous authorities in Cañaris and *La Minera* (or the government agencies that back it). In spite of its political importance, the participation of the *Iglisya* in these negotiations is neither invoked by the indigenous inhabitants of Cañaris nor authorised by their non-indigenous counterparts. Accordingly, the *Iglisya* does not enter into the public arena as part of a political discourse related to the ethical substance of indigeneity (as in the case described by Fabricant and Postero, this volume); nor is this building alluded to by political activists linked to international environmental networks (as is analysed by Li and Peñafiel, this volume). What remains of the political then in the emergence of this nonhuman entity?

In order to answer this question, the *Iglisya* requires us to make a rather serious conceptual revision of the terms in which one addresses these negotiations. Such is the intention of this chapter, which broaches an analysis of the *Iglisya* as a device for the ontological constitution of the land (one of the key elements of the social conflicts associated with mining in the Andes). Further definition may still be necessary.

The force that drives this chapter is not entirely similar to the one behind those studies dedicated to indigenous conceptions of 'landscape', 'space', or 'places' (Pérez Galán 2004; Salvia 2014; Robin 2010; Rivera Andía 2005), where it is more or less accepted that an indigenous society is representing (and living in or with) the same ('natural') spaces differently. That is to say, this chapter does not require us to affirm or deny the existence of a world 'out there' that humans interpret or know in varying ways (according to their 'cultures', 'epistemologies', or 'intellectual frameworks'). It is enough to consider the *Iglisya* as 'a set of embodied skills and subjectivities … a set of practices that array—and enact—a particular kind of person' (Law and Lien 2012: 4; see also Latour 2014a) and a particular kind of land. Without 'grounding the possibility of political difference in a prior story of how the world(s) must work' (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017: 54), the *Iglisya* as a child constitutes a type of land that is not fully encompassed, either by the mining operations' land or by the conservationists' land.

What I work to comprehend, instead, is a type of relationship with the land that implies a mutual constitution between it, humans (gathered together in this case in the *comunidad campesina*), and other nonhuman entities that, like the *Iglisya*, may or may not be part of the publicised negotiations around 'social conflicts' (Arellano-Yanguas 2011; Panfichi 2011; Tanaka 2012; Meléndez 2004). This emphasis on alternative ontologies of the human-land relationship (whether revealed in the public arena of social conflicts or not) is inspired by the contemporary debates around the 'systems of ownership' in the South American lowlands (Di Giminiani 2015; Brightman et al. 2016), some of which are, in turn, part of wider discussions around the dynamics of 'familiarisation' (Fausto 2012 [2001]), the composition of worlds (Descola 2014a), and the 'ontogenic' processes (Ingold in Descola and Ingold 2014) among indigenous groups.

Extractivist Contingencies: A Spectre Haunts Cañaris

I have described in previous studies some of the distinctive characteristics of the indigenous group that inhabits the Cañaris area (Rivera Andía 2013, 2014a, 2015b; Rivera Andía et al. 2017) and the vicissitudes of the 'spectre of mining' in the mountains of the province of Ferreñafe (in the Peruvian department of Lambayeque) (Rivera Andía and Snowdon 2013).

It is enough here to recall some aspects linked to the 'spectral' nature of the mining industry and the 'invisible' nature of the inhabitants of the Cañaris area. I start with this latter point. On the one hand, it could be said that the people of Cañaris have remained invisible, not only because of the usual subordination of modern-day indigenous constituent groups in the Peruvian public sphere but also because of the monopoly on 'indigeneity' that their southern counterparts (centred around an image of an 'imperial Cuzco') hold in the country's popular imagination. However, this 'invisibilisation' or 'actively produced non-existence' (Escobar 2016) has another aspect which, rather than being about pure negation, is more about disguise. In the same way that they are negated, the people of Cañaris are also affirmed. In serious circumstances, such as the brutal repression suffered during protests in 2013, they are treated as 'terrorists', a frequently used term in Peru's recent history (cf. González 2012). In situations of 'slow violence' (Nixon 2013), which is less dramatic but more persistent, the catch-all term used to label the existence of the people of Cañaris is 'poverty' (Eversole et al. 2005). In fact, one of the most frequent narratives recurring in the extractivist context in Cañaris is the description of the people of Cañaris as 'poor' (Rivera Andía 2014a). The label 'poverty' in the current national official discourse is used to describe living conditions characteristic of the predominant way of life in the Cañaris region and other parts of the Peruvian highlands, conditions which are usually considered indicative of need. In the context of the national and academic 'invisibility' that affects Cañaris, one of the ways in which its inhabitants have occasionally become more visible has been precisely through the label of poverty. Used as a form of stigma, this label is, above all, yet another way of continuing to ignore the rights of the Cañaris people as an indigenous group (De Echave et al. 2009; Merino 2012; Hallazi Méndez 2013; High 2015: 115, 179). The strategies by which the people of Cañaris criticise the external imposition of the label of poverty are dynamic and constantly changing. Nevertheless, these strategies are usually linked to some extent to religious practices, which have churches such as the *Iglisya* as their centre. In these cases, the ownership of land and agricultural work are reasserted as sources of wealth through renowned religious rituals in which only landowners may participate and where multiple expressions of life- and wealth-generative capacities of land unfold. In previous work, I have considered these as a collective, critical, and nonverbal reflection (Geertz 1973) of external attempts at stigmatisation (Rivera Andía 2014a).

The 'ghostly extractivism' to which I refer relates to an open-pit mining project generically known as 'Cañariaco' that has been owned by the Canadian mining company Candente Copper since at least the first decade of this century (Candente Copper Corp 2011). Through my use of the term 'spectral extractivism', I hope to highlight the situation in which 'disaster would seem to start with the hopes and expectations that people entertain some time before, or independently of, the start of commercial oil extraction' (Weszkalnys 2016: 230). Nevertheless, ghostly extractivism differs from what other scholars have called 'the temporal politics of a disaster yet to come' in one key respect: The Cañaris area anticipation is much more tainted by anxiety and much less supplied with large-scale prevention devices than other cases shadowed by the 'resource curse' (Weszkalnys 2016: 228). The lack of anticipation is unfortunately also a function of the lack of information about mining operations that affects the Cañarenses.

In 2013, the first protest by the inhabitants of this region was brutally suppressed (La República 2013) when community members tried to block the access road to the mining camp (both of which are located on their lands) from which the explorations and measurements of the extractable minerals are carried out. To a certain extent, this was a protest against a spectre, against an entity of rather huge proportions, ambiguous, and tentacular, whose various components had for some time incessantly and drastically interfered in local politics, the economy, and landscape. This phantom—called, as mentioned above, *La Minera*—emerges fundamentally from the intersection of three factors: the international price of certain metals (in particular: gold, silver, and copper), the legal and illegal subterfuges of the organisations that benefit from the mineral extraction (Gudynas 2011, 2018), and, finally, the invisibility to which the greater part of the indigenous world of Cañaris is subjected.

Like all spectres, the presence of *La Minera* generates a considerable amount of 'anxiety' (Bessire 2014), likely due in part to *La Minera*'s pursuit of the measureable, be it in the richness of the deposits or in the demarcation of the lands in which the mine will operate (just as Marc Brightman, this volume, points out in the Surinamese case). However, this anxiety is related likewise to the magnitude of the mining concessions made by the Peruvian government to *La Minera*, concessions that imply loss of land and contamination and scarcity of irrigation water (as Astrid Stensrud, this volume, describes regarding another Peruvian case), and

have led to the physical destruction of the town, including the main square and the church (Silva Santisteban 2013). Indeed, the scope of the planned open-pit mine, processing plant, and deposits of tailings and waste rock leave little room for doubt about the radical changes to the environment and, consequently, the way of life for the people of Cañaris (as is the case in other parts of the world where sustainability is reduced to an oxymoron and development programme agents are transformed into collaborators; see Rajak 2011; Rajak and Gilberthorpe 2016; Connell and Howitt 1991).

Whatever their reaction to the spectre of *La Minera*, for the people of Cañaris, it brings the inevitability of transformation, drastic or gentle, of the land and rural life in the Cañaris area.

In addition to contrasting attitudes to the mining project among and within the *comunidades campesinas* of the Cañaris area, there are different degrees of unease according to how drastic the transformations are expected to be. I give three examples of adjoining *comunidades campesinas* in the area. At one extreme is the *comunidad campesina* of Cañaris, which has the camp for the mining project inside its communal lands: the tension here is at its highest. At the other extreme stands the *comunidad campesina* of Penachí, whose lands are not affected, so far, by the project: attitudes here border on indifference. The intermediate case can be illustrated by the *comunidad campesina* of Incahuasi: the road that has been built to access the mining camp passes very close by the principal town but is not within their boundaries. In short, the inhabitants of Incahuasi show both enthusiasm and fear but in a way that is neither as moderate as it is among the people of Penachí nor as pronounced as among the inhabitants of Cañaris.

To describe the established relationships with the land in the Cañaris area, I look to the case of Incahuasi, which is relatively nearby those who would be directly affected by *La Minera*: the members of the *comunidad campesina* of Cañaris. The reason for choosing Incahuasi is not only because it has most of the distinguishing characteristics of the Cañaris area nor that some of its organisations support the claims and protests against *La Minera* but is based on something more historically profound: Incahuasi is a direct product of the indigenous battle waged by those who are now its neighbours. The town was founded in 1747 by the 'Indians' of Penachí and Cañaris who built the *Iglisya* as an open act of defiance against the large-scale landowners who then controlled those lands. Its establishment was part of a series of actions carried out by the 'Indians' of

Cañaris and Penachí to take over the land using all the legal methods at their disposal as well as some practices that were distinctly outside the law. Almost 300 years after its construction, their temple, the *Iglisya*, has finally become the principal nucleus of a political unit whose small towns and villages are today precisely those locations from which powerful others tried to gain control of the people of Cañaris.

There is, however, another even more crucial reason for us to centre our gaze on Incahuasi: the presence of a device constructed explicitly for such a struggle for the land. I am referring to an entity that is still somehow unusual in the context of Amerindian studies: a Catholic temple. Indeed, all the ethnographic and historical investigations (my own fieldwork included) into the control of land in the Cañaris area has led to this architectural complex. Its synchronic and diachronic analysis will help us understand not only the development but also the actual configuration of the relationships that humans establish with their lands in this region of the Andes.

A Multiple Artefact: The *Iglisya*

The few studies into religious buildings in Northern Peru have benefitted from various recent publications.[2] Absent from these valuable contributions, however, is the place of a Catholic temple like the *Iglisya* in an environment where personhood reaches far beyond the world of the human (Rivera Andía 2008). Indeed, if in numerous Amerindian cases 'an object is nothing more than a subject that is incompletely understood' (Coelho de Souza 2016: 183), there arises the problem of how to understand objects which, like the adobe temple, have not only personhood but life.

> *The main issue at stake was the conceptualization of artefacts in a world in which the subject-object distinction is by definition fuzzy (and even inapplicable). What is the place of artefacts in a universe where personhood extends far beyond the human?* (Brightman et al. 2016: 11)

I address this question in the following three discussions on the multiplicity of the church.

This extraordinary piece of architecture in the Cañaris area, the *Iglisya*, is an historical product of the indigenous struggle for the land throughout this entire region (Rivera Andía et al. 2017; Rivera Andía 2015a). Indeed,

the building emerged out of the strategies of the indigenous people for the control and defence of their lands, constructed clandestinely in the middle of the eighteenth century during the final years of the viceroyalty of Peru (Huertas 1996). As such, the *Iglisya* is an historic milestone that crystallises indigenous control (to the detriment of the large-scale local landowners) of a set of lands that form the basis of what today is the *comunidad campesina*.

   During my fieldwork (carried out between 2009 and 2013), at least three fundamental aspects of this building, the *Iglisya*, stood out: the *administrative*—expressed in its prerogatives over the distribution and control of land (Rivera Andía 2015b); the *condensing*—related to those aspects of it that are life-generating; and the *obedient*—related to the Amerindian perception of things as dependent or 'fully subjected' (Brightman et al. 2016: 12) (Fig. 7.1).

Fig. 7.1   The *Iglisya* of Incahuasi

An Iglisya-Land: Emergence and Functions of a Material Device

The *Iglisya* functions as an administrative device in two respects. The first involves distribution. The thatched roof (made of *jarava ichu*) is divided into sections where ritual maintenance (carried out every five to ten years) is overseen by kinship groups (*ayllus*) or small villages that comprise the owners of the lands of Incahuasi. The distribution of the roof surface between these kinship groups is explicitly analogous to the distribution of the lands of Incahuasi between the same groups—and the division into two groups established by the ridge of the roof is analogous to the division established by the river that crosses the valley (Carrasco 2018).

The second aspect of this administration is expressed in the control of the access to land through the heads of kinship groups (*cabezarios*).[3] The management of the *Iglisya*'s main contents (namely, the Catholic statues) corresponds directly to the appropriation of the benefits derived from working the parcels of land corresponding to those statues. For example, only the kinship group of the *cabezario* charged with observing the ritual honours of *Santa Rosa de Lima* have access to the lands belonging to her and the products of those lands. Carrasco's (2014: 27–30) study of the Incahuasi contemporary archives confirms how the annual celebrations by the brotherhoods around the temple statues function as a legitimisation ritual (Rappaport 1999) of the ownership of the land. Today, more than half a century after the formal recognition of the indigenous community of Incahuasi by the Republic of Peru in 1963—and, thereby, of their collective lands—community members continue to affirm that their lands 'belong' to the statues that live in the *Iglisya* (Vreeland 1993; Shaver 1992: 236).

Even if I were to end our considerations of the relationship between the temple and the land at this point, I could, perhaps, still affirm that this architectural object is actually a church land in the sense that it not only 'represents' the relationship that the inhabitants of the Cañaris area have with the land but embodies and constitutes that relationship (see Bloch 1998). On the one hand, the two sets of rituals performed in the Cañaris area (the *fiestas patronales* financed by the *cabezarios* and the collective renovation of the roof of the *Iglisya*) celebrate, legitimate, and constitute control over the land. On the other hand, the *Iglisya*, which serves as both the focal point and the refuge for the rituals, is the historical result of the struggle for that control over the land. Both types of exploration, the

ethnographic and the historical, are strengthened by a common assertion over the mutual constitution (or ontological composition) of people and lands in the Cañaris area (Rivera Andía 2015b). The land as constituted by the *Iglisya* is not merely an historically disputed object (previously, between 'Indians' and landowners, nowadays, between farmers and mining companies). The land here is also part of a collective where it co-emerges (de la Cadena 2015: 102, 143; see also Canessa 2017: 549–550) with the people of Cañaris. In this way, the division of the lands and the kinship groups that tend them are mutually constituted through the rituals sheltered by the *Iglisya* and the material being of its own architecture. This mutual constitution can be thought of as a type of cartography in the sense that the church land not only represents but incessantly produces its surroundings in such a way that the boundaries between the different ontologies or resulting worlds are constantly realigning themselves (Blaser 2009: 16). In short, although I do not linger on this variant of 'ontological anthropology'—which tries to state something about what there actually is in the world (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017: 46–54)— it may be correct to assert that the temple *is* the relationship between humans and the land (Mol 1999; Blaser 2009; de la Cadena 2014). We could go so far as to say that the *Iglisya* (as an indigenous tool for the access to land ownership) could have a greater significance than the land itself: 'the weight appears to lie less in things … and more on the conditions of the relationships by which knowledge becomes possible—less, therefore, on property, but more on the technologies or modes of transformation that allow access to the field of relationships' (Cesarino 2016: 202).

An Alive and Generating-Life Iglisya

In the second fundamental aspect of the temple, *condensing,* the *Iglisya* participates in the ritual and cosmological dynamic in Incahuasi, like an assemblage of the livability or life-giving properties attributed to the land—or, as Salas Carreño puts it, 'named places' (2016: 833). Through the statues that it houses and the altars that line its walls, the people of Incahuasi foster the fertility of their lands and the reproduction of the cattle that graze on those lands. The *Iglisya* condenses, in this way, the vitality of the land. Herein lies its living aspect: fertiliser or producer of life, the aspect that matters most in farming communities.

I am not going to linger here on the familiar topics of contemporary Andean indigenous ethnography—as, for instance, cattle branding rites

(Rivera Andía 2003)—nor on the more recent perspectives on the components of living usually labelled 'anthropology of life' (Arnold 2017). However, I would like to highlight two tendencies: on the one hand, a definition of 'ontology' alludes to how a particular world is composed—what its different components are—in accordance with the general disposition specified for each form of identification, as, for example, proposed by Philippe Descola (2014b: 437). An ontology, here, is based on something 'more elemental' (Descola 2014a: 239) than a cosmology. Rather, it is founded on 'systems of properties that humans ascribe to beings' (Descola 2006: 139), on 'generative patterns of inferences and actions, ways of composing the world and uses that follow analogous principles and that, for that reason, can be propagated in very similar forms and in very diverse historical contexts' (Descola 2014a: 112 and 236–237). In short, although Descola is conscious of the role played by 'historical contexts', the composition of a world is for him, above all, a matter of perception, of actualisation and of detection (or of omission) of the qualities of our environment and the relationships that are established in it (Descola in Descola and Ingold 2014: 30). On the other hand, some authors, such as Tim Ingold, have emphasised the procedural aspect of this notion of a world's composition, conceiving of it as 'a continuous process … [a] perpetual development…. To compose a world is not to represent life as though it existed beforehand, but to make life emerge as it grows' (Ingold in Descola and Ingold 2014: 37–38, author's translation). My intention here is not to discuss the differences between two authors who are so complex and prolific. I content myself with highlighting two possible emphases of the so-called composition of the worlds: one which is considered a form of perception, actualisation, and detection of certain qualities and the other which is thought of more as a construction, a development, or a type of instigation for life to grow (Hallam and Ingold 2014). This contrast highlights a relationship between the emphasis on the development of those elements that compose a world and the emphasis on the 'living' aspects that they have. Both facets seem to be underlined by the relationship between the people and the land in the Cañaris area: the *Iglisya* is not just an historically constituted device but also a 'living' component of the world. This process of mutual constitution recalls what Ingold has called—in his critique of the concept of ontology—an 'ontogeny' (*ontogénie*) in his emphasis on the inevitable temporality of continuous human evolution (Ingold in Descola and Ingold 2014: 37). The relevance of the study of 'temporalities' in the study of the systems of land

ownership in South America has been highlighted by Viegas (2016: 252): '[T]emporalities should be considered a key perspective in the understanding of the lived experience of possession, namely in the history of entanglements in the possession of land.' I now move on to discuss the third fundamental aspect of the *Iglisya*, the *obedient*. To my knowledge, this aspect has not been addressed previously in Andean ethnographies of indigenous buildings or artefacts.

A Church-Child: On Obedient Entities in the Andes

This third fundamental aspect of the *Iglisya* becomes evident when the building is, symbolically and tacitly as well as concretely and explicitly, conceived of and treated as an obedient entity. During the periodic renovation of its roof—through a ritual called *Iglisya qatay*, which has been far less documented by ethnography than, for example, the roofing rituals of newly built family houses (Gose 1991)—the temple is treated like a child and is given a ritual haircutting (*rutu chikuy*, or as it is called locally, *landa*) (Rivera Andía 2015b). Indeed, the *Iglisya qatay* follows the same sequence as the well-known pre-Columbian ritual still found throughout the Andes during which a child has its first haircut in exchange for ribbon tassels and donations, progressively integrating the infant into the human world. During the *Iglisya qatay*, the roof of the church is treated in the same way as a child's hair during the *landa* ceremony; both rituals have the same protagonists, songs, elements, and sequences (Rivera Andía 2015b). The building appears, then, not just as a living being but more specifically as a human child. More precisely still, it is treated as a certain kind of child: one that is being put through the first phases of its gradual incorporation into the society of upright and honest humans (*runa*), in the way that this is understood in the Andes (Ortiz Rescaniere 1999).

Let's return to the above-mentioned feeding relationship between (Quechua) humans and places in the Peruvian Southern Andes. As we have seen, among the Cañarenses or Quechua of Cañaris, humans treat their lands as do their children. If this is a correct interpretation, then the anomaly that Salas Carreño could not help but detect in Cuzco would be resolved. He observes that '[t]he relations between human parents and their children are slightly different from those between places and humans. While children do not feed their human parents, humans must continually feed places' (Salas Carreño 2016: 828). What happens then when humans leave the role of the child who is nurtured by the land and take instead the

role of those who nurture the land as one would a child? I suggest that this view allows us to explain the apparent incongruity of the statement above: the land is fed by humans *because* they are meant to do so, as they do with their children. This is, of course, a case in which humans are not permanently obliged to respect or fear powerful nonhumans. In this regard, the Cañaris ethnography and other examples (Rivera Andía 2000) recant the 'strong hierarchical relationship, with humans dependent on the places' goodwill' depicted in Cuzco (Salas Carreño 2016: 829). The *Iglisya* shows that a place (if not the land as well) can certainly be dependent on human goodwill. Therefore, rather than a 'strong asymmetry of power', in the case of land ownership in Cañaris, I see a symmetric confrontation or fight between humans and nonhumans.[4]

This ritual treatment of the *Iglisya* as a child establishes a close relationship between the control of the land and the 'nurturing' values and practices of the people of Cañaris. In this way, it personifies an indigenous form of conceiving of and putting into practice the ownership, not just of buildings but, above all, of the land. This analogy between childhood and the device for control of the land that is the *Iglisya* suggests a central role in the exercising of ownership and of care and nurture, whether it be of nonhuman entities or of human beings as children: 'care and nurture play a central role in the ownership of places' (Brightman et al. 2016: 24). The relevance for this Andean case, as well as of the perspectives of the authors gathered in this collection dedicated to 'ownership' and 'nurture' in the Amazon, will become ever more evident from this point on.

What I wish to highlight in this chapter are the logical consequences of this analogy between the *Iglisya*-land and human childhood: both are treated and understood as being under the care of human kinship groups that comprise the *comunidad campesina*:

> [A]ppropriating and nurturing acts of "domestication" are often necessary to maintain their [the object's] status…. As Erikson (2009: 188) suggests, in Amazonia "things", rather than being conceived as independent subjects, seem to be considered as semi-autonomous subordinates. In other words, "things" seem to be less perceived as full subjects than as fully subjected … submitted to an "overt life" of dependency as "obedient things" in much the same way as children, captives, clients and pets are. (Brightman et al. 2016: 12)

The ritual treatment of the *Iglisya* as a child implies that it is not a complete subject as such but rather a subordinate or dependent entity. Therefore, there is more than a building (made *for* and *by* the 'Indians') as

a milestone in the historical process of the constitution of their actual communal lands. Additionally, the 'creativity' exalted in its clandestine foundation and unusual architecture seems to be closely connected to a process of care or 'familiarisation' of these lands:

> *The ownership of nonhuman persons is part of the process of place-making. Creativity begets ownership, and the making of artefacts may create new persons … who may be in turn become owners themselves. Such processes of creative appropriation are … very close to the familiarizing processes of nurture.* (Brightman et al. 2016: 11)

The comparative possibilities between 'Andean' and 'Amazonian' cases are obviously outside the remit of this chapter. Leaving such a theme for future studies, I return here to our ethnographic case from the Peruvian Sierra in order to concentrate on its own specific characteristics. In sum, two findings (one hierarchical association and another symmetrical one) allow us to develop a hypothesis concerning the type of relationship that humans establish with the land in the Cañaris area. A hierarchical relationship, as noted above, is established between humans and the *Iglisya*, which places it in the category of *obedient* entities identified in the ethnography of the South American lowlands with children, captives, clients, or pets. What appears to emerge here, then, is the configuration of an *Iglisya*-child.

There is a symmetrical relationship, as established above, between the *Iglisya* and the land. Whether the *Iglisya* is an historical product of the land or an ethnographic artefact for the distribution and control of it, this relationship calls attention to the emergence of an *Iglisya*-land. It is worth remembering, in passing, that the building in question is literally constructed of two things extracted from the land: earth (the principal material of the sun-dried adobe bricks that form its walls) and the plants that grow on the thatched roof (Carrasco et al. 2016).

The hypothesis then, is as follows: if the relationship that humans have with the land materialises in the *Iglisya* (or is represented by it, or simply *is* it), and if the *Iglisya* is treated as and conceived of as an obedient entity, is the relationship between these people and this land then *analogous* to the one that they have with children? Is the land here included among the still not completely human entities, which need to be fed and cared for? Is the relationship that the people have with the land understood and staged in the terms used to care for an obedient subject that is in the process (always incomplete) of becoming human?

Final Considerations

This chapter offers an ethnography that seeks to overcome the invisibility and asymmetry to which indigenous groups such as the Cañarenses have historically been subjected and to provide an empirical basis for an argument about mining's role in the reproduction of social and environmental inequality in the Andes. This is particularly the case nowadays as increasing numbers of mining corporations' projects threaten ways of life—while state agencies simultaneously commoditise an essentialised culture of the area (as is currently being done [cf. Martínez 2017]). The simultaneity of these processes should not be surprising if we remember that both '[S]tate agencies and mining corporations are usually much better positioned to commission and direct ethnographic research or to exploit ethnographic knowledge' (Ballard and Banks 2003: 306).

In the Cañaris area, collectives are extended to include not only *runas* and *santos patrones* and places like the mountains and the lakes (as described by Andean ethnography and by both Ødegaard and Stensrud, this volume; see also Salas Carreño 2016) but also other nonhuman entities that have been historically constituted by humans, like the *Iglisya*. Its relevance emerges from what Latour considers 'the crucial political task': 'to *distribute* agency as far and in as *differentiated* a way as possible' (Latour 2014a: 15). Although rather different from a 'sacred' entity that must be 'respected' (Cepek 2016) and is part of or identifies itself with 'nature', the significance of this indigenous artefact for the Cañarenses largely exceeds the categories of 'religion', 'culture', or 'patrimony'. Far from presupposing any kind of 'non-modern ontological bases' (Schavelzon 2016: 132), the *Iglisya*'s existence stands only on 'relational contrasts produced in acts of comparing one set of purported commonalities with another' (Salmond in Boellstorff 2016: 402). But even if considered as nothing more than a mining-activated provisional 'quasi-object' (Cepek 2016), the politics of the *Iglisya* (and of the relationships it embodies) is as crucial as that which involves the historic struggle for control of the land. At the same time, the *Iglisya* is an entity under human care, as is the land itself. Both are interwoven in many ways: the land provides the raw materials used to build the *Iglisya*; the *Iglisya*, in turn, distributes, organises, and periodically produces the land. Both *Iglisya* and land constitute the de facto Cañaris collective. How do we make 'operational' or recognisable, de jure, the 'Cosmopolitic' (Stengers 1996; see also Blaser and de la Cadena 2017:186; Schavelzon 2016: 123) of this collective in the face of

the real-existing post-neoliberal regime that imbues the Cañaris area (Arsel et al. 2016; Bury 2005)? Is it appropriate to revisit the omnipresent denomination *comunidad campesina* when it comes to recognising the politically and economically relevant groups in this region of the world, which has been profoundly saturated with resource extraction? What then would constitute 'communal lands' in a situation where the land is part of a relationship such as that embodied by the *Iglisya*? How would our ethnographic understanding of the *comunidad campesina* be affected if ownership of the land were based on such radically different principles and if the exclusively human collectives were not those relevant in the political sphere? Is it possible, finally, to make the legal aspect of this relationship operational in the national sphere, above all in a situation such as the current one, marked by the struggles that have arisen as a result of the Latin American 'extractivist imperative' (Arsel et al. 2016)?

If the hypothesis that I am formulating holds, then yet another threat could be added to the already long list associated with spectral extractivism in the Cañaris area. I am referring to the suppression of a specific form of relationship that, until now, would have been crucial for the existence of the community of humans and nonhumans such as the one found in this part of the Andes. To threaten this relationship would be to eliminate a group, a world, and a way of life that specifically and probably precedes (Brightman et al. 2016: 3) those trying to replace it.

In the case that concerns us here, that of architecture and ownership of the land, *La Minera* also plays a role analogous to that of those external agents who are either trying to demolish the *Iglisya* in order to build a church of concrete (the mayors with their life-projects focused on the urban Spanish-speaking world on the north coast of Peru) or to neglect it until it falls into a ruin (the members of the religious groups created by the Summer Institute of Linguistics).

In a situation as persistently intimidating as this one, it seems difficult to envisage the relationships that are materialised in the *Iglisya* as a 'threat' to modernity—in the sense that Mario Blaser (2009) uses this term when describing the *Ɏrmo* of the Yshiro in Paraguay—or as a predatory aspect of the alternative world the *Iglisya* constitutes (Brightman et al. 2016: 3). Indeed, the practices materialised by the *Iglisya* and the ones corresponding to spectral extractivism might be rather 'kept in a field of equivocations because they do not severely interrupt each other or irremediably disrupt the commoning work' (Blaser and de la Cadena 2017: 190). I would, therefore, be content to glimpse in the *Iglisya* a

fighting implement (always available although not continuously used) in the 'war' of worlds that some authors have recently described (Latour 2009, 2014a: 5, b, 2015; Viveiros de Castro 1999, 2015a, b; Schavelzon 2016: 126). The relevance of the *Iglisya* as a device in the struggle for the land certainly relies does not rely on its visibility neither in the public sphere nor scholarly literature—where earth-beings are usually described in terms of respect or resistance (cf. Merino 2015: 86; Rénique 2009). It does not figure in public speeches nor is it invoked by activists involved in resistance against *La Minera* (which increasingly receives public attention in the forms described by Li and Paredes Peñafiel, this volume). Nor do we find southern earth-beings as *apus*—also described by Stensrud and Ødegaard, this volume—invoked explicitly in indigenous organised protests. It is possible, however, that the prevalence of the material, collective, and nonverbal aspects of the relationships woven into the *Iglisya* can be considered as part of 'a cosmopolitical economy of persons both human and nonhuman' (Brightman et al. 2016: 24) that might configure a 'Cosmopolitics' (Stengers 1996) if our current conceptualisations about 'whom, precisely, is one "taking seriously"' and 'how "other" the otherwise can be' (Candea 2014) are expanded.

Finally, we should perhaps remember the relevance of an 'ontography' (Holbraad 2009, 2014, 2017) compromised by the description of those worlds that interrupt 'the one-world story' (Escobar 2016: 22). If anything were to suggest itself as salvageable from the rivers of ink that have unleashed the current discussions about the 'ontological turn', perhaps it would be the obsessive methodological emphasis on the 'reflectivity' of our own concepts around ethnographic contingencies (Holbraad and Pedersen 2017). Through this chapter, I hope to contribute to the accompaniment of just such a conceptual reflectivity with its preoccupation for the frictions, inequalities, and hierarchies that make the world of Cañaris something 'actively produced as non-existent' (Escobar 2016: 15).

Notes

1. For a definition of extractivism, see the Introduction by Rivera Andía and Ødegaard, this volume.
2. I have reviewed (Rivera Andía 2016) and listed (Rivera Andía 2014b) these publications previously.
3. The relationship between land (claims), residence, and ties to locality and to kin have been studied in the Andes (Salas Carreño 2016) and elsewhere (Ballard 1997; Jorgensen 2010): 'land condenses a host of social relationships for which territory serves as a form of shorthand reference' (Ballard and Banks 2003: 300).
4. Although the case discussed here deals with the struggle for land ownership, I have previously described other situations in which ownership of other *things* (such as cattle) is disputed in indigenous terms (Rivera Andía 2003).

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