

The Local Dimension of Transnational Activity in Environmental Conflicts:  
Tambogrande, 1961-2004

By

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## Abstract

Based on the in-depth analysis of the Tambogrande case, the most well known case of social mobilization in Peru, I argue that the success or failure of transnational activity is closely linked to actions performed on the grassroots level by local organizations before the arrival of outsiders. Between 1999 and 2004, Tambogrande was the site of intense transnational activity. The support given by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) like Oxfam Great Britain and Oxfam America was crucial to stop a Canadian mining company, Manhattan Minerals Corporation (MMC), interested in the extraction of the minerals lying underneath. The existing literature about this case of environmental conflict highlights the contributions of the INGOs neglecting a deeper account of the past trajectories of the local actors. I argue that this successful case of transnational activity was the direct result of a long series of protests that began in 1961 when hundreds of farmers from different regions of Peru arrived to colonize the desert to create what is now the San Lorenzo Valley. The reconstruction of four previous decades of protests shows that the key elements that facilitated the success of the transnational alliances established in the period 1999-2004 were domestically created long before the arrival of INGOs. Specifically, I maintain that these key elements were three. First, a social movement organization (SMO) composed of representatives of pre-existing grassroots organizations such as agricultural, labor, commercial and political guilds. Second, a porous state office (PSO) that remained at the service of social mobilization as a source of democratic and legal legitimacy for more than twenty years. Third, a domestic non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO) that functioned as a broker between grassroots organizations, social leaders, national NGOs and international NGOs.

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## Introduction

### **MAIN ARGUMENT**

The aim of this dissertation is to contribute to the theoretical perspective claiming for more attention to the local or domestic dimension in the study of transnational advocacy alliances. This dissertation argues that the success or failure of transnational activity is closely linked to actions performed on the grassroots level by local organizations before the arrival of outsiders. The in-depth analysis of the Tambogrande case, the most successful case of social mobilization and transnational activity in Peru, allows me to defend this proposal.

Tambogrande is a district located on the northern coast of Peru, bordering Ecuador. Inside this district of a desert landscape and temperate climate is the fertile San Lorenzo Valley, the main producer of lemons and mangoes of the country. Between 1999 and 2004, Tambogrande was the site of intense transnational activity. The support given by international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) like Oxfam Great Britain and Oxfam America was crucial to stop a Canadian mining company, Manhattan Minerals Corporation (MMC), interested in the extraction of the minerals lying underneath. Coarsely summarized, the intended mining activities meant the relocation of a city, the diversion of a river, the digging of a massive open pit in an area rich in underground water, and the extraction of minerals like gold and copper right below hundreds of thousands of lime and mango trees.

As part of the resistance strategy against the Canadian mining company, Tambogrande district residents organized and held a popular referendum to demonstrate their agricultural vocation in a democratic way. This referendum also known as *consulta vecinal* or neighborhood consultation was the first of its kind and a model that was replicated by dozens of social movements facing similar threats in other countries in the region. The worldwide significance of Tambogrande's neighborhood consultation explains in part why attention of the analysts has focused on the global forces that intervened in this conflict. The existing literature on the Tambogrande case focuses exclusively on the events that occurred between 1999 and 2004, the years of intense transnational activity.

The great recognition that INGOs have received has been fair and well deserved. However, we must not forget the contributions of local, domestic or national actors. Based on more than 50 interviews conducted over six years, multiple fieldwork visits, and consultation of personal archives retained by local leaders, as well as consultation of periodicals and journal collections kept in public institutions, I argue that the social mobilization that took place in the Tambogrande district between 1999 and 2004 was the final period of a long series of protests that began in 1961 when hundreds of farmers from different regions of Peru arrived to colonize the desert to create what is now the San Lorenzo Valley.

During the 1950s, the Peruvian government used public funds and loans granted by the World Bank to irrigate the desert, placing new agricultural lots for sale. This laudable initiative was, at the same time, the origin of a long series of conflicts between the settlers of the valley and successive governments that tried to reformulate, to cut or to cancel this irrigation project during

the decade of 1960. The protests continued during the decades of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s against the governments that tried to impose mining in that agriculturally rich and ecologically fragile territory. Before the arrival of the INGOs, the inhabitants of Tambogrande already had extensive experience confronting the central government. They were organized and ready to resume the mobilization against the interests of the mining industry.

The INGOs arrived after four decades of uninterrupted social mobilization. The ideas and theoretical proposals of this dissertation are based on the reconstruction of those four decades of protest that were sustained without any intervention of external allies. The reconstruction of this long chain of protests allows me to affirm that the key elements that facilitated the success of the transnational alliances established in the period 1999-2004 were domestically created long before the arrival of INGOs. Specifically, I maintain that these key elements were three:

- First, a social movement organization (SMO) composed of representatives of pre-existing grassroots organizations such as agricultural, labor, commercial and political guilds. This SMO succeeded in representing local discontent without dividing or defrauding the population's expectations. This SMO was the Tambogrande Defense Front, founded in 1981.
- Second, a porous state office (PSO) that remained at the service of social mobilization as a source of democratic and legal legitimacy. This PSO was the Municipal District of Tambogrande. Mayors of this district led the protests during the 1980s and 1990s.

- Third, a domestic non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO) that functioned as a broker between grassroots organizations, social leaders, national NGOs and international NGOs. This DNGBO was Diakonia for Justice and Peace, a church-based NGO founded in 1987 by an archbishop famous for his courageous commitment to the defense of human rights.

The reconstruction of forty years of social mobilization, which took place without the intervention of external allies, allows me to argue that these three components (PSO + SMO + DNBGO) are the key elements for understanding the strength of the local dimension of transnational activity practiced in Tambogrande during the period of 1999-2004. Tambogrande District, as the scene of four decades of uninterrupted social mobilization, offers us sufficient arguments to ensure that the success or failure of transnational activity stems from the grassroots level.

### **PARTIAL BOOMERANG**

The most cited and mentioned approach in the analysis of transnational activity has been proposed by Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, and is known as the “boomerang strategy” (Keck, 1995; Keck & Sikkink, 1998a, 1998b; Sikkink, 1993, 1998). According to these authors, when state apparatuses block and ignore citizen claims on issues linked to universally accepted principles such as the defense of human rights or environmental protection, local activists, social movements and the various national organizations protesting against the government seek help in the international arena. The result of this effort is the articulation of transnational advocacy networks composed of actors with the capacity to establish cross-border links, such as



foundations, international non-governmental organizations, religious or ecclesiastical organizations, associations of intellectuals, financial institutions or representatives of foreign governments. The objective is to pressure the target state from outside.

Since these transnational alliances do not have coercive power, their members must be very creative in the search for leverage points such as trade benefits, cultural traditions or foreign offers of military or economic aid (Keck & Sikkink, 1998a, p. 200). For example, after several years without responding to a series of violations against human rights, during the 1980s the Mexican government had to be much more receptive when the free-trade negotiations with the United States began. In the same decade, an alliance of NGOs managed to make the Brazilian government demonstrate transparency in its plans to industrialize the Amazon when the World Bank revised these development projects under a more critical light (Keck, 1995, 1998; Keck & Sikkink, 1998a; Sikkink, 1993). However, the conditions are not the same for all countries. Strategies have to be tailored taking into account the characteristics of the target country and its position in the international arena. In some cases there are no large international credits at stake. In others, the same institutions do not always act under the same criteria. For example, in Ecuador, indigenous organizations against oil companies failed to get the World Bank on their side (Fox & Brown, 1998; Gray, 1998; Treakle, 1998).

Although the focus of Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink places the emphasis on external factors (the boomerang comes from outside), these authors recognize the importance of the domestic factors. They remind us that before some principles acquire the character of “universals,” as for example the right to vote for women, these principles were obtained through

long and painful battles fought on the ground level, and country by country (Keck & Sikkink, 1998a, p. 211). The recognition of the importance of the domestic dimension in transnational advocacy networks offers the necessary space to complement this theoretical approach of the study of advocacy alliances in different regions of the world, but relocating the emphasis on local actors (Moog Rodrigues, 2004; Rodrigues, 2000; Zugman Dellacioppa, 2011).

The analysis of the Peruvian case allows us to enrich the study of transnational activity by redirecting the emphasis, from the global arena, to the base level. The transnational activity in Tambogrande during the period 1999-2004 could not suffocate the central government from outside. There were no leverage points as described in the boomerang model. There were no international financial institutions interested in stopping the advance of mining in territories of agricultural strategic importance, like the San Lorenzo Valley. There were also no foreign parliaments or ministers from developed countries trying to influence the decisions of the Peruvian state. A commercial boycott against the minerals extracted from Peru was not only impractical but unimaginable. The path taken by the INGOs supporting the people of Tambogrande was the strengthening of existing local actors. Institutions like Oxfam Great Britain and Oxfam America decided to support local leaders, religious authorities, grassroots organizations, and national NGOs. In the Tambogrande case, the boomerang strategy was only partially applied. The external allies decided to bet on the capabilities, the expertise, and the prestige of the domestic allies. I will show in the next chapters that the local organizations already had several decades of experience in confrontation against different governments. In short, in the Peruvian case, the external allies acted from within.

#### **TAMBOGRANDE AS EMBLEMATIC CASE**

The successful social mobilization of the people of Tambogrande in defense of their right to decide their own development model constitutes a worldwide well-known emblematic case (Scurrah et al., 2015). Tambogrande is also one of the most illustrative cases of bad practices and little social responsibility of some Canadian extractive companies operating in different countries of the world (T. D. Clark & North, 2006; North, 2011; North & Young, 2012, 2013; Stevens, 2009).

However, the existing literature on the Tambogrande case focuses only on the transnational stage, covering mainly the events that occurred between 1999 and 2004. Although those who have analyzed the case have previously recognized and mentioned that the local actors were already organized many years before the arrival of the Canadian company Manhattan Minerals Corporation (MMC), they do not explore the pre-transnational stage. That is, they do not explore what happened before the arrival of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). The existing literature highlights the contributions of the INGOs neglecting a deeper account of the past trajectories of the local actors (Alvarado Merino, 2008; Arce, 2014; De Echave, Diez, et al., 2009a; Haarstad, 2005; Meloche, 2007; Muradian, Martinez-Alier, & Correa, 2003; Portugal Mendoza, 2005; Robles Mendoza, 2003; Subías Grau et al., 2005).

A critical review of the work of INGOs in Tambogrande has recently been published, offering a much more balanced version of the relationship the grassroots level has on transnational activity (Scurrah et al., 2015). This study offers credit that had not been received by local organizations. First, the Tambogrande Defense Front is presented as the organization that was at the center of a

dense transnational network composed of multiple actors operating at different levels (local, regional, national and international) whose main function was to represent the inhabitants of Tambogrande and to lead the mobilization process. Second, the church is identified as the institution that acted as a broker between the Defense Front and national and international NGOs. Third, this critical study specifies that NGOs formed a coalition known as the *Mesa Técnica* or Technical Table for the purpose of advising Defense Front members and managing the financial resources provided by international institutions (Scurrah et al., 2015, pp. 29-35). However, the analysis of what local actors did before the arrival of their international allies, and the establishment of the connections between the pre-transnational stage (before 1999) and the transnational stage (after 1999), remains as a pending task and that is the gap that this dissertation seeks to span.

One of the most notable events that took place in Tambogrande was the celebration of the first popular referendum of the world to oppose the advance of extractive industries in areas where its development proposal is not well received by the local population (McGee, 2009). This neighborhood consultation was the first of its kind and served as a model that was subsequently replicated in other Latin American countries (Castillo & Ávila, 2008; Di Genaro, 2011; Fulmer, 2007; Jahncke & Meza, 2010; McGee, 2009; Muradian et al., 2003; Muradian, Walter, & Martinez-Alier, 2012; Oliver-Smith, 2010; Perkins, 2011; Stevens, 2009; Svampa & Antonelli, 2009; Urkidi, 2011). The popular referendum in Tambogrande was celebrated on June 2002 and during the next 10 years 68 similar neighborhood consultations were held in countries such as Peru, Argentina and Guatemala (Walter & Urkidi, 2015). These referendums fit into what the sociological literature considers the “repertoire” of replicable and adaptable strategies of protest,

or tactical performances, shared through a process of “diffusion” occurring among movements enduring similar experiences (Soule, 2007; Tarrow, 2010; Tarrow & della Porta, 2005; Tilly & Tarrow, 2015).

Tambogrande’s referendum constitutes a model of direct democracy that several mining-affected communities have been able to replicate in a context in which many Latin American governments still do not implement the free prior and informed consent (FPIC) mechanisms promoted by institutions such as the International Labor Organization and the United Nations (ELI, 2004; Gamboa & Snoeck, 2012; Herz, La Viña, & Sohn, 2007; Laplante & Spears, 2008; Welp, 2008).

#### **MINING BOOMS, OVERLAPS AND LEGITIMACY**

The mining booms, driven by the increased price of minerals in the international market, incite waves of exploration on previously little affected zones like areas of agricultural use or indigenous territories (Ballard & Banks, 2003). These overlaps generate two major problems. First, mining activities spark a chain of conflicts over control of territory and over other issues such as water, citizen participation, environmental protection and human rights (Ballard & Banks, 2003; Handelsman, 2002; Jochnick, 1999; Switzer, 2001). Second, extractive activities generate a serious problem of state legitimacy. Although state decisions are always contested by those who are affected by mineral or oil extraction, civil confrontation and contempt levels worsen when it comes to a state that has systematically failed to provide basic services such as health, education, employment, justice or security (Ballard, 2013; Ballard & Banks, 2003).

Extractive booms test the democratic vocation of governments and test almost all dimensions of state-society relations (Ballard, 2001, 2013; Jahncke & Meza, 2010). However, no matter how discredited and weakened a particular state apparatus is, those who oppose government decisions remain citizens of that state and the protests have to take into account the limits and possibilities imposed by that state; the peasants who rebel against the government do not renounce their citizenship, they ask to be heard as full-fledged citizens (Munro, 1996). As has been observed by Charles Tilly (2006) the forms and strategies adopted by social mobilizations depend on government capacities to enforce its decisions within its political jurisdiction.

The problems of legitimacy in the state-society relations generated by the extractive booms affect all parts involved. The legitimacy of those who lead the social mobilization is also a crucial factor in the fate of protest. In order to understand the concepts I will present below, I will define “legitimacy” – in the most Weberian and general possible sense – as the capacity of a certain authority to back up its proposals in the belief or recognition that it is the right thing to do, beyond their capacity to punish or the self-interest of the individuals to whom it is directed (Hurd, 1999; Spencer, 1970). Authorities with “legitimacy” are those that achieve respect, obedience and conformity to the norms they promote based on qualities such as trust, prestige and credibility (Fallon, 2005; Friedrichs, 1980; Grafstein, 1981a, 1981b; Matheson, 1987; Miller, 1970; Pakulski, 1986).

## **MINING IN PERU**

In Peru, mining for economic or commercial purposes is a very old activity that began with the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors. The controversial and contradictory relationship of

Peruvians with mining is also old because of the enormous hopes it arouses but never fulfills (Glave & Kuramoto, 2007; Póveda, 2006). The surprises came with the neoliberal model imposed by President Alberto Fujimori in the early 1990s. In order to promote foreign direct investment and extractive activities, President Fujimori implemented an extremely generous, attractive and flexible regulatory framework (Durand, 2004, 2005; Glave & Kuramoto, 2002, 2007). These new laws, coupled with a boom in international market prices that lasted for several years, created the conditions of a process characterized by a frontal clash between global forces and local actors, on the one hand, multinational extractive companies and on the other the population directly affected by the advance of this industry (Baca, 2014; Bebbington, 2007; Chakarova, 2012). Influential mining and oil companies came to Peru in a global context of deregulation, where the main commitments and responsibilities are dictated by the market, under little or no efficient control by the state, and at a time when multiple and successive governments continued a privatization model by eliminating to the maximum any type of state participation in the extractive sector (Damonte, 2008; Durand, 2010).

In 2009 there were 14 companies affiliated with the International Council on Mining and Minerals (ICMM), the association that brings together the largest mining companies in the world, and approximately 100 junior companies mainly focused on exploration (Oxfam, 2009) operating in Peru. Additionally, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), member of the World Bank Group, operates in Peru as a shareholder of profitable and strategic mining projects (Glennie, 2005; Keenan, De Echave, & Traynor, 2002; Oxfam, 2009).

The consequences of Fujimori's extractive neoliberalism have been considered a true macroeconomic miracle (World Bank, 2015). Peru is the world's second largest copper producer (as well as the owner of the world's second largest copper reserve yet to be tapped), the second largest producer of silver, the sixth largest producer of gold, the second largest producer of zinc, and fourth lead producer. This list has to include other metals, such as iron and tin, in great demand in the global market that Peru also exports. Thanks to this mineral diversity, Peru has an almost unrivaled comparative advantage. In 2004, Peru was considered the seventh most attractive region in the world to make mining investments after Nevada, Australia, Quebec, Ontario, Chile and Alaska; in the period of 2004-2011 Peru received between 3% and 5% of the world budget in mining exploration; and in 2012 Peru occupied the seventh position producing 4.1% of the value of the total global mining production (EY, 2014; KPMG, 2013; Larrain Vial, 2012; MEM, 2004, 2016; PWC, 2013). One of the most important consequences of this mining boom, started in the 1990s, has been the consolidation of mining as one of the fundamental pillars of the Peruvian economy. Mining attracts approximately 25% of foreign direct investment (Sanborn & Dammert, 2013), constitutes 60% of the total of Peruvian exports (Baca, 2014; Macroconsult, 2012; WGC, 2011) and is praised as the productive sector that pays more taxes to the state (IIMP, 2010; Instituto Peruano de Economía, 2011; Valladares Villarán, 2006).

However, the contribution of mining to the national economy and, above all, its ability to reduce poverty, is a matter of constant debate. Existing studies not only use different indicators, variables, and price indices, but also combine and exclude different administrative levels, municipal, provincial, regional and national, to sustain what they define as poverty or progress (Del Pozo Loayza & Paucarmayta Tacuri, 2015; Keenan et al., 2002; Perla, 2010; Tanaka, 2005;



Zegarra, Orihuela, & Paredes, 2007). Critics point out that in order to understand the true impact of the mining's contribution through the payment of taxes, it is necessary to take into account the generous returns as well as the tax exemptions and the fixed taxation contracts that this industry has enjoyed since Fujimori's times (Glennie, 2005; OCM, 2016a, 2016b). In addition, other problems generated by mining activities are mentioned in a context of state weakness, such as the deterioration of state-society relations due to the economic benefits that some members of the police receive from mining companies, the extremely low quality of expenditure incurred by public institutions receiving funds from mining, the low number of direct jobs generated by extractive industries, and poorly supervised environmental problems such as the decline in water sources (Baca & Ávila, 2015; OCM, 2016b; Oxfam, 2009; Robles Mendoza, 2003).

In summary, mining activity in Peru is totally oriented to the international market, is barely linked to other economic activities and generates very few direct jobs (Glave & Kuramoto, 2002, 2007). The contribution of mining is very modest since it constitutes approximately 5% of the total GDP (De Echave, 2012) and large-scale mining occupies only 1% of the economically active population (Benavides Ganoza, 2012). These small figures are even more surprising if one takes into consideration the millions in investments and the enormous monetary wealth produced by this productive sector.

## **CONCESSIONS & OVERLAPS**

Alberto Fujimori's supposed neoliberal macroeconomic miracle has had serious social, environmental and political consequences. The laws supporting macroeconomic stability prioritize the defense of private and foreign investments, ignoring any kind of efficient legal

protection in favor of the environment, human rights or citizen participation (De Echave, 2008, 2010; De Echave, Hoetmer, & Palacios, 2009; Glave & Kuramoto, 2002, 2007). This state failure has generated a great distrust in the population affected by the territorial expansion of extractive activities, doubting the will of the state to control, to supervise or to sanction the mining companies (Póveda, 2006).

There is a dichotomy between the ownership of the surface and the ownership of the subsoil in Peruvian law, because these are considered as two different and mutually independent types of property (Ashton et al., 2015, p. 21). In Peru, the owners of the surface do not own the riches that could house the subsoil. According to this fictitious separation, both levels of property can be exploited independently because what is done on one level would not have to affect what happens in the other. This type of criteria supports a highly lenient concession system in which rights over subsoil wealth are delivered without evaluating the credentials, financial solvency or operational capacity of those requesting concessions (Ashton et al., 2015, p. 15). These concessions are delivered from Lima, without taking into account the benefits produced by the owners or users of the surface. Neither is it taken into account any type of environmental concern because there is no zoning system in Peru that would allow the rational use of the territory based on long-term criteria (Glennie, 2005; Oxfam, 2009).

This situation is aggravated by the fact that the state does not regulate how those who have received the legal rights over the wealth of the subsoil, and those who own or inhabit the surface of the same portion of the national territory, must interact with each other. All aspects of coexistence between mining companies and local communities have been privatized, replacing

state regulation by criteria of community relations established by the mining industry (Damonte, 2009).

Under this system of concessions, the expansion of extractive activities has generated a wave of conflicts throughout the national territory seriously affecting state-citizen relations (Alforte et al., 2014; Bebbington, Hinojosa, Bebbington, Burneo, & Warnars, 2008). Those who defend the current system of concessions claim that there is mining activity in only 1.3% of the national territory, either in the exploitation phase or in the exploration phase (MEM, 2014, 2015, 2016). However, what must be taken into account is that 20% of the entire national territory has been granted in concession (Baca & Ávila, 2014, 2015; OCM, 2012).

This system of concessions has generated an explosive overlap between the interests of the owners of the mining concessions and the rights of the owners of agricultural lands, members of peasant and native communities, and users of river basins (Balvín, 2004; De Echave, 2009; De Echave, Hoetmer, et al., 2009; Oxfam, 2014; Vittor, 2008). According to the reports issued by the Ombudsman's Office, mining activities are the main cause of conflict in Peru. In 2012, this office registered 227 cases of conflict throughout the country, out of which 148 were classified as "socio-environmental" conflicts. Within those 148 socio-environmental conflicts, 105 conflicts were linked to the mining sector (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2012).

The contrast between the limited disposition of agricultural land in Peru, and the strategic importance of the San Lorenzo Valley, made the Tambogrande case the most visible overlap of all. The agricultural area in Peru is extremely limited. According to calculations made in the

early 1980s by the Office of National Assessment of Natural Resources (ONERN), the potentially cultivable land area in Peru does not exceed the 6% of the total national territory (World Bank, 1992). This estimation has been recently confirmed by the Agricultural National Census of 2012 in which the agricultural surface of the country was determined at 5.5%. The surface under cultivation, and the area irrigated by different techniques like gravity, spray, drip or exudation, is even smaller, 3.2% and 2.0% respectively (INEI, 2013). Under these conditions, Peruvian territory should be carefully managed to reduce levels of food insecurity and to alleviate the pressures of the growing population over the few productive areas (Eguren, 2012). Since the 1970s, however, all governments have promoted the extraction of the minerals underneath the Tambogrande District, ignoring the fact that the San Lorenzo Valley is one of the most fertile valleys on the arid coast, producing a high variety of foodcrops and, above all, the country's main producer of mangoes and limes (Aste Daffós, 2002; Cruz & Canterác, 2006).

In Peru there is no official system of territorial zoning, but, in practice, the concession system functions as the mechanism that establishes the priorities in the economic exploitation of the territory (Oxfam, 2014; Red Muqui, 2015). The maps drawn up by the Peruvian state showing the concessioned grids, as well as the maps elaborated by the NGOs monitoring this process, constitute maps of uncertainty as they indicate possible conflicts and dispossessions (Bebbington, 2012).

Another important cause of conflict is the lack of efficient procedures to take into account the will of those who occupy the surface of the concessioned grids. The weak procedures through which the state intends to listen to those potentially affected by extractive activities (De Echave,

2010) have been totally subordinated on the elaboration of the Environmental Impact Study (EIA) developed by teams of private consultants, professionals and contractors, financed and supervised by the mining company (Ashton et al., 2015). First, the final decision to approve or disapprove EIAs is in the hands of the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM), which necessarily implies a serious conflict of interest, since this is the ministry whose main function is to promote and facilitate extractive activities (Ashton et al., 2015; Muradian, Folchi, & Martinez-Alier, 2004; Muradian et al., 2003).

Second, according to Peruvian laws, mining companies together with representatives of the MEM, must hold Information Workshops and Public Assemblies, after having finished and delivered the EIA. The population is summoned only when the process is about to culminate. The Information Workshops aim is to disseminate the content of the EIAs. These are information and propaganda events. The Public Hearings aim is to collect the opinions, comments and contributions of the local population. However, mining companies are not legally obliged to incorporate criticism, to consider the most debated aspects, or to correct the content of EIAs as expressed in those assemblies (Ashton et al., 2015, p. 103). In summary, the concessions are delivered from Lima without evaluating the credentials of those requesting them or without considering the impacts on the surface, the population is convened after the delivery of an EIA prepared by the mining company, and the mining companies do not have the obligation to include or resolve the controversies raised by those attending the Public Assemblies (De Echave, 2010, 2012; Li, 2009; Pinto & Rivero, 2012).

Considerations about the mining concession system in Peru contained in this section are of particular importance in understanding the Tambogrande case because the Manhattan Minerals Corporation (MMC) did not have the financial capacity to extract the minerals and could not attract solvent partners. This company received a significant number of concessions and signed agreements with the Peruvian state, but it was an inexperienced company with no capital and no mining operations in other countries. The insistence of the insolvent MMC ended up making Tambogrande a world example of citizen participation in mining and environmental issues. The popular referendum became a model of direct democracy, and local people received a national award for human rights. Above all, MMC's insistence turned Tambogrande into the most notorious case of overlap because this company tried to convert the country's main producer of mangoes and limes into a mining zone. The Tambogrande case perfectly demonstrated the negative consequences of the laws implemented by President Alberto Fujimori, attracting the attention of international non-governmental organizations.

#### **NEW ACTORS & LOCAL DIMENSION**

I argue that the success or failure of transnational activity stems from the grassroots level. I also argue that the Peruvian case provides enough evidence to redirect the attention from the global to the local dimension in the analysis of advocacy coalitions. In Peru, as in other Latin American countries, the massive influx of multinational extractive companies, barely supervised by the state and only committed to their parent companies and the international market, has turned the grassroots level into the scene of a frontal collision between global actors and domestic actors (Arellano Yanguas, 2008a; Damonte, 2009; Scurrah, 2008b; Svampa, 2009; Svampa & Antonelli, 2009; Svampa & Viale, 2014).

In this context, the representatives of the state are viewed with distrust as the population is convinced that the laws have been made in favor of large companies. The Peruvian state has renounced its capacity to act as an impartial interlocutor (Oxfam, 2009; Scurrah, 2008a, 2008c). Before the imposition of neoliberalism in Peru, the main actors were only the state, mining workers' unions, and mining companies. At present, the void left by the state has been occupied by new actors who are acting as mediators in conflicts and as guarantors of the most fundamental rights of the affected population, like municipal mayors, presidents of subnational governments, ecclesiastical authorities, indigenous organizations, peasant organizations and NGOs specialized in environmental protection and the promotion of human rights (Sanborn & Dammert, 2013; Scurrah, 2008a, 2008c).

An important feature of these new actors is that they are operating in a disconnected or disjointed manner. The numerous social movements that have emerged against the advance of the extractive industries have failed to consolidate a single political project or a common platform that represents them all (Damonte, 2009; Meléndez & León, 2010). In Peru today, there is intense political, environmental and transnational activity, but highly concentrated at the local level and working scattered in different parts of the national territory.

National and international NGOs intervention has been crucial to facilitate the flow of resources and the building of bridges in a context highly concentrated at the grassroots level (Bebbington, 2007). NGOs have contributed by developing the capacities of local actors, establishing inter-institutional alliances, documenting violations against human rights, developing independent

technical reports on possible ecological impacts, financing media campaigns to influence public opinion, creating spaces for dialogue between authorities, policy makers, mining companies, and grassroots leaders, and providing legal advice to affected populations (Scurrah, 2008a). Many of these NGOs are still trying to overcome the existing disconnections by building umbrella organizations and establishing information exchange networks (Svampa, 2011).

## **EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

During the period 1999-2004, the domestic NGO that served as a bridge between the Tambogrande population, the leaders of the social mobilization, and the international NGOs, was a church-based NGO founded in 1987 by Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias with the aim of defending human rights. In 2001, the main figurehead of the social mobilization, Godofredo García Baca, who personally led all protests during four decades, was ambushed and killed by a hooded gunman. Neither the Peruvian government then, nor successive governments, showed interest in resolving the case or in discovering the intellectual authors. A year later, in 2002, the people of Tambogrande received a national prize for their defense of human rights. These events were not fortuitous. Most of the negative consequences of extractive industries in contexts of state deregulation can be classified as human rights violations: murders committed by gunmen, soldiers, police or private guards, eviction of lands, dispossession of indigenous territories and destruction of ecological habitats (Garvin, McGee, Smoyer-Tomic, & Aubynn, 2009; McBeth, 2008; McGee, 2009, 2010; Seck, 2008).

The well-known resource curse (Ross, 2003) adopts specific forms depending on the characteristics of the exporting country, as there are many variations between one country and



another taking into account how contracts are negotiated between the state and foreign firms, how legal rights are granted, levels of transparency in state-company relations, management of the fiscal revenues and compliance with international standards (Collier, 2008). The numerous environmental conflicts show that Peru has not found the way to escape the resource curse (Arellano Yanguas, 2008a, 2008b, 2011). A recently published study concludes that the multiple violations of human rights in Peru are the consequence of a weak state, highly dependent on the export of raw materials, which has transferred many of its responsibilities to the private sector (CIJ, 2016).

#### **LOCAL DIMENSION OF TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVITY**

The aim of this dissertation is to contribute to the theoretical perspective claiming for more attention to the domestic dimension in the study of transnational activity. Several scholars has supported the idea that the crucial factors to understand the success or the failure of transnational advocacy initiatives reside in the grassroots level, arguing that any transnational intervention has to rely on well-developed social movements or legitimate local allies (Bandy & Smith, 2005; della Porta & Kriesi, 1999; della Porta & Tarrow, 2005b; Juska & Edwards, 2005; Nelson, 2002, 2004; Passy, 1999; Princen, Finger, & Manno, 1994; Rootes, 2005; Rothman & Oliver, 1999, 2002; Rucht, 1997, 1999; Smith & Bandy, 2005; Smith, Chatfield, & Pagnucco, 1997; Tarrow, 2007).

Some observations made by these scholars have guided the research condensed in this dissertation. First, the evident consideration of the grassroots level as the primal scenario: “The empirical literature on social movements seems definite that most local mobilization cycles begin

with indigenous or internal insurgency which then attracts external resources” (Rothman & Oliver, 2002, p. 117). Transnational actors are the ones going to a strange place when social mobilization has already begun. “The initiative for protest and resistance always began with local people, as did the initiative to seek external resources. External agents were reactive, responding to requests or proposals, or entering an area after the disruption had started” (Rothman & Oliver, 2002, p. 128). Transnational actors are foreigners and as a consequence easy target for opponents arguing nationalistic principles. External organizations need local anchors, and the most prolific and the most stable the better. That is why international NGOs are always promoting the visibility and strengthening the abilities of their domestic allies (Ghimire, 2011). Anthony Bebbington (2007) after a comparative study of cases in Peru and Ecuador concludes that environmental movements against the expansion of unwelcome mining activities arise first from “networks and practices of everyday life.” After a period of domestic activity and consolidation, these networks wove alliances with transnational actors. This author argues that the globalization stage always came after, and that the both kinds of agents, locals and transnationals, need each other (Bebbington, 2007).

Second, not all state apparatuses are equally vulnerable confronting external pressures (Smith & Wiest, 2005). Sometimes the only viable way is to create venues of domestic pressure (Rucht, 1999). The sustained mobilization during long periods of time has been reported by several empirical studies as something crucial for the success of the resistance and only domestic actors can display the “radical flank effect” or endure “direct actions” contradicting the principles of some transnational actors deeply committed to more peaceful or civil strategies (Khagram, 2002; Rucht, 1997). The reconstruction of the long social mobilization in Tambogrande, which began

with the arrival of colonists in the San Lorenzo Valley in 1961, and ended with the expulsion of a Canadian mining company in 2004, clearly shows that the local population never stopped practicing direct actions or pressuring by force. As it will be narrated in detail in the following chapters, the population of Tambogrande combined all kinds of strategies, some more peaceful and civic than others, but marched in the streets, surrounded public premises, blocked roads, and faced the invaders fighting with sticks and stones, square by square and house by house, until the last day of mobilization.

A crucial aspect in the analysis of the domestic dimension of transnational activity is the necessary allocation of autonomy, agency and initiative both among international actors and in their domestic allies (Lahusen, 1999; Rothman & Oliver, 2002). There is no valid reason to assume that actors at the grassroots level are unable to make their own decisions, to defend their own agendas, to change their minds or to develop new interests in the midst of social mobilization.

J. Christopher Brown and Mark Purcell (2005) have coined the phrase “local trap” to refer to a series of misleading assumptions made by some researchers and activists about the grassroots level: for example, the quick but deceptive association of the local level with virtues like democracy, justice, inclusion, sustainability and ecological consciousness. As these authors remind us, there is nothing inherent to any level: “A successful democracy can be local, regional, national or global. [...]. A global community is just as conceivable as a local one” (Purcell & Brown, 2005, p. 282). According to these authors, it is necessary to take into account that domestic actors also have their own agendas, are capable of pursuing selfish ends, presenting

false information and abusing their weaker neighbors. The “local trap” explains why many NGO initiatives have not had the expected results. It is necessary to take into account that both transnational actors and their domestic allies have autonomy, agency and initiative: “It is these agendas, and not the inherent qualities of a particular scale, that will determine the program’s social and environmental outcomes” (Purcell & Brown, 2005, pp. 282-283).

**FORMULA = PSO + SMO + DNGBO**

The key elements explaining the success of the transnational mobilization in Tambogrande were domestically generated during four decades before the arrival of international NGOs. Those key elements were three. First, a social movement organization (SMO). This was the central element in the dense network that was woven and its mission was to represent the settlers and farmers of the district. This SMO was the Tambogrande Defense Front. Second, a porous state office (PSO) that acted as a source of democratic and legal legitimacy for several decades. This PSO was the District Municipality of Tambogrande. Third, a domestic non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO) that functioned as a broker between national NGOs, international NGOs and social mobilization leaders grouped in the Tambogrande Defense Front. The reconstruction of the four decades of pre-transnational social mobilization in the Tambogrande district has allowed me to determine the origin of these three institutional actors and how they were linked to each other.

**a. SMO.** In the sociological literature the term social movement organization (SMO) is used to study those organizations that crystallize from within the social mobilization to represent the population in front of actors who enjoy legal legitimacy or who belong to formal institutions

(McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1988, 1996). SMOs bring together the main leaders of the mobilization coming out from the grassroots pre-existing organizations involved in the protest. SMOs assume much more formal and stable structures, in order to deal with representatives of the state or private companies, who tend to lower the profile of the leaders by constantly insisting that these are isolated or ephemeral actors. These platforms allow representatives of the mobilization to sign agreements, to attend meetings with a more official investiture and address the media as members of a recognizable organization.

Although the term SMO has been used in a much more flexible way, including under this category both national and international NGOs (Bebbington, 2007; Smith, 2002; Smith, Pagnucco, & Romeril, 1994), I will use this concept in a more restrictive way, reserving it to categorize the organizations that arise at the grassroots level grouping the representatives of local pre-existing organizations. The Tambogrande Defense Front coincides with the definition of SMO adopted in this dissertation.

The Defense Front was founded in 1981 as a result of a coalition of pre-existing political, commercial, agricultural and worker organizations with the aim of rejecting the presence of a French mining company, the Bureau of Recherches Géologiques et Minières (BRGM), which with the support of the central government sought to extract the minerals from the subsoil. The most important and influential pre-existing organization at the time of the founding of the Defense Front was the Settlers Association of San Lorenzo.

The Settlers Association was created during the 1960s with the objective of confronting the central government that at that time had legislated in favor of the owners of neighboring cotton estates who wanted to use all the available water to irrigate their profitable crops. Then, during the 1970s, the Settlers Association confronted the military government to prevent agrarian reform from affecting its agricultural holdings. In addition, the military government of the 1970s was the one that called the French mining company BRGM to extract the minerals from Tambogrande. During those two decades of mobilization, 1960s and 1970s, valley farmers gained extensive experience in confronting the state. When the Defense Front was founded in 1981, the main representative of the settlers was the engineer Godofredo García Baca, who arrived in the valley in 1964, leading from that moment all the protests until his assassination in 2001. Later, during the decade of 1990s, The Water Users Board of San Lorenzo, the institution that administers water distribution in the valley, became the pre-existing grassroots organization that functioned as the most important support of the FDT.

**b. PSO.** I will use the term porous state office (PSO) to describe the functions fulfilled by the Tambogrande District Municipality. This characterization is based on the theoretical proposals of Joel Migdal (1988, 1994, 2001, 2004) and Jack Goldstone (2003). The first of these authors argues that the barriers between the state and society are actually much more blurred and permeable than they seem to be. Those who govern are part of the governed society, those who occupy the state offices come from the sector that votes for them, and the state apparatus is composed of a myriad of offices defending usually contradictory principles offering enough space for civil society initiatives to find echo within the government (Migdal, 2001).

The second author has observed that the boundaries dividing social movements and conventional forms of politics are also quite diffuse. Goldstone proposes that, instead of drawing impervious lines, we should observe the interpenetration and the continuity that exists between social movements, political parties and state offices. This author assumes that a combination of strategies is what exists in real life. Those who mobilize against state decisions block roads, march in the streets and display some levels of violence confronting law enforcement, but at the same time they vote. It is usual for protest leaders to become formal candidates and for political parties to be backed by massive popular mobilizations (Goldstone, 2003). Both authors use the term “porous” to describe the relations between state and society, and the relationships between social movements, political parties and state offices.

The analysis of the four decades of pre-transnational social mobilization in Tambogrande coincides with the central ideas of these two theoretical proposals. The Defense Front was founded in 1981 with the support of the acting district mayor. Then, during the 1980s and 1990s, the population voted on five separate occasions for a member of the Defense Front to become the mayor, thereby keeping that government office at the service of the protest. As we will see in the next chapters, the District Municipality of Tambogrande functioned as a source of legal and democratic legitimacy. During the pre-transnational stage, the democratically elected mayors gave strength and visibility to the local claims. During the transnational stage, in 2002, the acting mayor issued the rules that gave legal support to the world famous first popular referendum. Those who have studied subsequent referendums in other regions of Latin America have documented the same dynamic of cooperation between social movements and municipalities

(McGee, 2009; Oxfam, 2016) considering neighborhood consultations as “hybrid” institutions in which the municipalities have functioned as “anchors of legitimacy” (Walter & Urkidi, 2015).

The close relationship between the Tambogrande District Municipality and the Defense Front also served to solve one of the greatest obstacles faced by the mobilization leaders. Those who assume the tasks of representation can never be completely sure of being in tune with most of their constituents. In addition, their decisions can be ignored very easily because those who participate in a social mobilization do so freely and voluntarily (Offe, 1985). The members of the Defense Front adopted an old municipal practice to make decisions in a participatory way, the *cabildos abiertos* or popular assemblies. The *cabildos abiertos*, a practice of colonial origin, consisted in the celebration of mass assemblies in a public space, as for example the main plaza, to discuss municipal matters. Members of the Defense Front held multiple *cabildos abiertos* during the 1980s and 1990s to gain approval for their decisions and to show the central government representatives that they had the direct support of the local population.

**c. DNGBO.** The construction of inter-institutional alliances between similar affected groups and the search for allies in different levels of government and other geographical spaces is fundamental for any type of social mobilization. Within these alliances, NGOs stand out with special brilliance for their ability to cross borders by calling for actors with different backgrounds and expertise (Beamish & Luebbbers, 2009; Bennett, 2005; Sudbury, 2003). Diakonia for Justice and Peace, was the church-based NGO founded by Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias in 1987 to stop the penetration of terrorism into grassroots organizations within his religious jurisdiction, and to defend the human rights of the most vulnerable, trapped between



terrorist violence and abuses by state representatives. During the 1980s the Archbishop faced terrorism by supporting various political and cultural initiatives, preaching in churches, marching in the streets and giving speeches in main squares to prevent the demoralization of the Catholic people. In the late 1990s, Archbishop Cantuarias sought the help of representatives of Oxfam Great Britain and of the Peruvian Catholic Church representatives based in Lima, in order to convene a group of national NGOs with experience in environmental issues. This church-based NGO promoted the alliance between the Defense Front and the transnational actors.

The best theoretical way of describing Diakonia for Justice and Peace is to consider it as a domestic non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO). The term “bridging” is widely used in the literature on transnational activity to refer to the task of establishing links between different institutions and actors. Bridging, as a basic notion, has been expressed in several ways. For example, María Guadalupe Rodrigues (2000) uses the term “catalyst” to refer to organizations that, as part of transnational advocacy networks, engage in the search for economic and political resources, the dissemination of information, and inter-institutional coordination (Moog Rodrigues, 2004).

Bridging as a notion is the basis of a whole family of concepts used in the study of social movements. “Brokerage” is defined as the creation of new links between previously disconnected actors (Tarrow, 2011, p. 187). This work is usually done by intermediaries who act as hinges communicating new sites and situations (Tarrow, 2007, pp. 186-190) aiming to build coalitions between actors operating at different levels of contention (della Porta & Tarrow, 2005a; McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001). “Scale shift,” the action of broadening the scope of the

social mobilization reaching new political, administrative or geographical levels, is also related with the basic notion of bridging: “by scale shift we mean a change in the number and level of coordinate contentious actions leading to broader contention involving a wider range of actors and bridging their claims and identities” (McAdam et al., 2001, p. 331). “Frame bridging” is another similar concept defined as “the linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem” (Tarrow, 2007, pp. 61-62).

Those who analyze concrete cases of transnational mobilization constantly use “bridging” as a term to describe the work done by NGOs connecting donors and beneficiaries, producers and consumers, peasant organizations, ecclesiastical associations, government branches, private corporations, and institutions dedicated to the exchange of information in defense of humanitarian causes, operating in different regions and countries (Anner & Evans, 2004; Carroll & Bebbington, 2000; Gordenker & Weiss, 1995; Hailey & James, 2004; Mahler & Hansing, 2005; Pitanguy, 2002; Raustiala, 1997; Rivera-Santos & Rufín, 2010; Smith et al., 1994; Van Tuijl, 1999; Waddell, 2000). This term has been used several times to study transnational environmental activity (Schultz, Duit, & Folke, 2011; Schultz, Folke, & Olsson, 2007; West & Schultz, 2015; West, Schultz, & Bekessy, 2016; Westley et al., 2013). Many of the authors using the term bridging subscribe and rely on the famous theoretical contribution of Robert Putnam (Putnam, 2000; Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993) who emphasizes the previous existence of ties of collaboration and trust as a trait that facilitate collective action (L. D. Brown, 1991; L. D. Brown & Fox, 2000; L. D. Brown & Timmer, 2005; Grootaert & Van Bastelaer, 2002; Park, 2010; Teegen, Doh, & Vachani, 2004; Vervisch & Titeca, 2010).

In order to theoretically describe the role of Diakonia for Justice and Peace, I will adopt the way in which L. David Brown (1991) defines the non-governmental bridging organizations. According to L. David Brown, the bridging organizations are those organizations with the capacity to bring together, around common goals, diverse constituencies operating in different dimensions but sharing similar interest in solving development problems. These institutions are real coalition-builders, capable of spanning multiple gaps between separate political levels, policy makers, regions and cultures (L. D. Brown, 1991; Jamal, Kreuter, & Yanosky, 2007).

It is necessary to highlight three characteristics of bridging organizations. First, according to L. David Brown, these organizations must be able to manage diversity and negotiate with actors who advocate different agendas. Second, bridging organizations occupy a very vulnerable position. Because of their brokering activities these organizations end up in the middle of a dense network of inter-institutional alliances receiving all kinds of pressures. Third, legitimacy is a fundamental feature without which bridging organizations could not operate. It is necessary to possess very high levels of credibility and reputation in order to promote events of collaboration and coordination in contexts of conflict (L. D. Brown, 1991; Rodrigues, 2000; Shah, 2011).

With regard to transnational activity, L. David Brown has observed that bridging organizations are crucial because there are objectives that necessarily involve articulating the grassroots level with the national and global levels across multiple borders (L. D. Brown & Timmer, 2005). Thanks to bridging organizations, all levels can contribute to the same cause: a. Grassroots groups contribute with information possessed only by those who are on the ground. b. National

NGOs contribute with knowledge about the most relevant political issues and how the various state offices work. c. International NGOs contribute with their understanding of major global trends, offering a much wider range of alternatives and resources (L. D. Brown & Fox, 2000). However, the relationships between grassroots organizations and international NGOs are plagued with problems such as lack of accountability, communication failures, contradictory goals, incompatibility of values and priorities, and disparity of power. All these difficulties make the legitimacy, credibility and reputation of bridging organizations a more sensitive issue (L. D. Brown & Fox, 2000, pp. 455-457).

Finally, the term “bridging” has also been applied to describe individuals who assume the costs of overcoming the initial disorder of the mobilization and the costs of looking for the first potential allies (Robnett, 1996; Westley & Vredenburg, 1997). L. David Brown has used the notion of “bridging individuals” in the analysis of transnational activity, noting that these actors come from pre-existing grassroots level organizations or domestic NGOs. Usually these individuals are those who possess the required skills and personal commitment to neutralize the centrifugal forces operating in networks composed of a multitude of disparate actors oriented by different agendas (L. D. Brown & Fox, 2000, p. 455).

In summary, my argument is that the three factors described in this section (PSO + SMO + DNBGO) are the key elements to understanding the success of the transnational activity displayed in Tambogrande between 1999 and 2004. Those three factors were domestically brewed during four uninterrupted decades of social mobilization, long before the arrival of the international NGOs. Thanks to these three factors, the people of Tambogrande and their

transnational allies were able to successfully confront a Canadian company that was attracted by the institutional reforms carried out by President Alberto Fujimori to impose a neoliberal system highly dependent on the export of raw materials.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The main objective of the fieldwork supporting the argument of this dissertation was the search for elements of continuity in order to connect the long chain of protests that occurred in the District of Tambogrande from the early years of the 1960s until the expulsion of the Canadian mining company MMC in 2004. The trajectory of important bridging individuals, as the colonist and engineer Godofredo García Baca, and the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias, connects all the stages of the protest. The trajectory of the Settlers Association, which began its activities during the early 1960s and became one of the main pre-existent organizations that joined the Defense Front on its foundation in 1981, constitutes another important element of continuity.

There are two main sources supporting the argument of this dissertation: a. Interviews with the protagonists of the social mobilization. b. Consultation of secondary sources such as newspapers and magazines. The interviews were conducted between 2008 and 2014. The first round of interviews was held in Lima with the chairs and staff of the NGOs that made up the Technical Table. The second round of interviews was held in Piura with chairs and staff of Piura-based NGOs, members of the Tambogrande Defense Front, and leaders of various grassroots organizations who actively participated in the protests.

Both the Piura-based NGOs staff, and the opposition resident leaders in Tambogrande, agreed that international NGOs came in the last stage of what was a very long sequence of protests that was originated several decades before, remarking that former mayors played a crucial role. At first I did not take these statements very seriously because I considered that as a reaction against the enormous credit received by the international NGOs. The interviewees pointed out that almost all of my questions seemed to be part of an assessment of the contribution of NGOs and that I was also minimizing or ignoring the efforts and initiatives of the local population. With the aim of correcting the initial approach, I decided that the third round of interviews would have to include the former mayors of Tambogrande managing to interview the five former mayors who governed Tambogrande between 1980 and 2004.

The former mayors of Tambogrande corroborated that international NGOs and Lima-based NGOs arrived during the last stage of a long sequence of protests. The memory and experience of the former municipal authorities (I also interviewed some former aldermen) was much deeper than my previous interviewees. These authorities agreed that the social mobilization that expelled the Canadian company in 2004 had its origin in the arrival of the settlers to the San Lorenzo Valley during the first years of the 1960s. Also, they agreed on that the main character, connecting all the stages of the protests was the engineer and colonist Godofredo García Baca. Unfortunately, the engineer García Baca had been assassinated in 2001. The most valuable testimony of all was no longer available.

My fourth visit to Piura aimed to rebuild the sequence of protests in the Tambogrande district since the 1960s. I visited the Provincial Library of Piura during two months in order to consult a

regional newspaper, *El Tiempo*, covering the 1960-2005 period. Because the collection of *El Tiempo* was not complete, some events were covered by consulting another regional newspaper, *Correo*. These two newspapers allowed me to construct a time line organizing all the events narrated by the interviewees. The information extracted from these newspapers allowed me to trace the participation of the main character connecting all the stages of this long social mobilization, the colonist and engineer Godofredo García Baca. The timeline constructed with the data provided by the newspapers also allowed me to contextualize all the photos, letters, newspaper clippings, and documents that some interviewees generously shared with me. The clips provided by the interviewees included a wider range of newspapers, some of the edited in Lima like *La República* and *El Comercio*. Settlers began to arrive at the San Lorenzo Valley in 1961, but the infrastructure was built during the 1950s. Therefore, it was necessary to know the background of this irrigation and colonization project. To that end, I consulted the editions of the *Peruvian Times* ranging from January 1941 to January 1962, preserved by the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP) in the City of Lima. I also consulted editions of *La Revista de Piura* corresponding to the period that goes from March of 1957 to November of 1962, preserved by the Center of Investigation and Promotion of the Peasantry (CIPCA) in the city of Piura.

The testimonies provided by the engineer Renato Rossi, and the education expert Elsa Fung, were fundamental for the efficient reconstruction of the origin of this long sequence of social mobilization in Tambogrande. In 1960, engineer Rossi arrived, in what would be the future San Lorenzo Valley, as the direct representative of the central government, to rehabilitate the irrigation infrastructure and to train the first settlers. The specialist, Elsa Fung, came the same year to work as the director of the education component of the colonization project. The

information provided by Rossi and Fung was fundamental to understand the beginnings of the long social mobilization. Both, Rossi and Fung, were close friends of the settler Godofredo García Baca, the main element of continuity, connecting four decades of protest.

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

The main sources of information in the elaboration of this dissertation include the interviews conducted during my fieldwork visits and the periodicals of public collections. Not all interviews have been used in the writing of this document. When using the information obtained from an interview, the corresponding paragraph contains a quotation in parentheses, indicating which informant provided the data. I have attached a list of informants describing the manner in which each of them was related to the social mobilization and the date of the interview.

With respect to the information extracted from periodicals in order to facilitate the reading, I have only inserted specific references in the paragraphs containing crucial phrases pronounced by some authority or character and statistical data or percentages that could be susceptible to some type of discussion. All the historical data contained in chapter two has been extracted from the magazine *Peruvian Times*, published in the city of Lima, specifically from its editions published between January 1941 and January 1962. When any event, place, date, name or figure mentioned in chapter two is not accompanied by a reference, it must be assumed that the information was obtained from the *Peruvian Times*. All the historical data contained between chapter three and chapter nine has been extracted from the newspaper *El Tiempo*, published in the city of Piura, specifically from its editions published between January 1960 and December 2005. When any event, place, date, name or figure mentioned between chapter three and chapter



nine is not accompanied by a reference, it must be assumed that the information was obtained from *El Tiempo*.

## Synopsis

This thesis argues that there are three components that explain the success of the transnational activity in Tambogrande displayed during the period 1999-2004. A porous state office (PSO) that was at the service of the protest, functioning as a source of legal and democratic legitimacy. A social movement organization (SMO) composed of multiple pre-existing grassroots organizations. And a domestic non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO) that functioned as a broker between the grassroots level and the transnational level. My argument is that these three key factors were domestically developed long before the arrival of international non-governmental organizations.

In this chapter I will offer a synopsis of the narrative contained in each of the following chapters. This synopsis shows the specific moments in which each of these three key theoretical elements (PSO + SMO + DNGBO) were conceived and integrated in the social mobilization that began in the 1960s. The objective of this outline is to facilitate the reading for those who are interested in one specific component or in one specific political conjuncture. This synopsis contains the sequence of events that I have reconstructed, through the interviews and the archival materials, to defend the main idea of this thesis: the success or failure of transnational activity stems from the grassroots level.

### **CHAPTER ONE**

The first chapter contains the definitions of some concepts that have been widely used in the introduction of this document like *transnational activity*, *social movement*, *social movement organization (SMO)*, *porous state office (PSO)*, and *non-governmental organization (NGO)*. The following chapters contain the reconstruction of the social mobilization.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

The second chapter describes the geographical, economic, and political conditions that converged in the Tambogrande District during the 1950s, triggering a series of protests that would last more than four decades. Peru is composed of 24 territorial subdivisions known as “departments.” At present, these subdivisions are officially called “regions.” The Tambogrande District is located in the Piura Department, at the northern end of the Peruvian coast, very close to the border with Ecuador. The desert coast of the Piura Department is crossed by two rivers in their race toward the Pacific Ocean, the Piura River, and the Chira River. The flow of the first of these rivers, the Piura River, is unpredictable and generally very poor. However, the small valley that forms around its banks is extremely fertile. The town of Tambogrande lies in one of the shores of this river, in the middle of the Sechura Desert. The Piura River is born on the western side of the Andean mountain range, within the Department of Piura, specifically in the Huarmaca District. In contrast, the Chira River is extremely large and generous. This river has its origins in Ecuadorian territory, has a much more extensive route, receives many more tributaries, and crosses regions where it rains for several months along the year. Curiously, very shortly before reaching the sea, these two rivers came close to each other, no more than 14 kilometers from each other, evidencing the disparities between both flows.

Due to the extreme fertility of the Piura River Basin, since the early years of the 20th century, the hacienda owners asked the central government for a diversion from the Chira River Basin to the Piura River Basin to benefit and expand their cotton fields. Since the end of the 19th century it was known that there were minerals in the subsoil of the Tambogrande District, but the exact composition of the deposit was not known and therefore it was very difficult to predict the profitability of their extraction. In addition, the small town of Tambogrande was almost totally isolated. It could only be reached by winding and narrow horseshoe paths. Faced with these circumstances, the agricultural use of this part of the territory was always a priority.

During the 1940s and 1950s the influence of the United States of North America over the Peruvian government increased. The international context was marked by the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War. Internally, peasant discontent against the concentration of agricultural land in the hands of a small national elite mushroomed along the Peruvian territory, mainly in the Southern Andes. This discontent was expressed later in the emergence of guerrilla movements during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Since it came to power in 1948, General Manuel A. Odría was interested in diverting the water from the basin of the generous and stable Chira River to the basin of the poor and erratic Piura River. At that time, this plan was known as the Quiroz Project, because the main objective was to capture the water of the Quiroz River, a natural tributary of the Chira River, and to derive it through a system of tunnels and canals towards the Piura River, just at the vicinity of the town of Tambogrande.

The pragmatic General Odría built the desired derivation favoring the influential cotton-producing landowners. However, this general had his own plans. Odría was required to solve the

problem of land concentration, but he was not inclined to implement an agrarian reform affecting the national ownership structure. The solution enacted by the general was a national irrigation plan. As part of this endeavor, General Odría secured a loan from the World Bank to build a reservoir over the Quiroz River and a canal system that would allow the reclamation of 50,000 hectares of desert, around the small town of Tambogrande. That way, General Manuel A. Odría transformed the Quiroz Project into the San Lorenzo Project.

The Quiroz Project was a simple water derivation with the objective of benefiting the cotton estates located along the Piura River Basin. In contrast, the San Lorenzo Project was an ambitious irrigation and colonization project. Hundreds of landless farmers came to buy the plots that the Peruvian government put up for sale, colonizing the desert with the aim of creating a new valley. The arrival of the settlers was the origin of a conflict between the Peruvian state, the World Bank, and the owners of the haciendas for the use of reservoir water. The Settlers Association was consolidated in the mid-1960s with the objective of defending their properties and their right of access to water. This conflict lasted until the arrival of a new military government in 1968.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

The third chapter contains the events that occurred between 1961 and 1968. I describe the origin of the Settlers Association and their tenacious resistance against the hacienda owners and against the central government. The intervention of the World Bank in favor of the continuity of the San Lorenzo Project was a fundamental factor in understanding the initial stage of mobilization. The colonists arrived since 1961, in small groups, to a fertile but dry land. At the beginning, the

settlers were few and all their resources and energies were concentrated on the transformation of the desert. The World Bank's influence over four consecutive governments blocked – for a while – the pressures of the hacienda owners. Unable to cope with internal pressures, in 1967 the then president Fernando Belaúnde decided to cancel the colonization process. The initial influence exerted by the World Bank provided a temporary window allowing the settlers to organize, to numerically grow, and to consolidate their dominion over the territory. Since 1967, the settlers continued to confront the central government by themselves, without allies. This chapter allows us to understand the conditions under which engineer Godofredo García Baca became the main bridging leader since his arrival in the valley in 1964. Subsequently, in 1981, colonist García Baca would be one of the founders of the Defense Front, investing all his experience and legitimacy in this social movement organization (SMO).

#### **CHAPTER FOUR**

The fourth chapter covers the most important events recorded between 1968 and 1975. In 1968, General Juan Velasco Alvarado overthrew President Fernando Belaúnde and radically transformed the country's economic structure. General Velasco nationalized the oil fields in the hands of the United States-based International Petroleum Company, created the Ministry of Energy and Mines with the objective of facilitating the ownership and control of the state of extractive activities, and implemented an extensive agrarian reform across the whole country leaving the national elite without one of its main sources of wealth. The government of General Velasco had unexpected consequences in Tambogrande. The main enemies of the settlers lost their political influence after the expropriation of the haciendas by the military regime. But, the colonists feared the application of the agrarian reform within the San Lorenzo Valley. In

response, the settlers led the protests of small and medium-sized landowners against the military government, impeding the implementation of the agrarian reform in San Lorenzo.

However, there was an additional impact that the settlers could not avoid. The military government led by General Velasco promoted a national plan that sought the industrialization of the country. And for this end, the central government needed the economic resources that came from one of the most abundant natural wealth: minerals. The Tambogrande's ore was placed on the list of mining projects that were to be executed. However, due to the fact that the exact mineral composition was still unknown, and because the small town of Tambogrande remained isolated from the City of Piura (capital of the department) and from the Port of Paita (main port of the Peruvian North), Tambogrande was transferred to a waiting list. The military officials in power were the first to create an overlap of rights and interests in this part of the Peruvian territory.

Because the military working in the Ministry of Energy and Mines postponed their activities in Tambogrande, the military working in the Ministry of Agriculture did not find any obstacle in making the most of the potential of the San Lorenzo Valley and continuing with its expansion. First, the military was reorganizing the land ownership of the country on the basis of a system of agricultural cooperatives. And for this they needed to take advantage of all the available agricultural land in order to benefit hundreds of thousands of peasants. Former President Fernando Belaúnde had canceled the colonization process by decreeing that San Lorenzo should not grow beyond 25,000 hectares. But the irrigation infrastructure covered a total area of 50,000

hectares. Consequently, the military decided to continue with the rehabilitation of arid lands, but this time under a cooperative model.

Second, the military managing the Piura Department inherited a problem that had not been resolved by previous governments: the constant rising of food prices. But at that time San Lorenzo was an important food pantry supplying the entire Peruvian North and the military working in the Ministry of Agriculture were the first to promote the industrialization of San Lorenzo's fruits by creating a pilot packaging plant with the support of specialists sent by the United Nations. During the military government, the mangoes of San Lorenzo arrived for the first time in countries like Argentina and England. The simultaneous interest of two ministries with conflicting objectives illustrates the origin of an overlap between mining and agriculture that would affect the following decades.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

Chapter five covers the 1975-1980 period. In 1975 the General Francisco Morales Bermúdez overthrew the General Juan Velasco, redirecting the conduction of the country. General Morales Bermúdez convened a Constituent Assembly to draft a new political constitution and then called for an electoral process to restore power to civilians. Although General Morales Bermúdez was a transitional president, his government had serious effects in the Tambogrande District as the military continued to drive the execution of the pending mining projects. During this government, a delegation of the French company Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières (BRGM) arrived in Peru with the objective of exploring the minerals of Tambogrande and of establishing a joint exploitation agreement. The presence of the French engineers in



Tambogrande provoked the discontent of the local population sparking an alliance between different political parties and grassroots organizations to reject this mining project. The insistence on the extraction of minerals – ignoring the economic importance of the San Lorenzo Valley – led to the creation of the social movement organization (SMO) that would represent the social mobilization, the Tambogrande Defense Front.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

The sixth chapter covers the 1981-1982 period in which the Tambogrande Defense Front emerged and organized. In 1980, President Fernando Belaúnde was elected for his second term as president of the republic, and a few months later municipal elections were also held. President Belaúnde continued to support the explorations of the French mining engineers and his administration announced the imminent extraction of the minerals. The municipal elections in Tambogrande were marked by the fear of the possible extractive activities. The elected mayor, Emilio Palacios Rosas, had promised in campaign to use the municipal office to contact the central government in order to clarify the future of the district, once and for all. Due to the fear, very few inhabitants invested in improving their houses, many farmers stopped the expansion of their crops, and the municipality could not make any type of planning since the destiny of the city was absolutely uncertain.

The social movement organization (SMO) was consolidated under the auspices of the new mayor. In 1981, Mayor Emilio Palacios Rosas met with the then Minister of Energy and Mines, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, in order to clarify the future of the district. At that meeting, Minister Kuczynski suggested a guided tour in Cerro Verde, a state-run copper mine in the southern

department of Arequipa. The minister was trying to demonstrate that modern mining was not a threat. After the trip, the main political leaders of the district returned to Tambogrande more convinced than ever about the need to build a common platform integrating all grassroots organizations.

Among the founders of the Defense Front was the presence of the colonist Godofredo García Baca at that time president of the Settlers Association, and the presence of the young professor César Crisanto Palacios, the leader of the left in the district. Garcia Baca, besides being the most famous and influential settler of all, was one of the most active militants of the APRA party in the entire region. Since the founding of the Defense Front in 1981, the engineer Garcia Baca led the mobilization of the district against the execution of the mining project until his assassination by a hooded gunman in 2001. After the founding of the Defense Front in 1981, the young professor Crisanto would be four times elected as district mayor, in 1983, 1991, 1993 and 1995. Mayor Crisanto guaranteed the continuity of the municipal office as a source of legal and democratic legitimacy at the service of the social mobilization.

The insistence of President Fernando Belaúnde on continuing the mining project, ignoring the value of the San Lorenzo Valley, and the new context of democratic openness after the military regime of the 1970s, in which the population could once again elect their mayors, created favorable conditions for the connection between two key elements: a social movement organization (SMO) and a porous state office (PSO).

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

This chapter describes the main events in 1983-1985 period in which the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias became the main public figure of the Northern Coast of Peru. The El Niño phenomenon of 1983 was one of the most destructive climatic events of the 20th century. The Piura Department is considered the world epicenter of El Niño because of the cold Humboldt Current that climbs from Chile, and the stream of hot water descending from Ecuador, clash on its coast triggering a climatic event with worldwide repercussions. So, the north of Peru is cyclically beleaguered by heavy rains, overflowing rivers, mudslides, and the appearance of multiple plagues.

In 1983, the ravages of El Niño left the Piura City in ruins; the main cities of the north were completely isolated from each other due to the rupture of bridges and roads, without receiving food, medicines or drinking water. The small town of Tambogrande was flooded by the Piura River and the farming fields of the whole region were devastated. In the midst of this dreadful scenario, Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias led the citizen's protests against the government of President Fernando Belaúnde. Archbishop Cantuarias personally led the street marches, was the keynote speaker at numerous rallies, and preached from the pulpit about the need to scrutinize the money that the central government sent for reconstruction. Archbishop Cantuarias confronted President Belaúnde and sponsored the creation of a regional Defense Front to demand an oil canon to finance the reconstruction of Piura and to improve the living conditions of the region. This was the origin of the political legitimacy of Archbishop Cantuarias, who later acted as a bridging leader in defense of the district of Tambogrande against the Canadian mining company MMC.

The Quiroz Project, originated at the beginning of the 20th century, aimed to resolve the natural imbalance between the Chira River and the Piura River. Subsequently, the Quiroz Project was reformulated by General Manuel A. Odría, adopting the name of the San Lorenzo Project, and generating a war for water in the middle of a desert. At the end of the 20th century, a climactic event exposed the ineffectiveness, indolence and weakness of a central government that acted from afar, from Lima, creating the conditions for a religious authority, the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias, to become the public figure with more legitimacy and influence in the Northern part of Peru.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

The eighth chapter covers the 1986-1992 period. After leading the protests for the reconstruction of Piura, and after obtaining an oil canon for Piura, Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias assumed a much more dangerous challenge, to protect the human rights of the most vulnerable sectors trapped in the crossfire between terrorism and the Peruvian state. In 1987, Archbishop Cantuarias founded Diakonia for Justice and Peace, a church-based NGO that would be dedicated to protecting the rights of the poorest. Diakonia built a huge network of local church-related organizations (parishes, pastoral teams and prayer groups) to prevent the infiltration of Shining Path at the grassroots level and at the same time to provide legal advice to innocent citizens harassed, accused or unjustly imprisoned by the state as if they were terrorists.

Diakonia, the domestic non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO) that operated as a broker between the grassroots level and the international NGOs during the 1999-2004 period had its origins in the bloody 1980s. Archbishop Cantuarias consolidated his legitimacy by bravely

confronting terrorism and by demanding the Peruvian government, then led by President Alan García, to act responsibly. Several of the Piuran politicians who collaborated with Archbishop Cantuarias working to build a better society were shot to death. Archbishop Cantuarias survived the 1980s as the only public figure with legitimacy at the regional level. Later, the Archbishop would put his personal prestige and the experience of Diakonia at the service of Tambogrande.

During this same period, the late 1980s, a group of congressmen tried to revive the mining project designed by the French company BRGM. In response, the then district mayor, Manuel Reyes, reactivated the Defense Front and lead the protests. Mayor Reyes held numerous *cabildos abiertos* or open assemblies before putting the most important decisions into practice, and before talking to representatives of the central government. Thanks to the support of the population, Mayor Reyes could speak as mayor and at the same time as president of the Defense Front. Manuel Reyes maintained a porous state office (PSO), the district municipality, as a source of legal and democratic legitimacy at the service of social mobilization. During his administration, there was a total connection between a PSO such as the Tambogrande District Municipality and an SMO as the Defense Front.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

The last chapter covers the longest period of all, 1993-2005. In this stage, the last of the key elements, the domestic bridging organization, is finally integrated completing the proposed theoretical formula (PSO + SMO + DNGBO). The narrative of the conflict contained in this chapter shows how these three key elements were linked together in order to evict Manhattan Minerals Corporation from the district. In this last stage, the people of Tambogrande reached the

fame by celebrating the first popular referendum of the world rejecting an extractivist development model that did not match their views and rights. During this last stage the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias convened the international non-governmental organizations facilitating the alliance between transnational actors and local leaders. It was Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias who bridged the grassroots level with transnational actors.

## Chapter One

### Concepts

#### **TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVITY**

Transnational activity is one of the most widely used labels to study the overlap between state actors, private corporations, social movements, and non-governmental organizations on issues transcending national borders (della Porta, Andretta, Mosca, & Reiter, 2006; della Porta & Tarrow, 2005b; Ghimire, 2011; Keck & Sikkink, 1998a, 1998b; Piper & Uhlin, 2004; Rothman & Oliver, 1999, 2002; Smith, Chatfield, et al., 1997; Tarrow, 2007, 2012). The term “transnational” is more appropriate than “global” because it allows us to highlight the importance of local or domestic actors in institutional networks advocating for environmental protection or human rights respect.

Nicola Piper and Anders Uhlin (2004) define “transnational” as those “interactions across state borders involving at least one non-state actor” (p. 5). The term “transnational” is also preferred by these authors over the term “global” because many of the interactions between NGOs and social movements cross international boundaries in some regions of the world without achieving a true global scope. The term “activism” has been defined as those “political activities that are: (1) based on a conflict of interests and thus are of a contentious nature; (2) challenging or supporting certain power structures; (3) involving non-state actors; and (4) taking place (at least partly) outside formal political arenas” (Piper & Uhlin, 2004, p. 3).

Dieter Rucht (1999) considers a social mobilization as “transnational” when this activity is “essentially composed of closely interrelated groups and organizations that belong to more than one country” (p. 207). According to this author, important components of these alliances are and remain strictly national. Only few components have the ability to cross borders, to influence foreign governments, to mobilize followers, or to pool resources originally located in distant countries.

Thomas Risse-Kappen (1995) defines “transnational relations” as those “regular interactions across national boundaries when at least one actor is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or an intergovernmental organization” (p. 3). Risse-Kappen emphasizes that what happens in the local or national arena is crucial to understand the outcomes in the interplay between NGOs, multinational corporations, and states. This author is in clear stating that the success or failure of transnational coalitions depend on what happens in the domestic sphere. Transnational actors can not achieve their goals without persuading or lining up with domestic allies or governmental actors (Risse-Kappen, 1995, p. 13).

I will consider the pursued social changes as the result of simultaneous pressures exerted by domestic and international actors. Negotiations on matters related to environment, democracy, or human rights, are always determined by a combination of domestic and international factors in constant interaction (Evans, 1993, p. 397). In the understanding of these efforts it is necessary to focus on both sides of the equation, otherwise we will “miss an important part of the history” (Putnam, 1993, pp. 433-434).



## **SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

The study of social movements consists in the study of collective political challengers of the status quo without access to the levels at which decisions are made (Buechler, 2000, 2011; Snow & Soule, 2010; Staggenborg, 2011). Literature provides plenty of definitions about what to consider a social movement depending on different elements and aspects adopted by authors' preferences (Crossley, 2002). However, there are some elements of consensus that I will describe in this section.

**a. Products of Modernity.** The first element in this academic consensus is to consider social movements as products of modernization. Steven Buechler (2000, 2011) highlights the extensive historical studies made by Charles Tilly and his associates (Tilly, 1964, 1986, 2004, 2006, 2008; Tilly, Tilly, & Tilly, 1975) as the most notable effort in the study of social movements as products of the convergence of large social processes such as capitalism, bureaucratic state-building, proletarianization of the peasantry, and wars.

Due to a historical concentration of power, states have connected together a diverse collection of regions, towns and cities that were formerly disjointed. Because these apparatuses provide the rules governing social life and economic activities, the modern state constitutes both a target and an arena. Different actors direct their protests against one central apparatus struggling within the limits that have been previously set by this political unit (Buechler, 2000, 2011; Givan, Roberts, & Soule, 2010).

**b. Social Change.** Defining social movements as agents of social transformation in modern society is another element of consensus (Crossley, 2002; Fuentes, 1989; Staggenborg, 2011). The potential for change existing in clashes between social movements and state apparatuses has led some authors to regard them as true vehicles for democratic achievement (della Porta & Diani, 2006; Giugni, McAdam, & Tilly, 1998; Tilly, 2004). Nevertheless, we should note that not all social movements match the hopes and expectations of analysts. Some social movements can be regarded as “fundamentalists” or “anti-democrats” (della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 245). Beside labels, governments can be affected and influenced after a long confrontation with protesters.

With different degrees, or emphasis, most scholars consider social movements as political vehicles of reform. Although some claims are not ostensibly political, these claims are directed to the political authorities and representatives working in various levels of the state apparatus (Jenkins, 1995). On the surface, we only see leaflets inviting us to stop consuming meat or bumper stickers promoting same sex marriage. But in fact, these efforts are seeking to transform society and these transformations will alter well-established institutions. It is almost impossible for protesters of any cause to escape having contact with state authorities or representatives (Jenkins & Klandermans, 1995).

**c. Outsiders and Challengers.** The third element of consensus is to define social movements as “outsiders” with respect to the formal structures of power, or as “challengers” with respect to the elites defending the cultural, economic, or political order (Staggenborg, 2011, p. 6). It is assumed that social movements begin their actions outside the institutional boundaries of the state

apparatus and their actions are considered highly disruptive by the more powerful economic and political groups.

We have to consider that social movements do not operate in a social vacuum. The boundaries between social movements and other vehicles of social transformation are extremely porous (Snow & Soule, 2010, p. 154). A close observation reveals the existence of multiple revolving doors between social movements and other vehicles of social change such as political parties, religious organizations, and even state offices. Due to the existence of these multiple memberships, to draw the boundaries between a social movement and its environment becomes a difficult task (Rucht, 1996). Nevertheless, the existence of certain levels of dialogue or coordination does not transform social movements in members of the official polity or raises them to the level of elites. Protest leaders can be invited to speak at the congress and be seated next to high ranked officials, but after the ceremony all the attendants will be back working in their own agendas inside and outside the state (Lo, 1992, pp. 230-231).

**d. Collective Long-Term Efforts.** Scholars interested in the subject agree that social movements mainly consist of collective action (Buechler, 2000, 2011; Crossley, 2002; Snow & Soule, 2010; Staggenborg, 2011; Walder, 2009). It should be remembered the first line of Herbert Blumer's (1961) famous essay entitled *Social Movements*: "Social movements can be viewed as collective enterprises to establish a new order of life" (p. 199). Blumer's ideas have long been debated and reformulated. Nevertheless, no one disputes the collective nature of social movements. This characteristic remains as a constant and it is emphasized in various existing definitions.

Continuity, consistency and sustained long-term actions in the protests are also part of consensus (della Porta & Diani, 2006; Tarrow, 1994; Tilly, 2004). This does not mean that collective actions have to be performed in a homogeneous fashion or keep the same levels of energy during the process. It has been observed that social movements may alternate moments of intense action with moments of “latency” (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 95-96).

**e. Non-Compulsory Participation of Individuals and Organizations.** The fifth element of consensus is to consider the participation as nonmandatory. Social movements are made up of individuals as well as organizations (Hall, 1995; Klandermans, 1997) and both participate voluntarily. Social movements do not have “members” only “participants” because involved actors freely coalesce around common causes (della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 26). Emphasizing this trait some authors have described social movements as “fields of actors” (Gamson & Meyer, 1996) and “fluid phenomenon” (della Porta & Diani, 2006).

In addition, it has also been observed that those involved in social mobilization maintain high levels of autonomy from other actors or partners (della Porta & Diani, 2006). Network approaches in the study of social movement are useful to understand – and reinforce – the idea of temporary alliances, multiple memberships, diversity and autonomy (Diani, 1992a, 1992b, 2000a, 2000b, 2003, 2007). The definition of social movements offered by Dieter Rucht (1996) combines all mentioned elements in this section:

In a very restrictive sense, a social movement consists of two kinds of components: (1) Networks of groups and organizations prepared to mobilize for protest actions to promote

(or resist) social change (which is the ultimate goal of social movements); and (2) individuals who attend protest activities or contribute resources without necessarily being attached to movement groups or organizations (p. 186).

### **EXTENSION OF CONCEPTS**

In the late nineties, social movement theorists joined the study of non-state actors in the international arena introducing the concepts created in the studies of nationally bounded mobilizations (Buechler, 2011, p. 224). Social movements are no longer studied as opponents focused exclusively on gaining political or economic reforms within the boundaries of nation states. The new global order has transformed social movements in potential “transnational collective actors” endowed with potential for crucial changes (della Porta et al., 2006, p. 21).

Historically based studies of social mobilization made by Charles Tilly (1964, 1978, 1986, 1995) are at the beginning of a line of continuity that runs from claims made inside very specific locations or regions, to claims directed toward centralized government apparatus, to claims made in international courts or in multilateral institutions (Passy, 1999; Rucht, 1999; Smith, 2004, 2007). As a result, concepts typically used in the analysis of social movements have been extended along this line of continuity between the local, the national, and the transnational arenas (Bandy & Smith, 2005; Buechler, 2011; McCarthy, 1997). It is also important to note that social movement theorists keep the emphasis in the nation-states as the main targets as well as the main battle arenas in transnational efforts (Tarrow, 2001; Tarrow & McAdam, 2005).

### **SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

Social Movement Organization (SMO) is the concept used to study organizational forms crystallizing in the belly of social movements in order to assume the public representation and the task to coordinate thousands of people who are free to stop participating at any moment. The origin of the term SMO can be traced back to the article written by Mayer Zald and Roberta Ash (1966) entitled *Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change* and has proven to be one of the most solid and stable definitions in social movements literature (della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 140).

According to the academic consensus referred to in the previous section, social movements are collective vehicles of change that originate actions from outside the state apparatus – away from higher levels where important economic decisions and political repercussions are made – and are composed of voluntary coalitions of individuals and organizations that maintain high levels of autonomy from each other. In short, social movements are entities with low levels of institutionalization and low levels of homogeneity (Koopmans, 1993).

However, not all actions are unplanned or completely spontaneous. Usually protesters need to build small instances of representation or decision-making and that is why organizational approach occupies a very important place in the social movement literature (Clemens, 2005; Clemens & Minkoff, 2007; Ghimire, 2011; McAdam & Scott, 2005; Zald, Morrill, & Rao, 2005).

In this section I will develop two ideas related to the concept of Social Movement Organization

(SMO) that are important for understanding the evolution of protest in the Tambogrande case: a. Social movements are shaped and supported by stable and previously existing organizations or networks and b. Social movements can also give origin to new more formal, institutionalized, and hierarchical organizations.

**a.** The observation of pre-existing associations as crucial elements in the study of social movements can be traced back several decades (McAdam, 1982, 1988; Oberschall, 1973; Piven & Cloward, 1979). Traditional forms of organization based on religious, cultural, or ethnic ties, as well as modern forms of association like political parties, are well known base blocks of mass participation (Buechler, 2011, p. 112; Staggenborg, 2011, p. 30).

In sociological literature, all those autonomous and pre-existing forms of associations (like neighborhood associations, churches, colleges or professional guilds and even sporting clubs) providing the resources required to start and sustain long protest processes are usually referred to as “mobilizing structures” (McAdam et al., 1996; Tarrow, 1994). The definition provided by John McCarthy (1997) emphasizes the provision of resources:

Mobilizing structures include the more or less formally organized everyday life patterns upon which movements build collective action, ranging from religious groups and neighborhood associations and workplace cliques and friendship groups. Building upon these preexisting social relations, activists can facilitate mobilization because they are spared the great effort of creating new social relations and networks of communication between constituents from scratch. If such mobilizing structures are available for co-

optation by activists, they may also be able to appropriate a portion of the previously pooled resources of the group, which might include equipment, communication structures, work place, and financial resources (p. 249).

All of this set of local resources offered by pre-existing formal or informal associations has been also referred by social movement theorists as “indigenous organizational strength” and regarded as the basic infrastructure that allows the launching of mass participation as well as its further development into more organized campaigns of political action (McAdam, 1999, p. 44).

The inclusion of these pre-existing forms of association referred as “mobilizing structures” and “indigenous organizational strength” in the analysis is considered as the solution of the pessimistic free-rider dilemma proposed by Mancur Olson (1971) in the study of collective participation (McAdam, 1999, p. 45; Tarrow, 1994, p. 21).

**b.** It has been also observed that social movements can give rise to new forms of organization with more stable and hierarchical features. However, when this happens, we have to make the distinction between the social movement as a whole and these associational byproducts (Rucht, 1996). Social Movement Organizations (SMOs) are among these possible associational outcomes. SMOs are created by key figures in order to provide social movements with more structure and permanence. These crystallizations within mass protests are supposed to assume the negotiations with different stakeholders like other movements, non-governmental organizations, private companies, parties, or branches of the state with presence in the same social or political environment (McAdam et al., 1988, p. 716).



Social movements arise in non-formal settings outside and away from the governmental levels at which crucial decisions are taken but necessarily have to deal with formal institutions. To resolve this problem and to confront representatives showing off their memberships to legally recognized organizations, protest leaders invest a considerable part of their resources in the creation of SMOs (McAdam et al., 1996, p. 13).

SMOs are usually the result of the efforts of key local figures, but these new more formal associations do not ease the relationship between the leaders and the mass of constituents. SMOs are basically meant to deal with outsiders who hold legal recognition such as mining company representatives, congressmen, state ministers, or even presidents. Local leaders come from pre-existing organizations within the movement base, provide their already gained prestige and skills, and are well connected with crucial segments of the aggravated population (McAdam, 1999, p. 47) but SMO members still depend on the voluntary participation of the components of the protest (Rucht, 1996). Those who assume positions of leadership or public representation in social movements have little room to make binding decisions. These figures are never sure if the different participants of the movement share the same opinion on a particular issue (Offe, 1985).

It is worthy to note that the concept of Social Movement Organization (SMO) has been transformed into to the concept of Transnational Social Movement Organization (TSMO) and applied into the analysis of transnational activity (Davis & Zald, 2005; McCarthy, 2005; Rucht, 1999; Smith, 2005; Smith, Pagnucco, & Chatfield, 1997). However, there are some differences. For example, the amount of needed resources to coordinate between allies established in two or

more different countries. Local or domestic SMOs can survive on indigenous resources, but TSMOs require more stable flows of resources to maintain a more professionalized staff (Johnson & McCarthy, 2005; McCarthy, 1997; Smith, Pagnucco, et al., 1997).

### **POROUS STATE OFFICE**

I define a porous state office (PSO) as an official state office, close enough to the grassroots level to be used in favor of those who mobilize against the central government, providing needed legal and democratic legitimacy to those who protest. Strategies followed by the residents of Tambogrande are consistent with what the literature has registered through the study of similar cases in other parts of the world. Grassroots organizations with environmental agendas and their transnational allies are basically claiming to be heard by the government and to redirect the prerogatives of the state apparatus in favor of nature: not to destroy, overcome, or collapse, the whole political structure (Hurrell, 1994; Litfin, 1997, 1998; H.-A. Van der Heijden, 2002). In real scenarios, the state is not totally defined as an enemy. Social challengers are very clear about the distinction between the state apparatus and the provisional government in charge.

Joe Migdal (Migdal, 1988, 1994, 2001, 2004) developed a model to understand the “porous” boundaries of the state apparatuses. In contrast with weberian authors emphasizing theoretical state attributes like “monopoly,” “distance,” or “efficiency,” this author puts under analytical light the blurred lines dividing state and society. Mobilized citizens can run for office, are able to establish partnerships with various state offices, and are constantly seeking leverage in all possible cracks and nooks of the political system (Migdal, 2001).

Migdal argues that the state is not an entity isolated from the rest of society and refers to his model as the “state-in-society” model. First, the state apparatus is actually a collection of distinct loosely connected offices dealing with contradictory goals, holding distinct objectives, and generally promoting conflicting sets of rules. Second, the official state boundaries are quite porous without clearly defined boundaries with other groups in society. Government representatives are members of society as everybody else and share its values, preferences and flaws. Third, the state apparatus is not as efficient as it seems to be in the imposition of its will or its goals. Rules and legitimacy imposed by those in charge are always under discussion (Migdal, 2001).

In Tambogrande, members of the Defense Front were consecutively elected as mayors and used the municipality to defend the agricultural agenda, steadily opposing the mining project. After several decades of mobilization, the District Municipality of Tambogrande was the office that created the popular referendum as a legal mechanism for citizen participation in cases of environmental disputes. Contradicting the wishes of the central government and its representatives – who repeated thousands of times that the referendum was “illegal” and “non-binding” – the mayor and aldermen of Tambogrande passed a series of decrees providing the legal support that other national level state offices had been refused.

#### **NGOs AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITY**

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have a special place in transnational alliances, especially in cases of environmental conflict (Eschle, 2001; Lipschutz, 1996; Lipschutz & Conca, 1993; Lipschutz & Mayer, 1996; Taylor, 2004; Wapner, 1994, 1995, 1996). The

extraction of valuable natural resources such as gold, iron, oil, or timber, can be conducted in geographical areas considered as “remote” but these activities are usually performed by influential transnational corporations and variations in the flow of these commodities has an enormous impact on the global market (Bunker & Ciccantell, 2005).

NGOs have two characteristics that explain why they can play a leading role in cases of social mobilization in environmental matters. First, domestic or national NGOs have presence at the village level while many states are absent in large geographic areas of their territories (Bratton, 1989a, 1989b, 1990). Second, even a smaller NGO has the capacity to link the local arena with international institutions (Grzybowski, 2000; Princen, 1994; Princen et al., 1994). These two features are a threat to national governments seeking to extract natural resources against the will of the local population or without considering the potential impacts over the regional economy. In these scenarios, NGOs are crucial to start the “boomerang pattern” (Keck & Sikkink, 1998a, 1998b).

The acronym “NGO” is a generalization that serves to point out a diverse and confusing collection of formal and informal organizations (Fisher, 1997; Vakil, 1997). Although there is no universally accepted definition, there are certain levels of agreement on the common use of the term NGO. For instance, most definitions agree that these are organizations whose ultimate goal is public welfare. The acronym NGO can include all types of institutions that recognize themselves as philanthropic, ranging from religious organizations to academic think-tanks advocating on multiple issues like human rights, gender, health, indigenous rights, environment, and many others (Clarke, 1998). There is also agreement with regard to what types of

organizations are not part of this heterogeneous collection of institutions. For example, nobody uses the term NGO to refer to private businesses, revolutionary movements, terrorist groups, or political parties (Simmons, 1998).

Another important feature is that NGOs are organizations with ability to maintain different levels of autonomy from the rest of society, especially against state and governments of different tendencies (Clarke, 1998; Elliott, 1987; Fisher, 1997). This autonomy is maintained by donations coming from various sources. However, this variety of funding sources constitutes the main target of criticism raised against these institutions.

The state apparatuses receive the needed money to function from those who are supposed to be served by the state. Citizens pay their taxes in exchange for a series of basic and essential services such as justice, education, health, and infrastructure. The case of NGOs is completely different. People who receive services provided by NGOs are not those who fund these activities (Fowler, 1991). Scholars have noticed diverse sources of funding and as a consequence diverse institutional loyalties in the world of NGOs. Some of these organizations receive public funding or individual donations, others rely solely on private or industrial funding, and others are directly created and managed by mining companies or politicians seeking to improve their public image (Ballard & Banks, 2003; Vakil, 1997).

National, local, or domestic NGOs, are financially dependent on foreign donors or funders like international NGOs, multinational organizations, or Northern governments. The risks of these connections have been reported on many occasions. First, hostile governments can easily

question the legitimacy of the work done by NGOs accusing them of promoting foreign interests or values (Fisher, 1997). Second, the linkages between these NGOs and the grassroots level are also under critical scrutiny. The independence levels of domestic NGOs when dealing with their benefactors in the global North has been questioned. Most critics argue that local or national NGOs will always prioritize the loyalty they have for their donors, assuming that these organizations could betray or abandon their local allies at any time depending on the guidelines issued by the senders of financial support. Literature about the marketization of the NGO world and about the dysfunctional outcomes in transnational activity like relations marked by opportunism and deception is extensive (Bob, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2005; Cooley & Ron, 2002; Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Fisher, 1997; Lofredo, 2000; H. Van der Heijden, 1987). According to this literature, NGOs have become contractors dedicated to promote the most profitable agenda and their beneficiary groups in the grassroots level have become just disposable clients. NGOs have been denounced as opportunistic actors in contexts of social disasters, or structural adjustments, and as promoters of democracy only to favor the interests of the market (Baker, 1998; Blaney & Pasha, 1993; Harvey, 2005; Petras & Arellano, 1994; Petras & Veltmeyer, 2005; Wallace, 2004; Zanotti, 2010).

Nevertheless, domestic or national NGOs are not totally under the shadow of their Northern counterparts. These NGOs are on the ground and it gives them significant leeway to absorb possible donor pressures preserving or honoring their own relations at the grassroots level. Without institutional partners on the ground, neither international NGOs nor multilateral institutions can make any real difference in a given society. In addition, local NGOs produce

crucial information and offer feedback to their allies in other countries (Alnoor, 2003; Bebbington, 2005; Elliott, 1987). In any case, the dependence is mutual.

Additionally, the state and the market are no models of high levels of accountability practices either. It is assumed that states are responsive to their citizens and markets to their customers, but in reality neither the state nor the market are paragons of accountability. For example, political candidates, once elected, forget electoral promises without suffering major costs (Wapner, 2002). When citizens mobilize, it is because they have already been ignored or blocked by the government. In this type of scenarios, NGOs constitute strategic allies and all the criticism mentioned above become less effective.

The adoption of neoliberal policies causes cuts in welfare expenditure, entrenches incompetent bureaucracies, and accelerates the loss of legitimacy of national governments, creating the perfect conditions to a massive proliferation of state-society conflicts (Lipschutz, 1996). The combination of neoliberal policies and environmental disputes displays in evidence that government representatives have lost the “right” to “decide”: this vacuum opens a gap for battles about who is going to decide the best use for the territory or how to administrate the resources at stake (Lipschutz & Mayer, 1996).

In contexts like these, after years of state absence or erratic and insufficient presence, government representatives approach the local people arguing that accepting the extractive activities is the only way to solve social problems in the region. Frequently, these state apparatuses – that never fulfilled their obligations – argue sovereignty over natural resources

when confronting local resistance. But, the less active the state is in rural areas, the less legitimacy it has to promote extractive activities of transnational corporations (Ballard & Banks, 2003). Citizen-state environmental conflicts not only affects the legitimacy of a specific government, the whole democratic system is put into question because citizens feel that the only purpose of democracy is to sustain the political stability needed by extractive global corporations (H.-A. Van der Heijden, 2002).

As predicted by the literature, when a local population seeks external allies, domestic NGOs are the key to finding potential transnational partners. Nevertheless, once engaged in the conflict, NGOs have to deal with their own intrinsic weaknesses. In environmental conflicts NGOs are especially vulnerable. First, states and transnational corporations are easily recognized as “stakeholders” – states hold the legal ownership of natural resources and corporations seek the profits generated by extractive activities – but the motives behind NGO interventions can be easily put under the light of suspicion (Ballard & Banks, 2003; A. Clark & Clark, 1999).

Second, NGO participation can spark formal and informal political opposition in different levels. Without intending to replace the political parties, NGOs end up taking on demands that pre-existing political parties were ignoring and this can be considered as foreign intrusion in national affairs (Clarke, 1998; H.-A. Van der Heijden, 2002). In not a few cases, annoying NGOs are touted as foreign enemies who violate the sacred principle of sovereignty and treated with different levels of hostility, including monitor campaigns over the flow of funding, blatant harassment of its members, institutional dissolution or national expulsion (Bratton, 1989a, 1989b, 1990; Fowler, 1991; Litfin, 1997).



Addressing these vulnerabilities, NGOs have developed various intervention strategies. First, NGOs and their transnational allies are constantly seeking to increase the visibility of local actors, domestic organizations, or key figures representing the social mobilization (Ghimire, 2011). Second, NGOs promote cooperation between different grassroots organizations, encouraging and supporting the creation of umbrella organizations (H.-A. Van der Heijden, 1999). This is clearly aggravating from the perspective of the government, because something that initially began as an isolated or regionally bounded complaint might reach national proportions attracting attention and supporters all over the country.

Third, NGOs invest considerable amount of efforts changing the direction of the political debate from the traditional emphasis in the principle of sovereignty to the responsibilities and obligations that governments are supposed to keep for the sake of its citizens and the environment (Litfin, 1997). Fourth, scientists play an important role in these efforts to move the focus of the debate away from the principle of national sovereignty. Science is not an activity entirely free of contradictions and government representatives can use technical arguments to favor their own interests. In the case of environmental conflicts, the conformation of *ad hoc* scientific research teams is one of the main contributions of NGOs (Litfin, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1998).

Fifth, to consolidate the new emphasis in the states' responsibilities and obligations toward its citizens and environment, NGOs can take advantage of the "contradictions" or "decoupling" generated by the acceptance of universal principles like human rights, ecological preservation,

and respect for indigenous peoples or minorities by states or governments not interested to fully comply with these commitments (Boli, 1987a, 1987b; Boli & Lechner, 2005; Boli & Meyer, 1987; Meyer, 1987; Meyer, Boli, Thomas, & Ramirez, 1997; Meyer, Frank, Schofer, Hironaka, & Tuma, 1999; Ramirez & Thomas, 1987; Tsutsui, 2004; Tsutsui & Hafner-Burton, 2005; Tsutsui & Wotipka, 2008).

Some governments pay lip service to these universal principles aiming to avoid being excluded from the global community of “modern” and “civilized” states (Smith & Wiest, 2005). The representatives of the state can act hypocritically because states have much to gain if they pretend to adopt these international requirements but at the same time states have little to lose if they do not really comply with such commitments. It has been documented how usual is for some governments to use these universal principles as shields to hide repressive activities in the domestic arena (Tsutsui & Hafner-Burton, 2005). Nevertheless, the public acceptance of universal principles can be used as an important source of leverage for NGOs and grassroots organizations seeking to change national policies (Smith & Wiest, 2005).

## Chapter Two

### Before 1961

#### Irrigation Projects and the World Bank

##### **THE IRON OF TAMBOGRANDE**

In order to understand the origin of the conflict, it must be taken into account that Peru is basically composed of three distinct geographical regions. First, the coast, a long arid line in front of the Pacific Ocean, is eventually crossed by the rivers descending from the Andes on their way to the sea creating small but highly fertile valleys. Although it is the region with the least amount of water, it houses the most populated cities and the most important commercial clusters of the country. Secondly, the Andes, a chain of mountains where the rivers descend on the western side – on their way to reach the Pacific Ocean – and the rivers flow down the eastern side – on their way to reach the Amazon River – have their origin. Third, the jungle, the largest but least populated region of the territory, ecologically dominated by the presence of the Amazon River and its tributaries. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, many governments considered the possibility of carrying out various irrigation projects aiming to increment the productivity of the coast. The American influence – especially after the Second World War – was fundamental to the execution of some of these projects. In particular, the diversion of water from the abundant Chira River to the unstable and deficient Piura River.

The city of Tambogrande lies on the northern bank of the Piura River, in the desert of Sechura. Located in the midst of an agricultural area, the existence of minerals in the subsoil of Tambogrande was well known. That is why the engineer and explorer Pedro Venturo visited the area in 1903 confirming that the town was on top of an iron ore – red hematite – and he even documented the names of the streets where traces of that mineral were outcropping. But Venturo could not know the depth of the ore or what other minerals were under the iron layer. There were no canyons or ravines allowing him to observe the structure of the underground, the vegetation cover was profuse and the course of the river was shallow (Venturo, 1904). Although Venturo deduced that it was a fairly extensive and profitable ore, recommending further explorations, the sources of energy to process iron in an industrial scale – such as coal or petroleum – were scarce. In addition, the small town of Tambogrande was connected with the outside through horseshoe paths being which made it very difficult to access the port of Paita (East, Holmes, & Burt, 1904; Velarde, 1908). Thus, the plans to increase the flow of the capricious Piura River continued as a priority ignoring the presence of minerals.

#### **CHARLES W. SUTTON**

Since the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, landowners located in the basin of the Piura River considered – among other alternatives – the possibility of diverting water from the Quiroz River (Adams, 1905; Portocarrero, 1907; Carlos W. Sutton & Stiles, 1906) whose origin is benefited by the cloud forests or *páramos* located in the province of Ayabaca and by the proximity to the high altitude lagoons known as Huaringas (More, Viñas, de Bievre, Acosta, & Ochoa, 2003; Torres Guevara, 2005).

This option was picked up by the North American engineer Charles W. Sutton, whose presence marked the country's history forever. Sutton arrived in Peru for the first time in 1904 recommended by the U.S. Geological Survey and Reclamation Service. From that year on he traveled the whole country studying how to expand the agricultural frontier, becoming the highest authority in irrigation matters. Although with some intervals in which he was deployed in other countries, this engineer rendered his services to the Peruvian state working in diverse offices for more than forty years. Sutton was a true modernizer. For him, irrigation projects did not solely consist of constructing canals and reservoirs, Sutton argued that in order to transform the desert into productive areas it was necessary to create communities with credit access and other material services (Peruvian Times, 1948c, 1949b; Charles W. Sutton, 1948). Sutton studied and supported the idea of taking water from the Chipillico River and the Quiroz River – two natural tributaries of the Chira River – channeling it all the way down to the Piura River Basin to benefit the existing agricultural area in the valley and – at the same time – to reclaim the desert lands located between these mentioned rivers creating new sources of wealth. This option was known as the Quiroz Project.

## **PIMA COTTON**

Sutton's prolonged stay in Peru was not enough to get the presidents to allocate the necessary money for the Quiroz Project. The takeoff and consolidation of the Piuran cotton industry between the 1920s and 1940s was fundamental for the subsequent execution of this derivation. For much of the twentieth century the "Tangüis" cotton was the dominant variety in Peruvian territory. This variety was developed in the valley of Pisco, on the south coast of Peru, by Fermín Tangüis based on a robust plant that seemed to be immune to the pests that devastated the crops

of the area (Peruvian Times, 1943, 1944). Tangüis consolidated its new variety between 1908 and 1912, quickly becoming the basis of the wealth of many landed families: between 1918 and 1931 the Tangüis variety jumped from 8% to 91% of all cotton exported by Peru (Gilbert, 1977; Gonzales, 1991; Sherbakoff, 1949; Tamayo, 1942).

However, the Piuran coast was the exception. After the plagues that decimated cotton fields, hacienda owners evaluated different varieties – including the Tangüis variety – determining that the “Pima” variety – an Egyptian-American variety developed in Arizona during the 1910s (Bess, 2014; Kearney, 1922; Percy, 2009; Willis, 1923) – was the one that best adapted to local ecology. The adoption of the Pima in the 1920s meant the definitive abandonment of native and perennial species by a system of annual crops. In order to avoid pests, preventive measures were established such as a strict irrigation schedule. According to the new measures, sowing could only be done between January and the first half of March as a ceiling. Hacienda owners had to wait until Piura River had enough water before starting the seeding. When the water was already descending from the highest parts of the basin, growers launched an intense routine of work before the water disappeared again into the desert. After the harvest, the corresponding cleaning of the fields was mandatory (Nicholson, 1949; Peruvian Times, 1950). The adoption of the Pima – and the high yield of the Piura River Valley that produced more cotton than the Chira River Valley (Rosenfeld & Jones, 1927) – made the sought-after Quiroz Project even more urgent.

## **THE AGRICULTURAL LEAGUE**

The Agricultural and Cattle-Raising League of Piura was founded in 1931 and became the most important organization of the department and displayed a great political influence on the national

governments installed in Lima (El Tiempo, 1968d; Peruvian Times, 1949a). Between the 1930s and 1950s Great Britain was the main destination of Peruvian cotton and Pima cotton – exclusively grown in Piura – constituted approximately 10% of the country’s total production (Peruvian Times, 1941, 1943, 1948b, 1957). Since its foundation, the Agricultural League actively represented those who would benefit from the Quiroz Project.

Unlike the sugar cane industry installed in other departments of the Peruvian coast – which required a large economic investment, a much more complex infrastructure and was characterized by a very high concentration of land with a much more severe impact on traditional forms of property – cotton was grown by any farmer regardless of the size of the lots (Anderle, 1985). Although not without conflict, the cotton estates of Piura coexisted with other forms of property – such as indigenous communities or small independent owners – and there were diverse types of workers: renters of the land paying with part of the crops known as *yanaconas*, users of pastures paying each year with a portion of the new livestock known as *colonos*, and workers of the hacienda crops for daily wages known as *peones* (Burke, 1949). With regard to members of the Agricultural League the average size of the property was less than 250 hectares (Burke, 1949).

## **QUIROZ PROYECT**

According to the Agricultural League’s calculations – made during the 1940s – in the Piura River Valley there were approximately 86,000 agricultural hectares out of which 17,500 were dedicated to Pima cotton that with permanent irrigation could be transformed into 31,000 hectares (Peruvian Times, 1950). These figures were taken into account by engineers and

politicians working in Lima on the legislation that would lead to the execution of the Quiroz Project.

According to the project proposed by Charles W. Sutton – and the Piuran landowners – water would be taken from the Quiroz River and the Chipillico River – two natural tributaries of the generous Chira River – and would be injected into the Piura River using the San Francisco Creek. This project involved the building of a tunnel through the mountain chain that separates these basins, a canal to transfer the water to the San Francisco Creek that runs into the Piura River, and a reservoir with the capacity to store 50,000,000 cubic meters of water located on the Palominos Creek or in the San Francisco Creek. The original project contemplated the possibility of building a hydroelectric plant at the mouth of the tunnel to take advantage of the water fall producing the energy needed by the engines pumping water from the Piura River to the haciendas. The main objective was clear: to benefit 31,000 agricultural hectares that would be devoted exclusively to the cultivation of cotton. In addition, 20,000 desert hectares would be reclaimed for agricultural purposes. But there was no clarity regarding the use of these new lands. It was speculated that part of the area would be used to grow alfalfa in order to improve milk and meat production (very expensive products at the time) and the other part would serve to install new cotton crops (Peruvian Times, 1948a, 1950).

#### **NORTH AMERICAN INFLUENCE**

Irrigation plans benefited from the largest United States presence since World War II. During the 1940s the United States were the main source of imports and the destination of Peruvian exports. During the same decade, cotton became the most valuable export commodity, giving even more



political leverage to members of the Agricultural League. In this context of strong American influence, on January 2, 1943, President Manuel Prado Ugarteche signed Law No. 9711 approving the creation of the Ministry of Agriculture with objectives like water management, execution of irrigation projects, improving the quality of food for the population and colonizing the lands of the Amazon region. The idea of colonizing the Peruvian jungle, as state policy, comes from the first moments of the republic (Rodríguez Achung, 1986) but it was during the twentieth century when this possibility was used to protect the interests of the large landowners of the coast. As was claimed by several politicians, there was no need to affect the ownership structure because of the vast availability of existing land in the Amazon area, on the other side of the Andes. As we will see later, the Quiroz Project concept was transformed until it became an alternative to colonize the coast without expropriations.

Only three months after its creation, President Prado entrusted to the Ministry of Agriculture the elaboration of the financing plans of the Quiroz Project and the delimitation of the idle lands that would be recovered. On May of 1943, the Peruvian government signed an agreement with the Institute of Inter-American Affairs (IIAA) creating a new office that received the name of *Inter-American Cooperative Food Production Service* – referred to as SCIPA by its Spanish initials – whose main objective would be the increase of the production of vegetal and animal products spreading new agricultural methods leading Peru towards food self-sufficiency. This new office operated from within the Ministry of Agriculture, but with great autonomy from the Peruvian government, being administered by North American engineers sent by the IIAA in collaboration with some Peruvian engineers.

Among the first activities of SCIPA was the execution of agricultural projects in the Department of Piura to guarantee the feeding of the North American soldiers installed in the Talara Air Base and of the rubber workers – important military input of the time – working in the Department of Loreto. After the war, this office offered technical assistance, developed soil conservation plans, designed irrigation projects, distributed tools, insecticides and seeds, constructed quarantine stations, introduced thoroughbred varieties to increase the production of meat, milk and eggs, drilled new water wells, constructed drainage systems and offering machinery for rent all over the country. SCIPA was one of the most influential offices in Peru during the 1940s and 1950s, channeling technical assistance provided by the United States in agricultural affairs and acting as a blocking institution against possible Soviet infiltration. Since 1949, the IIAA became part of the Point Four Program created by President Harry S. Truman, so the SCIPA became an Office of the Technical Cooperation Administration (TCA) of the Department of State.

Between 1945 and 1946 – during the government of President José Luis Bustamante y Rivero – Peru approved the agreements signed at the financial conference organized and held by the United Nations in Bretton Woods, fulfilling its commitments and contributions in gold for the establishment of the International Monetary Fund and the establishment of the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (later known as the World Bank). Thus, Peru consolidated its permanence in the military, political and commercial orbit of the United States. Like its predecessor, President Jose Luis Bustamante y Rivero also attended to the claims of the wealthy Piuran hacienda owners. On June 29, 1946, President Bustamante signed Law No. 10619 approving the execution of the diversion works to benefit 31,000 hectares in the Piura

River Basin. This law declared that this project was a public necessity authorizing the acquisition of desert land by expropriation or by direct purchase.

### **MANUEL A. ODRÍA**

After several years in hiding and illegality, the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) – a party founded in Mexico in 1924 by a Peruvian in the exile – participated in the 1945 elections. Although it did not win the presidency, it managed to place a good number of congressmen with whom it deployed an intense campaign of opposition against the president Jose Luis Bustamante y Rivero. In October 1948, after the frustrated but bloody APRA attack on the military facilities in the Port of Callao – part of a plan that included uprisings in other parts of the territory – General Manuel A. Odría overthrew President Bustamante and promised to reinstate the order in the country. General Odría declared APRA an illegal organization unleashing a relentless persecution against its militants who returned to hiding. Odría promised to reactivate the economy, to solve the problems related to the concentration of agricultural property and especially to combat the Marxist and communist ideologies threatening the Christian principles of Peruvian society (Guerra Martiniere, 1994).

Although in terms of volume minerals and metals combined constituted the main bulk of Peruvian exports, during the 1950s cotton remained the most valuable commodity, and agricultural and livestock activity represented the main source of income for the national budget. Peru was then an agricultural country and General Manuel A. Odría could not ignore the cotton producers because they attracted a large amount of foreign currency and employed the majority of agricultural workers on the coast. At the same time, Odría continued to strengthen the bonds

that united Peru with the American government, and he did it with such care that President Dwight D. Eisenhower conferred on him the insignia of the Legion of Merit with the rank of Commander.

## **FIRST PHASE**

Before General Manuel A. Odría seized power, the representatives of the World Bank had already clearly expressed their interest in the Quiroz Project. The Agricultural and Cattle-Raising League of Piura continued the promotion of this project seeking the attention of the political authorities in Lima. These efforts intensified in the late 1940s, when a drought punished cotton production, especially during 1947 and 1948. The years of drought were decisive for General Manuel A. Odría to react quickly with a decree signed on November 1948 invoking and subscribing the legal provisions signed by his predecessors, but he did something that the previous presidents had not done. He designated an annual allowance of S/. 7,000,000 to be taken from the general budget of the republic for the execution of the Quiroz Project until its completion.

In his message on the night of December 31, 1948, President Odría announced a broad plan to revive the national economy by emphasizing that irrigation would occupy an important place in this effort. He also announced to the nation that the works of the Quiroz Project had been already under way. Manuel A. Odría had begun the diversion of the Quiroz River into the Piura River using public funds, strengthening the perception that he was an efficient man who communicated through his works, not only with words.

Despite the diversion of the Quiroz River into the Piura River began with fiscal money, General Odría continued to seek World Bank participation in this and other infrastructure projects. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1949, Milo Williams – an irrigation expert from the Food & Agricultural Organization of the United Nations – was sent to Peru by the International Bank for Reconstruction & Development in order to study the Quiroz Project. Milo Williams visited the area between the rivers Chira, Quiroz, Chipillico, and Piura, with the Minister of Development and Public Works, Lieutenant Colonel Alfonso Llosa, and the American engineer Charles W. Sutton, at that time Inspector of the Board of Waters and Irrigation.

In March of 1949, the Peruvian Times published the Chronicle of a Reconnaissance Tour led by Charles W. Sutton. Thanks to this chronicle we know the conditions in which the works were initiated under the orders of General Manuel A. Odría. The tunnels were being built with dynamite, picks and shovels. The financial problems and the exchange rate at the time did not allow the purchase of sophisticated equipment. Since in Piura the construction of tunnels was a real novelty, a group from Arequipa – a region of the southern Andes – with extensive experience drilling rocks using artisan methods, stood out among the crew. Trucks, tractors, concrete mixers, air compressors and mechanical drills bought by the government came a year later.

Thanks to this chronicle we also know that Sutton and his contemporaries studied the behavior of the Quiroz River for over ten years determining that the surpluses would be sufficient to meet the needs of the project. However, these studies contradicted the experience of the old landowners located in the Quiroz River Basin, who objected by assuring that this river did not have enough

water to solve – in a permanent way – the problems of the capricious Piura River. The Agricultural League was in charge of convincing those skeptical hacendados. Just two months later, on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1949, Charles W. Sutton died at the age of 73 at the Limatambo Airport – in Lima – waiting for his flight to Piura to continue inspecting the progress of the Quiroz Project. Sutton died working on the most promising and famous of all his projects.

### **NATIONAL IRRIGATION PROGRAM**

In his speeches addressed to the nation, General Manuel A. Odría always mentioned Project Quiroz as one of the most important efforts of his administration. Thanks to these speeches we know some details about their position in facing the problems generated by the concentration of land, especially in the coast. Although strongly opposed to expropriations, Odría promised to pass an “agrarian law” that would resolve the social problems generated by land concentration without bloodshed. But the agrarian law was never enacted by him. Instead, Odría promoted a “National Irrigation Program” which he described as the beginning of a new agrarian era in which new small and medium-sized landowners would receive lands, credits, technical assistance and access to modern machinery. This program would attempt the massive recovery of idle or desert lands in order to create new sources of agricultural wealth in service of the trade balance – via the acquisition of foreign currency – and at the service of the general population.

The National Irrigation Program was approved on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1951. As President Odría explained during his speeches, this program would have two components. First, the construction of irrigation projects that would benefit the already productive areas of the coastal valleys and, at the same time, would allow claiming thousands of hectares of desert. Second, this irrigation

program would allow the colonization of idle lands to transform the desert into new productive zones. Unlike previous presidents who emphasized the occupation of the jungle, General Odría gave priority to the colonization of the coast. For Manuel A. Odría, irrigation would achieve – in a peaceful and modern way – the same objectives sought by those who demanded an agrarian reform. Odría promised to achieve the old dream of every farmer working his own land. The Quiroz Project would be transformed by Odría. It would go from being a project built under the demand of the hacienda owners dedicated to the cultivation of Pima cotton, to become an example of agrarian reform that would respect the existing property rights.

#### **MORRISON-KNUDSEN**

Culminating the Quiroz Project was among Manuel A. Odría's priorities. To this end, the president continued discussions with the World Bank and convened the American company based in Boise, Ohio – Morrison-Knudsen Company Inc. – to complete works initiated by Peruvian engineers. Morrison-Knudsen came to Peru to accelerate and to finish the diversion of water from the Quiroz River to the Piura River.

On March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1951, the president of the International Bank of Reconstruction & Development, Eugene R. Black, arrived in Lima and met with President Manuel Odría to learn about the projects that the Peruvian government was planning to implement. Four days later, on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1951, the Peruvian government signed a contract with Morrison-Knudsen to complete the Quiroz Project. Morrison-Knudsen – one of the six companies that built the Hoover Dam – pledged to complete the largest irrigation project ever in Peru's history. This company acted expeditiously by opening offices in Lima and Piura and mobilizing much more sophisticated

machinery. Works in the mountains of Piura began the first days of May. Already in the field, the North American engineers reported on the existence of an Incan canal that hundreds of years ago served the same purpose: to transfer water from the Quiroz River in the San Francisco stream, irrigating Tambogrande's crops, on the banks of the unstable Piura River.

During his 1952 presidential speech, General Odría reported with pride that an American company would soon terminate the diversion of water from the Quiroz River into the Piura River, remarking that it was the most important irrigation project of his administration. The most striking part of the speech was the announcement of the construction of a reservoir – five times larger than the one originally projected – in the Chipillico River Basin, in an area known as “Los Cocos.” Manuel A. Odría had already decided to modify the original plans of the Quiroz Project, adapting it to the National Irrigation Program and to his personal emphasis on the colonization of the coast. Morrison-Knudsen and Ministry of Development & Public Works engineers were already working on the design of the second phase of the Quiroz Project, which would claim a much larger portion of desert land.

Finally, General Odría inaugurated the first phase of the Quiroz Project on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1953. Morrison-Knudsen delivered 10 tunnels, 24 kilometers of canals, aqueducts and bridges to serve the profitable Pima cotton. During an honor banquet, the Agricultural League gave president Odría a model of the derivation, which weighted two kilos and was made in gold on an ebony base. Such gratitude was more than justified. The production of Pima cotton – a variety exclusively cultivated in the Department of Piura – as a percentage of the national total rose



notably, between 1955 and 1956 it increased from 12% to 16% (Peruvian Times, 1955a, 1957). The already announced reservoir in Los Cocos would be built during the second phase.

## **WORLD BANK**

During the 1954 national holiday speech, President Manuel A. Odría announced that the technicians of the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, and the US Bureau of Reclamation, had finished studying the second phase of the Quiroz Project, recommending a loan of US \$ 18,000,000. On February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1955, the Peruvian government and the International Bank of Reconstruction & Development approved – in principle – a loan for this amount to finance the second phase of the Quiroz Project. With this support – ten days later – on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1955, General Odría signed a Supreme Resolution authorizing a new contract with Morrison-Knudsen in the amount of US \$ 24,716,430 to execute the second phase of the Quiroz Project. The main objective would be the construction of a reservoir with the capacity to store 250,000,000 cubic meters of water in the area known as Los Cocos and reclaim approximately 50,000,000 hectares of desert land. Additional budget and extra costs would be covered by the Peruvian state.

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1955, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development announced the approval of the US \$ 18,000,000 loan for the construction of a new reservoir and the reclamation of 50,000 hectares of new land. The press release issued by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was clear with respect to the objectives of the loan. Peru was importing food in volumes that increased every year. This bank expected that 60% of the new lands – reclaimed from the desert – will be devoted to food production and grazing of livestock.

The Peruvian government would auction and sell the new lands, offering credits and technical assistance, ensuring that these lands would enter into production as soon as possible.

Thanks to the press release, we know that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was confident that the Peruvian government would act through two key institutions in Peruvian-American relations. First, SCIPA would provide machinery and technical advice. Second, the Agricultural Development Bank of Peru would provide long-term loans. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development noted that it had already granted previous loans to finance these two institutions: US \$ 3,000,000 for SCIPA and US \$ 5,000,000 for the Agricultural Development Bank (Peruvian Times, 1955b). The second phase of the Quiroz Project started under the auspices and close supervision of the World Bank.

## **SECOND PHASE**

The government of Manuel A. Odría came to an end in 1956. Although Odría came to power with the agreement of the most conservative sectors, he developed a greater independence from the most powerful groups of the country who were not capable of displaying effective political opposition (Guerra Martiniere, 1994). Manuel Prado Ugarteche, winner of the 1956 elections, returned to the government palace and through him the more conservative sectors regained control of the state apparatus. Once in his office – and faced with an ongoing economic crisis that worsened every day – President Prado would nominate Pedro Beltran Espantoso as prime minister and minister of economy.

During his term, Odría sustained a fierce rivalry with Pedro Beltrán Espantoso – economist, successful entrepreneur, hacienda owner, former director of the Central Reserve Bank, founder of political parties, and owner of the newspaper La Prensa – over the Project Quiroz and other government undertakings. Now the political rivals of Manuel A. Odría inherited the commitments made with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and therefore the responsibility to conclude the second phase of the Quiroz Project that the North American company Morrison-Knudsen was already in the process of building.

During Odría's term, Peru received more than US \$ 45,000,000 in loans from the World Bank, and the Quiroz Project loan was notoriously the largest of all. The coming conflict was inevitable. On one side would be President Prado and Minister Beltrán trying to comply with the World Bank. On the other side would be the producers of the most valuable export commodity of all – cotton – trying to stop the irrigation of desert lands in order to benefit from all the water in the reservoir.

On the one hand, President Prado met expectations clearly expressed by the World Bank. On June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1957, he signed a new Supreme Decree appointing SCIPA and the Agricultural Development Bank of Peru to conduct studies that would dictate the best way to distribute water, parcels, value and sell new irrigated lands as well as organize the colonization process. But on the other hand, President Prado would also have to listen to the Piuran cotton growers who were proud of the weight they had in the national economy. According to these Piuran hacienda owners, thanks to cotton in 1956 Peru obtained 7% of the total foreign exchange earned from exports, also noting that that year Piura contributed to 6% of cotton produced worldwide. Thanks

to the cultivation of cotton and the extraction of petroleum, Piura contributed to approximately 10% of the national budget in 1957 (Manrique Castillo, 1960; Talledo, 1960). After Lima, Piura was the department that contributed the most to the national economy.

### **SAN LORENZO PROJECT**

Finally, after a long series of debates in the congress, on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1959, Law No. 13240 was approved, establishing how the new irrigated land would be sold and how the water in the reservoir would be distributed. The first thing dictated by this law was the definitive name of this project of colonization and irrigation: “San Lorenzo”. The project was formerly referred to as Los Cocos – after the fruits in the flooded place – or as San Lorenzo – after the name of one of the hills surrounding the flooded area. From now on the official name would be the San Lorenzo Irrigation and Colonization Project.

This law gave the highest priority to the poorest in the area. Article N° 37 assigned the allocation of plots smaller than 5 hectares for small non-owner peasants and shepherds who used to occupied the area that was flooded to fill the reservoir (informants # 01 & #02). Article N° 38 allocated plots of 6 to 8 hectares for small non-owner farmers established in the idle land acquired by the state. These two articles clearly benefited the sharecroppers, *yanaconas*, and semi-nomadic goat shepherds, but placed a heavy burden on those who would have to conduct and carry out the colonization. The first fruits of this gigantic project would have to be obtained by people with no experience in handling regulated irrigation systems (informant # 01). The rest of the land would be divided into larger lots and offered for sale under a selective process based

on qualities such as agricultural experience, degree of education, number of members in the family, physical capacity, health, age, and economic income.

This law established that the water derived from the Chipillico River and the Quiroz River, as well as the water stored in the reservoir, would be in service of 31,000 productive hectares in the Piura River Basin and by the new plots of the irrigated area. Thus, this law contained the seed of what would be a long dispute over the water between the hacienda owners – dedicated to growing Pima cotton – and the new arrived settlers who would transform the desert into a new valley. The calculation of the 31,000 hectares was made in the 1940s and the water from the Quiroz River began to be injected into the Piura River in December 1953. Therefore, that figure did not reflect the true dimension of cotton fields under cultivation in the haciendas at the time the settlers arrived in the area. Second, this law did not establish the proportion of reservoir water that would be divided between the hacienda owners and the settlers. As a result, these two groups would fight over the water during the next decade.

## **IRAC**

Morrison-Knudsen finished and officially delivered the second phase in May of 1959 (informant # 01). In July of 1959 Pedro Beltran was appointed as Minister of Finance and President of the Council of Ministers and became responsible for the economic direction of the country assuming the international commitments (Gálvez & García, 2016). The president of the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, Eugene R. Black, arrived in Lima on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1959 to express his confidence in the economic measures adopted by the new minister and to ratify the economic and developmental importance of the projects financed by his institution. Pedro

Beltrán – political opponent of Manuel A. Odría and former opponent of the Quiroz Project – assumed the responsibility of continue the diversion of the water from the Quiroz River into the Piura River.

In June of 1960 Minister Beltrán created a new office under the name of the Institute for Agrarian Reform and Colonization (IRAC) – Supreme Decree No. 09 – in charge of implementing certain reforms in the agricultural sector. Fundamentally, this new office would operate on the basis of irrigation and colonization projects that were already under way without affecting existing property rights (Matos Mar & Mejía, 1980). Law No. 13240 was already approved and colonization had to be started at San Lorenzo as soon as possible. To this end, Minister Beltrán formed a small team of professionals, who would work from within IRAC, with the sole task of launching the San Lorenzo Project in no more than 90 days. The members of this team were as follows. First, attorney Enrique Torres Llosa, who was then working at the Central Reserve Bank – famous for his expertise in subjects as diverse as philosophy and Spanish literature – would be the team’s legal adviser. Second, economist Pedro Alibert, who worked in La Prensa – a newspaper owned by Minister Beltrán – would be the economic adviser. Third, Vicente Pesce, an Italian who worked in the Agrarian Bank, would be the financial advisor. Fourth, the agronomist and irrigation engineer, Renato Rossi, would be in charge of leading the actions in the field as a direct representative of the IRAC board (informant # 01). In 1961 SCIPA would become a fully Peruvian office adopting a new name: Agrarian Research and Development Service (SIPA). As a result IRAC – and the following Peruvian offices created to implement agricultural reforms – would take over the leading role in the administration and technical support of irrigation and colonization projects.

## Chapter Three

1961-1968

### War over the Reservoir Water

#### **IRAC IN TAMBOGRANDE**

In June 1960 Minister Pedro Beltran created IRAC as the office in charge of irrigation and colonization projects throughout the country. Engineer Renato Rossi and his team were in charge of running the channels that the American company Morrison-Kanudsen had delivered in May of 1959. The irrigation system was composed of one reservoir with a capacity to store 255,000,000 cubic meters of water and four main canals which included Yuscay (16 km.), Tejedores (12 km.), Tablazo (65 km.), and Tambogrande (33 km.). These four channels fed thousands of kilometers of secondary canals covering a total area of 50,000 hectares.

The Piura River Basin was already served with the water from the Quiroz River since General Manuel A. Odría inaugurated the first phase of the project in 1953. The arrival of the team led by Rossi – a team sent by the Minister Pedro Beltran – meant that the water of the San Lorenzo Reservoir would soon begin to supply the system and that the water would be used in the rehabilitation of the still desert lands. Disputes over reservoir water among the Peruvian government, the World Bank, San Lorenzo Project managers, cotton-producing hacienda owners, and the settlers would begin very soon.

The Peruvian government had acquired a collection of fertile soils, but the land was dry and difficult to manage. These were sandy soils along with clayey soils with slow water penetration in a zone of rugged topography (informant # 01). The lands were located in the vicinity of the town of Tambogrande: between the Piura River, the Chira River, and the Chipillico River. The lands were selected by a team of engineers. The selection was neither the result of an offer nor the result of land speculation (informant # 01). The former owners of the land – the hacendados – were expropriated receiving an economic compensation that did not generate legal quarrels. The state was buying land that the owners did not use because of lack of access to water and because the area had already been heavily affected by the indiscriminate cutting of native timber species such as *algarrobo* (*Prosopis pallida*), *guayacan* (*Tabebuia* spp.), *sapote* (*Capparis scabrida*) and *vichayo* (*Capparis ovalifolia*). Probably Peruvian and North American engineers who visited the area in the late 1940s decided on the basis of hydraulic criteria: the area was perfect to receive by gravity the water captured in the highlands from the Chipillico River and the Quiroz River, two rivers that naturally flow into the generous Chira River (informant # 01).

The team led by engineer Rossi searched and contacted the semi-nomadic herders who formerly occupied the area that was flooded to create the reservoir and adjacent areas. It was also necessary to register the *yanaconas* or non-proprietary peasants who worked on the lands bought by the state. These two groups had the highest priority in the acquisition of irrigated land under Law No. 13240. The territory was wild and there were no roads of penetration. The team of engineers had to use a helicopter to cover the area and identify the population. Some enthusiastic journalists posted pictures of the houses being built to accommodate settlers, schools for children and shelters for teachers. The bricks were made out of materials from the area. Those interested



in purchasing the land could consult a colored map showing the layout of the canals and the characteristics of the lots for sale. Engineers and administrators also showed the map of the future “San Lorenzo City” that would be built in the middle of the valley, in the sector known as Cruceta. This city would provide the necessary services for the progress of the settlers, including banks, post offices, schools, higher education centers and even an airport. But above all, the new city would serve to industrialize the production of the valley generating a new economic cluster that would benefit the Peruvian North. The map of the new city showed exactly which areas had been reserved for industrial use. The construction of a small hydroelectric plant in the area known as Yuscay had also been planned to take advantage of a 14-meter waterfall, providing the valley with energy while avoiding oil spending (Moscoso Franklin, 1968; Rossi, 1963, 1964).

## **CROPS**

In 1960 – after Lima and La Libertad – the Department of Piura had the third largest cultivated area. But monoculture made foodstuffs more expensive. Of the 105,071 hectares cultivated in Piura, 65,318 were dedicated to the cultivation of cotton thus so much of the food came from places like Olmos, Chepén, Chiclayo and Lima (El Tiempo, 1963c; Revista de Piura, 1957). The specialists of the time hoped that San Lorenzo would contribute to solving that problem and – taking into account the characteristics of the soils and water restrictions – recommended the cultivation of fruits. However, trees are slow to grow and the settlers sought immediate profits by growing cotton or rice. The cultivation of Pima cotton was highly profitable and would help settlers to capitalize quickly, but it would not contribute to the solution of addressing the food problem. The cultivation of rice would generate an additional problem because of the enormous

amount of water required: planting rice in the middle of a desert did not make any sense (informant # 01).

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Agriculture – from Lima and following the recommendations of the SCIPA engineers – was promoting the cultivation of cocoa, rubber, coffee and bananas. One of the first decisions taken by engineer Renato Rossi was to get rid of those plants – already installed in experimental stations – because they were species that grew more easily on the other side of the Andes in the rainy Amazon region. The management of the project controlled the water of the reservoir and that control allowed them to suggest the most suitable crops. According to the regulations of the time, the settlers were supposed to receive approximately 13,200 cubic meters of water per hectare each year. This amount facilitated the cultivation of Rossi's proposal – fruit trees, cotton and several varieties of grain legumes – but made it very difficult to grow rice. In order to grow rice, 30,000 cubic meters of water per hectare was needed per a growing season, which only lasted 6 months on average (informant # 01).

The process through which the new valley became the country's largest producer of mangoes and limes was slow. During the first two decades, cotton and rice predominated. The decision to plant fruit trees depended on a collection of individual conditions like saving capacity, access to credit and long-term planning abilities in each settler. At the beginning, most of them devoted to growing the cotton, another part to the foodstuffs and only a small fraction to the cultivation of fruit trees. After a few years, as administrative staff relaxed, and demand increased in the market, most settlers ended up prioritizing rice cultivation. The predominance of rice would further sharpen the battle for water: settlers would pressure San Lorenzo Project managers to prevent

hacienda owners from capturing reservoir water while at the same time settlers would pressure managers to inject more water into the canal system to service the rice fields.

#### **THE FIRST SETTLER AND THE TELEGRAM**

In 1961 – just like in previous years – the agricultural calendar of the Piura River Valley began thanks to the reservoir water. But this year would be different because the water of the reservoir would be shared. According to the Agricultural League, the San Lorenzo Project was detrimental for many reasons. First, the reservoir water would not be sufficient to attend the 31,000 hectares in the Piura River Valley after the arrival of hundreds of settlers. According to the Agricultural League, cotton crops had priority because the main objective of the Quiroz Project was the stabilization of the Piura River to protect this export commodity. Second, the legislation did not include the haciendas installed in Chipillico River as legitimate users of reservoir water. According to the Agricultural League, because the reservoir was built just over that river, the haciendas in that basin were not receiving enough water. Third, the lower part of the Piura River Basin – occupied by indigenous communities and small landowners – was not included for legal reservoir use. As it was argued by the Agricultural League, this omission was against food security in Piura as the lower part produced cash crops. Finally, a few years later, the Agricultural League blamed the San Lorenzo Project for the accumulation of saltpeter in the soils of the Piura River Valley requesting the construction of drainage systems in order to repair the damages.

In January of 1961, Agriculture Minister Alex Zarak and a senior World Bank representative, Humayun Mirza, visited the San Lorenzo Project. The members of the Agricultural League took

the opportunity to express their grievances by insisting that water would not be available to all users and that the reclamation of desert lands would affect cotton production and fiscal revenues. After hearing the claims and promising to take the necessary measures, the minister stated to the press that San Lorenzo was a model that would be replicated in a series of colonization projects that would be carried out in the Amazon area.

With the departure of the minister, the conflict between the Agricultural League and Renato Rossi continued because this engineer refused to release the requested amount of water from the reservoir to serve the needs of the hacienda cotton crops in the Piura and Chipillico River Basins. The allies of the Agricultural League in Congress intensified their efforts to modify the law. In defense of the project, the head of the IRAC legal department, Enrique Torres Llosa, visited Piura to explain that San Lorenzo was the initial step of the agrarian reform that the government would implement throughout the country. But this argument did not convince the members of the Agricultural League.

The official inauguration of the San Lorenzo Project was suspended several times, delaying the calendar of work in the new irrigated lands. The professionals of the IRAC received the order to transform the desert into a productive area as soon as possible and to reach that goal they needed the labor of the peons, *yanaconas* and shepherds who were already registered, selected and trained (informant # 01). In these circumstances, Rossi made the decision to proceed anyway. On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Eloy Vega Ortiz – who obtained the highest score on the list of beneficiaries of Article No. 38 of Law No. 13240 – was the first to receive a plot in San Lorenzo. That same day the Agricultural League sent a telegram to the President Manuel Prado denouncing the IRAC – the

office in charge of the administration of the reservoir water – for having reduced the amount of water injected in the Piura River. The hacienda owners asked the president to correct the situation immediately. In less than 24 hours President Prado gave the order to increase the water supply.

Finally, Pedro Beltran and his ministers arrived in Piura. After being received by priests, prefects, mayors, judges, prosecutors and journalists, the representatives of the central government attended the luncheon organized by the Agricultural League. Two days later, on July 17<sup>th</sup>, the Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, Pedro Beltrán, officially inaugurated the San Lorenzo Project, highlighting that it was the beginning of the agrarian reform. Again, Eloy Vega Ortiz – the first settler – posed again for the cameras. The next day Renato Rossi was removed from office. This engineer was an obstacle for the Agricultural League because he refused to release the reservoir water to be used in the cotton haciendas. Some ministers justified this decision by stating that it was an unacceptable attitude to have settled the colonists and planted the fields before the official inaugural ceremony (informant # 01).

The Agricultural League thought that after the expulsion of Renato Rossi it would be easier to put pressure on IRAC officials. But it was not. The administration of the San Lorenzo Project continued in defense of the calculations made by engineer Daniel Escobar – who had worked on this project since 1953 – restricting the distribution of the water (informant # 01). The Agricultural League refused the figures made by Escobar, accusing him of being a “theoretical” engineer who ignored the reality of Piura. A commission of the Agricultural League traveled to Lima to demand the approval of their own irrigation plan. The conflict escalated so rapidly that

the new agriculture minister, Carlos Moreyra y Paz Soldán, and the former agriculture minister, Alex Zarak, had to visit Piura. But the presence of these ministers did not resolve the problem. The war for reservoir water continued on every level.

In May of 1962, the influence of the Agricultural League on the Congress of the Republic gave one of its first legal results, Law No. 14064. This new law incorporated the haciendas of the Chipillico River as legitimate users of the water of the San Lorenzo Reservoir. As a result, more than 2,000 hectares of cotton located along this river would be supplied with the reservoir's stored water.

#### **MILITARY JUNTA OF 1962**

The presidential elections were held on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1962. Fernando Belaúnde, candidate and founder of Popular Action; Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, candidate and founder of APRA; and Manuel A. Odría, candidate and founder of UNO, obtained the highest votes, but there was not much difference between them. According to the laws at the time, if none of the candidates obtained the required minimum – a third of the votes – the congress would have to elect the new president. On June 28<sup>th</sup>, the Armed Forces intervened in the process alleging irregularities in the provinces and departments where the APRA candidate won.

In the midst of political chaos, Manuel Prado continued with the implementation of the irrigation project. On July 6<sup>th</sup>, agriculture minister Carlos Moreyra y Paz Soldán visited San Lorenzo to congratulate the first set of settlers who had been determined to be the most suitable buyers through the scoring system. The press noted that a good group of peasants came from south

Andean departments such as Ayacucho, Cuzco, Arequipa, and Tacna. Since the rumor of a coup was stronger than ever, the minister reassured the settlers saying that the San Lorenzo Project would continue anyway because it was to be administered in an “autonomous” way.

APRA and UNO reached an agreement: they would join forces in the new Congress to elect General Manuel A. Odría as the new president. General Odría himself announced this agreement in a radio message. Under suspicion of fraud, on the night of July 17<sup>th</sup>, the military entered the government palace expelling President Manuel Prado in order to eliminate potential APRA’s influence over the executive and legislative. General Ricardo Pérez Godoy presided over the Military Junta. The Agricultural League established very good relations with the representatives of the Military Junta and were able to get authorization from the reservoir to deliver new water discharges into the Piura River. However – as in previous governments – the military authorities complied with the commitments signed with the World Bank by giving continuity to the San Lorenzo Project. Amidst this hectic political context, the San Lorenzo Valley created by engineer Renato Rossi and the settlers, stood out as a model of peaceful agrarian reform that could be adopted in other regions of the country. In September, the press reported that Paul Craig Martin, a representative of the World Bank, spent three days in San Lorenzo.

The dispute over reservoir water became sourer when the military appointed Daniel Escobar as the interim manager of the San Lorenzo Project in January of 1963. Escobar, the author of the calculations of the water availability, was declared by the Agricultural League as a *persona non grata* in the whole department of Piura, referring to him as the incompetent one who had dried

up the Chira River. The Agricultural League published calculations made by its own set of engineers.

In March, General Nicolas Lindley Lopez overthrew General Ricardo Pérez Godoy, assuming the presidency of the Military Junta. This change of authority did not affect the progress of the San Lorenzo Project. In April, the military announced a new sale of parcels. The settlers would keep coming. In May, journalists documenting the progress of the San Lorenzo Project noticed something interesting: settlers were about to complete their own organizational process. Committees were operating in all sectors of San Lorenzo, and a commission of colonists was working on drafting the statutes to unite these committees into one single organization. Soon the Agricultural League would have to confront the Settlers Association.

### **1963 ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN**

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1963, Peruvians voted for the most centrist option by electing Fernando Belaúnde Terry as their new president. Although they were less than a month away from their departure from the Government Palace, the military continued the expansion of the San Lorenzo Project. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, agriculture minister, General FAP Alfonso Terán Brambilla, arrived in Piura to welcome new settlers – selected in the latest sales process – delivering the award documents.

Just three days before civilians returned to power, on July 25<sup>th</sup>, the Military Government Junta signed Decree Law No. 14575 creating the National Office of Agrarian Reform and Promotion (ONRPA) as an autonomous body under the leadership of the president of the republic that had the faculty of appointing the executive president of this organization. Previous offices – such as



IRAC and SIPA (formerly SCIPA) – became dependent on this new office. The conduction of the agrarian reform would remain a matter under the control of the president of the republic and the San Lorenzo Project would still be directly linked to the government palace in Lima.

#### **FERNANDO BELAÚNDE AND THE GREAT DROUGHT**

On July 28<sup>th</sup> Fernando Belaúnde occupied the presidential office of a country in turmoil. The candidate Belaúnde had promised to resolve the dispute against the International Petroleum Company (IPC) by collecting what this company owed to the state or recovering the wells by force. He also promised to implement a profound agrarian reform. But President Belaúnde did not fulfill any of those promises. These issues were intensely debated in the congress and President Belaúnde received constant pressures from the entire political spectrum. One of the results of his inaction was the division of his own political party because an important sector of his collaborators demanded the immediate nationalization of the oil. In the long run the final result of his inaction was a military coup. The arrival of Fernando Belaúnde to power coincided with a long period of drought that lasted until the end of his government. Those years without rain increased the pressures over the team of engineers administering the water of the reservoir and determined the beginning of the mobilization of the settlers.

The bitter drought had two other consequences that marked the history of Piura. First, the emergence of an incipient environmental awareness that manifested itself through the defense of the *algarrobo* tree. During those years, editorials argued that the *algarrobo* – the fundamental component of the desert – constituted the base of the Piuran economy and explained that the forests contributed to the conservation of humidity. In the Congress, some Piuran representatives

called for stricter laws to stop the indiscriminate cutting of this tree. The desperation generated by the drought reached such high levels that by the end of Belaúnde's government, the conservative daily *El Tiempo* argued that all of these problems were caused by the "greed" of some landowners who converted – or allowed others to convert – *algarrobos*, *sapotes* and *vichayos* wood into charcoal (*El Tiempo*, 1967c, 1968b, 1968e).

The second consequence of this long drought was the construction of a new reservoir on the Chira River. The Agricultural League intensified the pressure exerted on the central government looking for a new derivation. This time, the Agricultural League requested a direct derivation of the waters of the generous Chira River into the erratic Piura River. The drought demonstrated the vulnerability of the San Lorenzo Reservoir that depended on the water of the Quiroz River, a natural tributary of the Chira River. This time the Agricultural League called for a definitive solution by taking the water directly from the richest river of all. President Belaúnde responded positively by commissioning the study of a direct referral to Flores & Costa (informant # 01). However, the intentions of the Agricultural League found opposition among politicians, university students, unions, and professional guilds from the city of Sullana, on the bank of the Chira River. Under pressure, Belaúnde commissioned a new study to the US based International Engineering Company but this time including the construction of a reservoir.

The Piuran press highlighted that the studies of the International Engineering Company were funded with part of a previous loan granted by the World Bank and were made under the assumption that the World Bank would finance the construction of the entire infrastructure. The complete proposal of the US company was the following: the construction of a channel for the

derivation of water from the Chira River to the Piura River, the construction of a reservoir on the Chira River – in an area known as Poechos – with capacity to store between 500 and 900 million cubic meters, the construction of a system of drainage to eliminate saltpeter from the lower and middle part of the Piura River Valley and from the San Lorenzo Valley.

### **THE SETTLERS GAIN VISIBILITY**

During Fernando Belaúnde's presidency the settlers reached a notorious local recognition. First, they were invited to become part of the Agricultural League receiving two seats in the weekly sessions of this organization. Second, they began to appear on television discussing issues related to the intended agrarian reform. Third, the annual anniversary of the colonization festivities became a main regional event attracting thousands of visitors interested in sport tournaments, cockfights, rodeos, and mule races. These anniversaries were used by some importing houses to display and sell agricultural machinery of Japanese origin. The colonists exhibited and sold their products: cotton, corn, yerba buena, peas, bean, cabbage, sweet potato, yuca, watermelon, tomato, onion, lemon beebrush, and mint. In just three years San Lorenzo had become an oasis of prosperity contrasting with what was happening in other parts of the country where land conflicts continued after recent guerrilla activity.

The World Bank continued to monitor the progress of the San Lorenzo Project. In 1964 the famous economist Albert O. Hirschman spent 10 days inside the colonization as part of a comparative study. The lessons learned from this experience were included in the book entitled "Development Projects Observed" published for the first time in 1967 (Hirschman, 2015). San

Lorenzo – now internationally known – continued to set the tone for future undertakings towards a full-scale agrarian reform.

#### **SETTLERS MOBILIZE FOR THE FIRST TIME**

As the dry months accumulated, the Agricultural League called for more and more water on behalf of those who lived in the lower part of the Piura River Basin. In this claim, the Agricultural League was supported by a sector of the leaders of the Sechura Indigenous Community, the Catacaos Indigenous Community, numerous mayors, authorities of the Ministry of Agriculture, and a large crew of congressmen who was trying to modify the law to include 7,000 hectares – located in the lower part of the basin – as legitimate users of reservoir water. The Agricultural League argued that the lower part produced the pastures, vegetables and legume grains that supplied the markets of the region. But the Agricultural League only sought to inject more and more water from the reservoir into the languishing Piura River. Before reaching the ocean, the reservoir water had to pass through the middle section of the basin where the suction pumps serving the cotton estates were located.

After dispensing the water for several opportunities, in August of 1963 the IRAC officials decided to close the floodgates. There would be no water for anyone. The water stopped reaching the Piura River but also stopped running through the channels of San Lorenzo. The settlers blamed IRAC engineers for failing to defend the water announcing measures of force. According to journalists, 350 settlers were willing to do anything to defend 4,000 hectares of crops. A commission of settlers traveled to Lima seeking to meet with President Fernando Belaúnde to inform him in person that they were determined to break the floodgates. The settlers were

accompanied by a former ally of the San Lorenzo Project, Enrique Torres Llosa, the recently appointed minister of agriculture. The new minister listened to the claims and offered to work on the new water diversion that would solve the problems caused by the ever-deficient Piura River.

The Acción Popular committee in Sullana expressed solidarity with the settlers denouncing the false concern of the hacendados for the feeding of the Piuran population. According to these militants, this whole problem was created by the continuous modifications of the law for the benefit of the cotton haciendas on the Piura River who had gone from 31,000 potential hectares to 47,000 real hectares of highly profitable Pima cotton (El Tiempo, 1963a). The Agricultural League had the backing of a group of parliamentarians and senators who insisted that the lower part of the basin needed water to save pastures, cereals and vegetables. All these political influences overwhelmed the administrators of the reservoir, but the engineers could not release the water into the Piura River because the settlers prevented it by force. The settlers were already organized and gained control over the territory.

#### **RENATO ROSSI RETURNS TO SAN LORENZO**

From the first days of the Fernando Belaúnde presidency, the first vice-president, Edgardo Seoane Corrales, assumed the leadership of the institution created by the military a few days before handing over power: the National Office of Agrarian Reform and Promotion (ONRPA). Seoane, an agronomist by profession, had practical experience in farm management and irrigation systems, and was among Acción Popular leaders who demanded rapid and structural changes to transform the country (Flores, 1970; Gálvez & García, 2016; Kuczynski, 1977).

Vice President Seoane and engineer Renato Rossi did not know each other personally, but their names were constantly in the press and in the agricultural journals of the time. Seoane knew Rossi's professional accomplishments and decided that he would be the right person to lead the San Lorenzo Project and attain the goals agreed upon with the World Bank. President Fernando Belaúnde did know Renato Rossi personally since both were professors at the National Engineering University, where they would confer to discuss topics encompassing development and agricultural projects (informant # 01). Since the San Lorenzo Project depended on the ONRPA – office run by Seoane – Rossi would have considerable autonomy from the Ministry of Agriculture. In addition, Rossi had the personal appreciation of the President Belaúnde.

The central government had selected the most suitable person, but the situation was much more complicated than before. The settlers were already organized and mobilized, ready to confront either the project managers or the owners of the neighboring haciendas. The Agricultural League had a good amount of parliamentarians and senators defending their interests in Lima. The press was openly hostile to the San Lorenzo Project and was taking advantage of the previous government's mistakes to destroy the reputation of the colonization demanding its immediate cancellation. According to press reports, previous representatives in charge of IRAC had misappropriated lots, benefiting military personnel, politicians, lawyers, mayors, and sons of landowners who were accumulating land in pursuit of financial gain. These alleged cases of corruption were the ideal fuel for those who demanded the halting of San Lorenzo's expansion. The congressmen in favor of the Agricultural League announced that they would travel to Piura to clarify these facts. Political parties intervened by publishing letters in the newspapers. The San Lorenzo Project did not have the support of either the right or the left. For the former, it was an

improvised project that never had clarity – neither with respect to its extent or with respect to its goals – that had resulted in excessive water usage harming cotton crops. For the latter, it was a project that never benefited the poorest because it had the seal of the dictator Manuel A. Odría and the oligarchic Pedro Beltran.

A few days before the arrival of Renato Rossi, the agriculture minister, Enrique Torres Llosa, visited Piura and announced the new changes in the San Lorenzo administration. Minister Torres Llosa remarked to the press that the cause of the dispute over the reservoir water was the increase in the number of hectares of cotton inside the haciendas and not the arrival of the settlers. The announcement of the appointment of Renato Rossi as new director of the San Lorenzo Project was not well received. The members of the Agricultural League knew that Rossi would defend the water from the reservoir even if it cost him his position again. Already back in the field, Rossi implemented an anti-corruption campaign and accelerated the work plan with the objective of executing the agreed upon goals with the World Bank (informant # 01). San Lorenzo Project managers still considered it possible to build a city in Cruceta to facilitate the future industrialization of the valley's products.

The drought continued and in January of 1964 approximately 30,000 peasants invaded the haciendas located in Catacaos, in the basin of the Piura River. About 15,000 hectares were taken. Lima sent military aircraft – with hundreds of police troops on board – with the order to evict the peasants. The Agricultural League sent its representatives to Lima to meet with President Belaúnde demanding a definitive solution to the problems of the basin. In this meeting the Agricultural League demanded to modify the agreement with the World Bank limiting the

growth of San Lorenzo. These representatives took advantage of the situation, saying that they requested the cancellation of the San Lorenzo Project for the good of the population in the lower part of the basin that was dying of thirst and falling as easy prey into the hands of communist agitators. As the drought worsened, Renato Rossi agreed to release some of the reservoir water to save the crops in the lower basin that were about to perish.

### **OPPOSITION IN SULLANA**

The proposal of the Agricultural League to divert part of the water of the Chira River generated an opposition movement in the city of Sullana, the most important city on the banks of this river. In the midst of the drought, mayors, militants from different political parties, students, sports clubs, neighborhood associations, guilds and unions of all kinds, began a series of protests in defense of the Chira River water. While the city of Sullana was shouting against the Agricultural League and against President Fernando Belaúnde, a group of congressmen traversed the San Lorenzo Project collecting information to punish former officials accused of corruption. Renato Rossi took advantage of the massive presence of the press to reaffirm that colonization would continue to grow and to report that the sector known as El Tablazo was already under cultivation. Contradicting the warnings of the Agricultural League – which fiercely opposed the reclamation of this sector – Rossi acted hastily as possible to meet the World Bank goals.

In May, President Fernando Belaúnde signed Law N° 15037, implementing minor reforms in the agricultural sector without altering the system of ownership. This law created a new office: the Institute of Agrarian Reform and Promotion (IRPA). Previous offices such as the National Office of Agrarian Reform and Promotion (ONRPA) and the Agricultural Research and Promotion



Service (SIPA) were absorbed by the new office – IRPA – which would be governed by the National Agrarian Council. The council was composed of ministerial delegates, delegates of the congress and delegates of mayor agricultural guilds.

In October, a group of experts from the World Bank visited the San Lorenzo Project. The Agricultural League reacted publishing an analysis of the water situation of Piura arguing that it would be impossible to reach the goal of irrigating 45,000 hectares in San Lorenzo. The Agricultural League reminded the World Bank representatives that the main objective of the Quiroz Project was to regulate the Piura River by benefiting its cotton fields and warned them that if they wanted to continue irrigating the new lands they would have to channel water from the Chira River or from the Huancabamba River. The Agricultural League ruled that the San Lorenzo Project was doomed to fail (El Tiempo, 1964).

The central government still supported Renato Rossi's administration who was trying to meet the goal agreed upon with the World Bank. In November, the government of Fernando Belaúnde signed Supreme Decree No. 37 and Supreme Decree No. 41 creating a commission in charge of reservoir water distribution and granting greater levels of autonomy to engineer Rossi. A month later, former agriculture minister, Enrique Torres Llosa – now director of the National Agrarian Council – arrived in San Lorenzo to deliver the corresponding documentation among the new settlers who won the last selection process.

**COMMUNIST TRAINED IN CUBA**

In January 1965, the Settlers Association published a letter in the newspapers of Piura supporting the work carried out by engineer Renato Rossi inside and outside Peru in defense of the San Lorenzo Project. Settlers also protested against the legal reforms pursued by the Agricultural League seeking the modification of the water distribution in its favor. The colonist Godofredo García Baca signed this letter as secretary (El Tiempo, 1965a). It was the first time that the name of this famous engineer appeared in the pages of El Tiempo.

The settlers were also publishing letters, but the members of the Agricultural League had direct access to the president of the republic. In February, the manager of the Agricultural League, engineer Rómulo Franco, delivered a bill to President Fernando Belaúnde that would annul the decrees granting autonomy to the engineer Renato Rossi. President Belaúnde refused to sign, arguing that the World Bank and the United States ambassador were in favor of the San Lorenzo Project.

Unfortunately, the firmness of Fernando Belaúnde would not last long. After the president's refusal, the Agricultural League launched a campaign denouncing the World Bank as a foreign organization interfering in national affairs and trampling upon the Constitution. In the Congress, the personal attacks against Renato Rossi intensified. Renato Rossi was tarred as a communist trained in Cuba, who was engaged in sowing chaos and violence in Peru under orders given by Fidel Castro. Advocates of the Agricultural League demanded that Rossi's return to Tacna – his native region – because he was destroying Piura with his insatiable pride and his dictatorial style. El Tiempo continued demanding the modification to the World Bank agreements in order to stop the San Lorenzo Project. According to this newspaper, the colonization was the result of a design

error – for having selected very low quality lands and for misjudging the availability of water – which only served to satisfy personal whims (El Tiempo, 1963b, 1965d, 1966o, 1966s).

#### **NO MORE THAN 31,000 HECTARES**

The appointment of the Piuran born economist Javier Silva Ruete as the new minister of agriculture inclined the balance in favor of the Agricultural League. This new ministerial administration was determined to end the territorial expansion of San Lorenzo and to cancel the colonization process. During the first days of March, the new minister demanded the injection of the water from the reservoir into the Piura River – the agricultural calendar had already begun and the drought continued – but Renato Rossi ignored the new minister’s demands and did not deliver the water. The colonists also opposed the orders issued by Minister Silva and threatened to let San Lorenzo – as a pilot plan of the agrarian reform – “go to hell” if they did not first deliver the water that the state promised when settlers bought the land (El Tiempo, 1965c, 1965e, 1965f, 1965g). A few days later, the rains, everybody was waiting for arrived. But, as is usual in Piura, the water came with violence: rivers overflowed destroying crops, houses and all kinds of infrastructure.

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, Agriculture Minister Javier Silva Ruete, and the head of the World Bank Agricultural Department, Leonel Evans, arrived at Piura. Minister Silva Ruete was received at the airport by members of the Agricultural League and announced to the press that the San Lorenzo Project would not exceed more than 31,000 hectares. That was the formula calculated by the government to meet the demands of the Agricultural League and at the same time to maintain relations with the World Bank. On the other hand, the representative of the World

Bank, Leonel Evans, after visiting San Lorenzo also made announcements. First, the World Bank was pleased with the presence of Renato Rossi as director of the San Lorenzo Project. Second, the World Bank was planning to grant an extra loan of US \$ 11 million to continue the San Lorenzo Project. Third, the World Bank was willing to evaluate existing proposals to divert water from the Chira River into the Piura River. The meeting between the representative of the World Bank and the representatives of the Agricultural League was rough. El Tiempo reported that during that meeting the delegates of the Agricultural League attacked the World Bank, accusing it of meddling in a sovereign country, and that the engineer Renato Rossi and the hacienda owner Guillermo Balarezo Delta carried out harsh verbal confrontations.

In June, the Settlers Association electoral process was held, but the press did not have direct access to it. It was rumored that Renato Rossi would be soon be fired and the settlers decided not to provide information on their activities. That same month, the central government authorities announced a new batch of lots would be on selling and invited the colonists who won the previous process to receive the documents of adjudication. Agonizingly, the San Lorenzo Project was still underway.

In August, Renato Rossi was fired and the rumors were confirmed. The engineers, administrative employees and workers of the San Lorenzo Project published a letter lamenting that economic and political interests had deprived San Lorenzo of such a determined, competent and dedicated professional. In a letter – accompanied by more than 400 notarized signatures – Rossi's many virtues were highlighted, including his ability to interact with representatives of international organizations such as the World Bank (El Tiempo, 1965b). On August 15<sup>th</sup> – without Rossi on

the ground and with the gratitude of the Agricultural League – Minister Javier Silva Ruete arrived in Piura to distribute the corresponding documentation among the new selected settlers. The San Lorenzo Project was already sentenced to death, but the settlers kept coming.

### **FIRST PROTEST RALLIES**

According to El Tiempo, the departure of Renato Rossi marked the beginning of a new period of peace in Piura. In November, the new director of the San Lorenzo Project arrived, engineer Luis Joo Chang. El Tiempo welcomed the arrival of Joo presenting him to the public as a conciliatory professional who was willing to resolve the dispute over the reservoir water taking into account the demands of all parties involved. Also in November, the new agriculture minister, Rafael Cubas Vinatea, determined that the town of Tambogrande would be supplied with water from the San Lorenzo reservoir. Pressures on reservoir water continued to increase. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1966, Minister Cubas received a new group of settlers delivering the award documents at a ceremony held in the sector known as Parkinsonia.

The water in the reservoir was rapidly depleted and it was clear that this would be another dry year. The Agricultural League – with the support of mayors, congressmen and media – continued to insist on the immediate cancellation of the San Lorenzo Project and the settlers broke relations with the engineer Joo by not defending the water of the reservoir. In June, the Settlers Association sent a letter to the Congress denouncing that the cotton crops of the neighboring haciendas were still expanding at an alarming rate. The settlers demanded compliance with Law No. 13240, Supreme Decree No. 37, and above all compliance with the agreements with the World Bank (El Tiempo, 1966j). But the settlers were totally cornered. With the departure of

Renato Rossi the settlers lost communication with the representatives of the World Bank. With the presence of Javier Silva Ruete in Fernando Belaúnde's administration the state apparatus was totally in favor of the Agricultural League. The only route left was mass mobilization and direct actions.

Lima ignored the letter of the settlers ruling in favor of the Agricultural League. The commission distributing the water decided that the reservoir would continue to serve the cotton haciendas on the Piura River Basin. In addition, the authorities recommended the suspension of the delivery of lots corresponding to the last two sales processes. In response, the settlers met in assembly and decided not to release the water stored in the reservoir. At that time, the colonist and engineer Godofredo García Baca was already famous for his leadership and journalists were recording his statements. According to *El Tiempo*, García Baca recommended not to accept more water studies because they always favored the Agricultural League and summed up the enormous disadvantage in which the settlers were with the phrase "we have fallen in the game of the Piurans" (*El Tiempo*, 1966d, 1966e, 1966f, 1966k, 1966m). The settlers prevented, by force, the injection of the water in the Piura River. The press branded the settlers "rebels" and the administrators of the Project San Lorenzo of "fainthearted" (*El Tiempo*, 1966g, 1966h, 1966l, 1966r).

A month later, on July 12<sup>th</sup>, the settlers celebrated a new assembly announcing a wave of protests. The president of the Settlers Association – Jorge Riofrío Manrique – summed up the situation by saying that everybody was against the settlers, including central government, congressmen, political parties and even the media. Godofredo García Baca denounced strong police surveillance and reprisals against the employees of the San Lorenzo Project who were in

favor of the settlers. At noon on July 15<sup>th</sup>, the settlers took to the town square of Cruceta. After singing the national anthem and cheering Peru, they demanded the repeal of Supreme Decree No. 39 and the expulsion of the director of the San Lorenzo Project. According to the speakers, the settlers had been swindled by the Peruvian state and their decisions were already taken: they would not give up on the water or abandon their lands. On July 19<sup>th</sup>, hundreds of settlers filled the Sullana town square on the shores of the Chira River. The press reported that the provincial mayor of Sullana, the district mayor of Bellavista – and the famous colonist and engineer Godofredo García Baca – would be among the keynote speakers. That day – from the balconies of the municipality – the speakers repealed the laws in favor of the Agricultural League and repudiated the subjection of the Piuran press to the power of large landowners. The next day *El Tiempo* responded by calling them “cowards” for attacking hacienda owners and journalists, shouting out loud from a friendly city like Sullana. *El Tiempo* challenged the settlers to do the same, but in the Piura River Basin (*El Tiempo*, 1966n, 1966q).

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, Fernando Belaúnde attended the luncheon that the Agricultural League organized in his honor. During this visit, President Belaunde refused to hand over the documentation to the new settlers on the grounds that San Lorenzo was “convulsed” (*El Tiempo*, 1966a, 1966b, 1966c, 1966i, 1966p). The Agricultural League had already won the war over water. The San Lorenzo Project ceased to be officially touted as the successful pilot project of a modern, peaceful and democratic agrarian reform. Belaúnde could not even mention San Lorenzo, much less approach himself to that area. On October 24<sup>th</sup>, the Minister of Agriculture, Rafael Cubas Vinatea, arrived in Piura promising that San Lorenzo would not continue to grow. The National Agrarian Council had authorized the sale of 7,000 hectares, but the Minister

stressed that this would be the last sale and that the land limit was already reached. El Tiempo celebrated this decision, recalling that its editorials had asked for the cancellation of the San Lorenzo Project for several years.

#### **NO MORE THAN 25,000 HECTARES**

The new agricultural year came and the drought continued. Relations between the settlers and the colonization director were still suspended. In spite of the opposition of the settlers, the agricultural activities along the Piura River began with the scarce endowments of water that the reservoir released. Along the river the “tapas” – or crossed blocking material as tree trunks – proliferated serving to bring the water towards the mouth of the suction hoses.

In January of 1967, Gerald Alter, representative of the World Bank, visited San Lorenzo to evaluate the status of the project. But this visit no longer had any effect on the future of the settlers. President Fernando Belaúnde had already changed his mind by favoring the demands of the Agricultural League. El Tiempo took advantage of Alter’s visit to publish an editorial blaming San Lorenzo’s failure on the “blind porphyry” of foreigners, the “irresponsible stubbornness” of Peruvian officials, and the “suicidal whim” of the settlers (El Tiempo, 1967a, 1967b).

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Agricultural League won a new legal victory in the war over the reservoir. The central government enacted Law No. 16465 incorporating 7,000 cultivated hectares in the lower part of the Piura River Basin as legitimate users of stored water. Now the Agricultural League had new legal grounds to demand the injection of water into the Piura River. A few days



later, Supreme Decree No. 10-F was promulgated, establishing a new limit on the growth of the valley to 25,000 hectares. This was the end of the colonization process. According to this law San Lorenzo would not grow beyond that extension. In addition, this law established the way in which water from the reservoir would be distributed: Piura River Valley (31,000 hectares), San Lorenzo Valley (25,000 hectares), users of the lower part of the Piura River Basin (7,000 hectares) users of the Chipillico River Basin (2,148 hectares).

In March the engineer Luis Moscoso Franklin was appointed as new director of the San Lorenzo Project. This engineer – known for his commitment to the project – would be the last hindrance to the Agricultural League. Moscoso arrived in San Lorenzo in 1959 to supervise and receive the works executed by Morrison-Knudsen in representation of the Peruvian government and therefore he knew very well the infrastructure, the different kinds of soils in this tough terrain and the availability of water in the rivers (informant # 01). Moscoso continued the construction of drains to reduce saltpeter levels – and continued the internal relocation of settlers who received difficult soils – trying to comply with the latest agreements with the World Bank.

But the claim of the settlers was still ignored. The Agricultural League had the support of a large group of congressmen, the Minister Javier Silva Ruete (who returned to occupy the same position again), and now of President Fernando Belaúnde, whom they visited in May. In June, a group of 800 peasants from the lower part of the basin arrived at the town square of Piura to protest against the chaos reigning along the river. These peasants, accompanied by police broke the “tapas” in the river. These 800 peasants set up a ten days’ picket system along the river from Tambogrande to Sechura, preventing water from being caught along the way.

## **SETTLERS STORM THE RESERVOIR**

This long drought had also affected other Departments in northern Peru such as Tumbes, La Libertad, Lambayeque, Cajamarca, and Ancash. To try to alleviate the situation, the Peruvian government was importing more rice from countries like Russia, China, Brazil, Venezuela and Argentina. The situation was so desperate that masses were celebrated and the Virgin Mary was carried through the streets and avenues begging the Lord for the rain.

On January 19<sup>th</sup>, 1968, Supreme Resolution N° 04-F-DAR was issued establishing a new distribution of water. Only 14 million cubic meters remained – in a reservoir with a capacity to hold 250 million – and the board in charge of the distribution decided that the settlers would no longer receive water because they had already exceeded their quota. On February 20<sup>th</sup>, the settlers stormed the reservoir appropriating a few million cubic meters. Approximately 650 settlers – armed with iron bars, chains, stones and sticks – reduced the policemen who guarded the reservoir. The employees refused to hand over the keys, but the settlers broke the locks that prevented the water from reaching their irrigation canals, and closed the floodgates that fed the Piura River Basin.

The police regained control of the reservoir the next day and the prefect of Piura promised to punish those responsible. The gates releasing water to the Piura River Basin were opened again. With the reservoir under police control, the Agricultural League announced that the settlers would no longer receive additional water. Once again, El Tiempo took advantage of the events to

repeat that the San Lorenzo Project was a gigantic mistake. Only 7 million cubic meters remained in the reservoir and the settlers only received water for domestic use.

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, a delegation of peasants from the lower part of the Piura River basin arrived in Piura to protest against the distribution. This protest was led by eight district mayors, leaders of the Catacaos Indigenous Community, and leaders of the Sechura Indigenous Community. The prolonged drought caused a rupture between the Agricultural League and some of its allies in the lower part of the basin. The water never reached the lower part because it was captured by the suction pumps along the middle of the valley. Tired and betrayed, these mayors confessed before the press to have been instrumented by the hacendados in this war for water. These mayors complained that some landowners had managed to irrigate 100% of their crops – by illicit means – while they had not received a single drop.

On March 8<sup>th</sup>, the minister of development and public works, Pablo Carriquiri, arrived in Piura to hear all the parts. Engineer Luis Moscoso – director of the San Lorenzo Project – was in favor of the settlers and had pointed out a series of irregularities in the water distribution process. In retaliation, members of the Agricultural League prevented Moscoso from attending the meeting with the minister. The press published the photo of this engineer – bewildered and isolated – in the courtyard of the Agricultural League premises surrounded by closed doors (El Tiempo, 1968g, 1968h).

On May 24<sup>th</sup>, farmers from the lower part of the basin arrived again to the town square of Piura to protest against the Agricultural League. The reservoir had only 6 million cubic meters and

chaos was even worse. The entourage of about 500 peasants, headed by five district mayors, shouted in the streets demanding the confiscation of the motor pumps that were sucking the water preventing it from reaching the lower part of the basin. On July 10<sup>th</sup>, the central government issued Supreme Resolution No. 0063-68-FO authorizing the opening of the gates of the reservoir to save cotton crops. At that time the reservoir had only 20 million cubic meters. Just as along the Piura River, San Lorenzo was also in chaos. Seeking to obtain water, many colonists were digging trenches and farming in unauthorized places. Although virtually empty, the reservoir was at the disposal of the Agricultural League. The colonization project came to an end in the midst of a pandemonium and thirst.

#### **THE FAVORITE SON OF CASTILLA**

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, the armed forces commanded by General Juan Velasco Alvarado entered the government palace and expelled President Fernando Belaúnde who was exiled to Argentina. Six days later, the army entered the Talara fields and expropriated the oil complex resolving the long conflict between the Peruvian state and the US based International Petroleum Company. El Tiempo celebrated with “nationalistic emotion” this act of “patriotism” emphasizing that the general Velasco was born in the city of Piura the 16 of June of 1910 in the district of Castilla. El Tiempo considered the Piuranity of General Velasco as an extraordinary opportunity to begin the construction of a new reservoir (El Tiempo, 1968a, 1968c, 1968f, 1968j). The Agricultural League organized a committee of notable Piurans who would travel to Lima to congratulate the new president and request a definitive solution to the problems of the erratic Piura River.

On October 30<sup>th</sup>, General Velasco received the visit of his countrymen in the government palace. According to the chronicle published by El Tiempo, Velasco recalled that he had studied at school – and had even played in the streets – with some of those present. The president of the Agricultural League, Juan Coronado Balmaceda, expressed the greeting and the adherence of the Piurans to the new government, congratulating Velasco for having claimed national sovereignty over the oil fields. The mayor of Castilla – accompanied by her aldermen – awarded a medal to the President Velasco declaring him “Favorite Son of Castilla” (El Tiempo, 1968i). The Agricultural League requested the construction of a new reservoir in the place known as Poechos to divert water from the Chira River into the Piura River.

During the next few weeks the Agricultural League and the military worked closely to start as soon as possible the construction of the new reservoir. The engineer Rómulo Franco – manager of the Agricultural League – made available to the new government all the studies carried out by the previous governments and promised to draft a new law. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, the premier and war minister, General Ernesto Montagne, went to a luncheon organized by the Agricultural League. In this ceremony – which was attended by the most influential personalities of the region – the Agricultural League put into the hands of General Montagne a Decree Law authorizing the financing and execution of the diversion of the water from the Chira River into the Piura River. Engineer Franco gave a speech explaining the details of this project. All this happened just in time because the drought was so severe that even the always plentiful Chira River was almost dry.

## Chapter Four

1968 - 1975

### Redefinition of territory

#### **NEW MODEL**

After expropriating the facilities of the International Petroleum Company (IPC) in Talara, General Juan Velasco Alvarado initiated an aggressive plan to take advantage of the natural resources seeking the industrialization of the country. This new economic direction impacted the district of Tambogrande in two ways. First, Tambogrande was noticed by the military as an attractive source of iron and listed as a place to be studied. Secondly, Tambogrande ended up being – geographically speaking – in the midst of a large extractive-industrial project that would concentrate the resources coming from all northern Peru – including the oil of the Amazon and the minerals of the Andes – in the Sechura desert, specifically in the area known as Bayóvar.

The inclusion of Tambogrande in the list of mining sites that were to be exploited transformed the conflict. The settlers would start confronting the central government's promotion of extractive activities. During the 1960s, the two contending actors – the settlers and the hacienda owners – defended agricultural agendas. From now on, the settlers will endure a conflict over the use of territory between two antagonistic development models. On one side the colonists would defend agriculture. On the other side the state would promote mining.

The military regime implemented numerous reforms. First, the creation of the Ministry of Energy and Mines. Second, the creation of a mining investment fund to promote this activity throughout the national territory. Third, the modification of the system of mining concessions by establishing new deadlines and requirements, pressing those who had not yet started activities. According to government spokesmen, there were approximately 6,000 unexplored or untapped mining concessions. The owners of these concessions had to submit new work plans or the concessions would revert to the state. In this way important ores like Michiquillay in the Department of Cajamarca, Cerro Verde in the department of Arequipa, and Quellaveco in the department of Moquegua reverted to the state. Fourth, the new mining legislation encouraged the direct participation of the state through the new Mining Company of Peru (MINEROPERU) without excluding the creation of mixed companies or the private activity of national and foreign capitals. Thus, the military government set up an entrepreneurial state determined to extract as many minerals as possible (Champion, 2006; Kruijt & Vellinga, 1983).

#### **BAYÓVAR PLAN**

The government of General Velasco chose Bayóvar as the central point of a large extractive-industrial nucleus that would take advantage of the natural riches of the Peruvian north. Bayóvar is the name of a site rich in phosphoric rocks on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, in the Sechura Desert, in close proximity to the mouth of the Piura River. This phosphoric ore was explored during the 1950s and remained nearly untouched since then. In addition to meeting domestic demand, the military planned to make Peru a world fertilizer exporter.

Bayóvar – located in the Bay of Sechura – had an additional advantage. It was the ideal place to build a port because its depth allowed the approach of ships of great draft. All the wealth from the Departments like Piura, Tumbes, Cajamarca, Lambayeque, Amazonas, and Loreto would be brought to this port. A pipeline would be built to bring the oil from the jungle, as well as a refinery, two ports to supply tankers, several petrochemical plants for the manufacture of synthetic fertilizers, a modern refinery to process copper, and a new city – between the Virrilá Estuary and the Yllescas Mountain – to house an approximate population of 150,000.

The water to supply the many factories and the new city would come from the Chira River, specifically from the new reservoir at Poechos. For the military authorities, diverting the water from the generous Chira River to the erratic Piura River would not only serve agricultural purposes, it would also serve the industrialization of the country. Electricity would be brought by high voltage towers from Olmos. The military government also began the execution of the old Olmos Project, which consisted of the derivation of the Huancabamba River – a natural tributary of the Marañón River – to the Olmos River, in the neighboring department of Lambayeque, in order to expand the agricultural frontier. The Olmos Project was basically composed of a trans-Andean tunnel of approximately 20 kilometers in length, a reservoir and a hydroelectric plant.

In addition, a road system was planned to connect the new Bayóvar City with nearby urban centers such as Piura, Sechura and Olmos. According to military announcements, these roads would be extended by the roads of penetration that the previous government had abandoned without concluding. To the north, the new roads would be extended by the ruinous road that connected the City of Piura with the City of Huancabamba and the rugged horseshoe road to the



City of San Ignacio, on the other side of the Andes, in the neighboring Department of Cajamarca. To the south, the roads would extend along the roads that linked Olmos with the City of Chamaya and the City of Jaén, in the Department of Cajamarca, and the city of Bagua in the Department of Amazonas. These roads would connect the industrial facilities of the coast of Piura with the Amazon region, specifically with the navigable zones closer to the Marañón River.

In fact, the military took back old projects (mines, ports, oil wells, irrigation, hydroelectric, roads into the jungle) but they articulated them around a specific nucleus, placing much of the national territory at the service of a single goal: the industrialization of the country. The military referred to this ambitious project as the Bayovar Plan. The military were determined to turn the extraction of minerals and oil into the “backbone of the national economy”. Toward the end of his rule, General Velasco became even more interested in the ambitious extractive-industrial project that would concentrate the wealth of Northern Peru in the Sechura Desert, creating the Executive Committee of the Bayóyar Complex (CECOMBA) in charge of planning and integration of the public companies that would operate in this area.

## **OVERLAP**

The new national model led to the overlapping of two opposing agendas on the same territory. In addition to being trapped in a network of extractive projects known as the Bayóvar Plan, Tambogrande was also in the midst of an exhaustive mining exploration plan. During this period, the military announced the discovery of titanium in Paita, Talara, Pariñas, Colán and Tumbes; iron in Las Lomas; uranium in Bayóvar; and copper in Ayabaca, Suyo, Cañaris, and in the

tributaries of the Marañón River in San Ignacio. The Sechura Desert – and surrounding areas such as Tambogrande – began to be considered as an area rich in minerals that should be put at the service of regional progress.

The overlapping of antagonistic agendas became apparent in the presence of both, the Ministry of Energy and Mines, and the Ministry of Agriculture. From the beginning of his administration, General Jorge Fernández Maldonado – minister of energy and mines – enthusiastically promoted the Tambogrande Mining Project, assuring that – together with other iron deposits along the Peruvian territory – it would serve to meet the demand of countries interested in this mineral such as Japan.

However, two problems remained. First, Tambogrande was still virtually isolated. During Renato Rossi's first term, the staff of the San Lorenzo Project expanded the horseshoe road connecting the town of Tambogrande with the city of Sullana and affirmed the ground allowing the transit of pickups and smaller vehicles (informant # 01). But a road with these characteristics was not sufficient for the requirements of large scale mining operations, much less to transfer the minerals to the port of Paita. Second, Minister Fernandez explained that the characteristics of the deposit were little known. There was no certainty regarding the amount of the mineral or the exact composition of the deposit. Nobody has been able to determine the profitability of the ore yet. Due to these two drawbacks, Tambogrande was not included in the mining development plan for the 1971-1975 period.

Although the minerals would not be extracted in the short term, Minister Fernández continued working to facilitate the future use of Tambograndes' mineral deposit. First, Minister Fernández announced that his office would organize further explorations in this district. Second, Fernández announced that his office was in contact with the corresponding offices for constructing a new highway that would connect Tambogrande with the city of Sullana and the port of Paita. The Minister's efforts to make this mining project more attractive yielded results on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1971, when President Velasco signed Supreme Resolution No. 028-71-EF approving the contracts between the state and the companies in charge of the construction of the road that would connect Tambogrande, Sullana, and Paita. The first section of this road – connecting Tambogrande with Sullana – was completed in 1973.

#### **SAN LORENZO RESUMED ITS GROWING**

The Ministry of Agriculture played the most active role in this overlap of agendas. The reservoir in Poechos would allow use all the water of the San Lorenzo reservoir to continue with the reclamation of desert lands. Morrison-Kanudsen finished a canal system that dominated a total area of 50,000 hectares; however, the government of former president Fernando Belaúnde had ruled that the San Lorenzo Valley would not be permitted to exceed 25,000 hectares. The military decided to make the most out of the existing infrastructure and to continue with the rehabilitation of idle land. However the growth of San Lorenzo did continue under the new cooperative model imposed by the military. From that time forward, the peasants would come to occupy these lands under a collective system of production organized and supervised by the government.

Within the Ministry of Energy and Mines, the military had postponed the exploitation of the minerals in Tambogrande. As a result, the military personnel collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture did not find any obstacle in promoting the enormous agricultural potential of San Lorenzo. The new military administration of the Department of Piura tried to solve one of the chronic problems of the region, the shortage of food in the local markets. For this they fined land owners – including numerous settlers of San Lorenzo – who were not fulfilling the percentage of land dedicated to foodstuffs required by law. As part of this effort the military began a campaign to promote fruit cultivation in the different valleys of the region and – without a doubt – the San Lorenzo Valley was the most promising of all attracting much of the resources allocated for this purpose.

In the early 1970s, the main crops of San Lorenzo were cotton, rice, corn, and mango. And to a lesser extent there were crops like lemon, watermelon, melon, orange, grapefruit, mandarin, banana, yucca, peanuts, wheat, soybeans, sorghum, avocado, fig, and coconut. Cotton, rice, and corn were fast-growing products that were in high demand. The situation of the mango – the most plentiful fruit tree within the colonization at that time – was different. In March of 1971 it was announced that San Lorenzo would soon surpass the 3,000 hectares dedicated to mango cultivation and that contribution would double the national production. The search for new markets and the industrialization of mango were tasks that could not be postponed.

In August of 1973, the settlers met with the Prime Minister and Minister of War, Edgardo Mercado Jarrin, requesting a study to industrialize the products of San Lorenzo. A month later the central government announced that a team of engineers from the Food and Agriculture

Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was designing a mango picking, sorting and packing plant. This would be a pilot project and if there was positive results, it would be commercially replicated to benefit of other fruits. This packing plant was built in Cruceta and work began in December transporting 60,000 kilos of mango to Lima, Argentina and England. The mangoes came out of this plant in carton packs of 4 kilos each.

During the presidency of the general Juan Velasco Alvarado the mining site of Tambogrande was listed as an ore to be excavated in the near future. But at the same time this very same government continued with the territorial expansion of San Lorenzo supporting the first steps toward the industrialization of its products. Simultaneous interest in minerals and mangoes illustrates the overlap of two antagonistic agendas determining the origin of a conflict that would last for more than two decades.

#### **ALGARROBOS & TURMALINA**

During this period, the gestation of the Piuran environmental consciousness continued to leave some traces in the pages of *El Tiempo*. First, editorials continued to appear demanding the defense of *algarrobo* as a symbol of the fragile ecosystem known as the dry forest. Thousands of hectares were disappearing annually to the charcoal and parket makers. Second, journalists began to pay attention to the impacts of the mine known as Turmalina, located in the district of Canchaque, in the province of Huancabamba.

With regard to the need to halt the deforestation process, there were no doubts or controversies. It was a demand shared by all sectors of public opinion and the military in charge of the

Department's agricultural administration made some decisions to alleviate this process. Illegal logging of species such as *sapote* and *guayacán* was interrupted by seizing numerous cargoes and prohibiting the manufacture of parquet in Piura. In addition, some reforestation projects were implemented. Only in San Lorenzo did the authorities reserve 600 hectares for the sole purpose of planting and preserving *algarrobo* trees.

In the case of the Turmalina mine – a mine located in the Canchaque district – there was controversy though. Thanks to the huge governmental impulse for the massive exploration and extraction of minerals, Turmalina was seen as a potential source of economic resources that would contribute to the progress of the region. However, the impacts of this mine were unmanageable. The residents of Canchaque began a series of protests alleging that the tailings of this mine were contaminating the water affecting human health, livestock and crops. Some medical doctors and representatives of the central government assured that the tailings of this mine did not affect the quality of the water denying any type of contamination. Although the news were scarce, these claims constituted the first case of discussion about the pollution generated by mining activity in Piura.

#### **SETTLERS STORM THE RESERVOIR FOR A SECOND TIME**

On February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1969 the representatives of the Agricultural League met again with President Juan Velasco to discuss the final details of the reservoir construction project in Poechos and the derivation of the water from the Chira River to the Piura River. A few days later the president signed Decree Law No. 17463 funding the project. This decree dictated the formation of the “Chira-Piura Project Council” integrated – among other members – by Juan Coronado

Balmaceda, president of the Agricultural League, and by Rómulo Franco Calle, manager of the Agricultural League. The latter was appointed secretary of the council and would act on behalf of the minister of agriculture.

The Settlers Association – along with other agricultural organizations from the provinces of Sullana, Paita and Talara – protested that they had been excluded from the council requesting to increase the number of delegates. In response to these demands *El Tiempo* repeated – once more – that San Lorenzo was a “mistake” resulting from “ignorance” and “improvisation” that had already caused much “damage” to Piura (*El Tiempo*, 1969b, 1969i). Enhancing the role of the Agricultural League, *El Tiempo* covered in detail the many steps taken by the members of the council who were constantly traveling to Lima, monitoring compliance with the established deadlines, and disseminating offers from interested countries to finance the construction of this new reservoir. The Agricultural League was confident that the World Bank would lend the necessary money to build the infrastructure. Members of the Agricultural League traveled to the United States and then received in Piura the experts that the World Bank sent to study the viability of the project.

The agricultural campaign of 1969 began like the previous ones with disagreements over the water management of the San Lorenzo Reservoir. The drought had continued, resulting in the reservoir operating on barely one fifth of its capacity. Because General Velasco had opened the doors to the Piuran delegation asking for a new water diversion, settlers thought that the Agricultural League was backed by the military government. Additionally, members of the Agricultural League were still complaining about the influence of the San Lorenzo Project

Director, Luis Moscoso Franklin, and the former agriculture minister, Enrique Torres Llosa. According to the Agricultural League these two characters – famous in Piura for their tenacious defense of the San Lorenzo Project – were trying to modify the distribution of water in favor of the settlers. At that moment, nobody knew the position of General Juan Velasco regarding the Piuran hacendados.

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, the central government issued Supreme Decree No. 015-69-FO dictating the new distribution of the water stored in the reservoir. The colonists protested this new law announcing that they would send a commission of settlers to Lima to meet with government representatives. A few days later, on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the settlers captured the reservoir by force. The prefect ordered to open the floodgates and a police contingent travelled from Sullana to San Lorenzo to regain control over the reservoir. This was the second time that the settlers took the reservoir by storm. The first time was only a year ago. During the meeting of authorities, San Lorenzo Project director Luis Moscoso Franklin said he did not approve of the settlers' reaction, but pointed out that the settlers were right because the users of the Piura River had taken more water than expected. A few days later, General Velasco's administration corrected the distribution in favor of the settlers. In April a new manager of the water was nominated and in June a new distribution was established.

#### **GENERAL BARANDARIÁN**

During the previous government, former President Fernando Belaunde enacted Law No. 15260 declaring cooperativism as a matter of “national necessity and public utility.” This law defined cooperatives as autonomous, free, private, and non-profit-making organizations that sought



mutual assistance among their members. During President Belaunde's term, the settlers of San Lorenzo founded – voluntarily – eleven cooperatives devoted to the commercialization of rice, corn, fertilizers and pesticides (Robles Rázuri, 1969a, 1969b).

When the military seized power, they intensified the promotion of the cooperative system as the optimal way to achieve maximum utilization of agricultural land as well as the best way to promote positive social values. To this end, General Juan Velasco Alvarado signed Decree Law No. 17532 creating the National Office of Cooperative Development (ONDECOOP). This office would be in charge of promoting cooperativism at the national level by organizing new cooperatives, officially recognizing existing ones, ensuring compliance with the cooperative spirit and providing technical advice. But – unlike what occurred during the previous government – this time the state intervened directly and actively in the organization of society.

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, the Minister of Agriculture, General Jorge Barandarián Pagador, visited San Lorenzo to participate in the settlers' annual fair. The central event was the inauguration of a rice mill built by cooperatives created – freely and voluntarily – by settlers during the previous government. The mill operation demonstrated the prosperity of the settlers but also exhibited the predominance of a crop with high water consumption in the middle of the desert. The cultivation of rice had proliferated even during the years of drought and the colonists already stood out among the most important producers of the Peruvian North.

During this visit, the minister observed social inequalities. While the settlers had prospered, thousands of landless peasants were working in San Lorenzo as laborers. Barandarián said he

would be an ally of San Lorenzo if the settlers backed him in the relocation of the landless peasants in the areas of expansion to be irrigated. Before the crowd and standing next to Luis Moscoso Franklin – ex San Lorenzo Project manager and then advisor of the agrarian reform – Minister Barandarián announced that San Lorenzo will continue to grow. Immediately, the new colonization director, Juan Ibáñez Gandulía, executed the orders given by the minister incorporating the landless peasants under the new cooperative model, continued repairing channels and implementing drainage systems to reduce the levels of saltpeter. San Lorenzo resumed its expansion under military administration.

#### **DAY OF NATIONAL DIGNITY**

President Juan Velasco arrived in the Department of Piura on October 8<sup>th</sup> with the aim of celebrating the first anniversary of the annexation of oil wells in Talara, a date known as the National Dignity Day. The president attended the luncheon organized in his honor by the Agricultural League. As a sign of gratitude for the implementation of the Chira-Piura Project, the president of the Agricultural League, Juan Coronado Balmaceda, handed President Velasco a silver plate measuring 45 centimeters in diameter. In the center of the plate, an etching illustrated a peasant's hand clasping a soldier's hand in friendship. The Piuran peasantry was massively disappointed because General Velasco was expected to proclaim the Department of Piura under agrarian reform (Arce Espinoza, 1983). Instead, the peasants witnessed the president enjoying a glamorous buffet with the members of the Agricultural League and receiving a heavy plate made of pure silver. Nevertheless, the expected news came a few days later. On October 15, General Velasco signed Supreme Decree No. 210-69-AP declaring the Department of Piura as an agrarian reform zone. This severed the last strands of hope among members of the Agricultural

League who reacted to the press stating that they would “collaborate” with the agrarian reform and “understood” the search for “social justice” (El Tiempo, 1969a, 1969c, 1969d, 1969e, 1969f, 1969g, 1969h).

On December 14<sup>th</sup>, Agriculture Minister, General Jorge Barandarián visited San Lorenzo delivering 1,092 contracts among the landless peasants already organized and working in their respective cooperatives. It is important to note that it took nine years – and three different governments – to install 1,300 settlers under a system of independent owners. Only in this ceremony did General Barandarián officialized the arrival of 1,092 peasants organized under the military-imposed cooperative system. San Lorenzo would continue expanding, but under the new military model. The former settlers – who came as free and individual owners – began to be surrounded by thousands of peasants tied to a highly supervised cooperative system.

#### **THE END OF THE AGRICULTURAL LEAGUE**

After the Department of Piura was declared a zone of agrarian reform, the Agricultural League attempted to oppose the changes, but the long war over the reservoir water in San Lorenzo and the search for the derivation of the Chira River into the Piura River had left all the sectors in a situation of mutual animosity. In addition, the prolonged drought, the destructive rains of 1965, and the falling price of cotton had also eroded the power of the hacienda owners (Arce Espinoza, 1983). Within the Agricultural League, the owners of the haciendas were divided. On the one hand was the more conservative sector of the large landowners who opposed any change in the statutes and also opposed the acceptance of the new peasantry sector that would benefit from the reforms. On the other hand was the less conservative sector that was willing to accept the

beneficiaries of the agrarian reform as long as the owners of the great properties maintain the control of the Agricultural League (Arce Espinoza, 1983).

In this context, nobody wanted to be president of the Agricultural League. After several processes frustrated by lack of participation, Francisco Hilbck was appointed as the new president (Arce Espinoza, 1983). As part of the new directive presided by Francisco Hilbck – who led the less conservative sector – were also appointed engineer Jorge Vera Tudela (representing the Chira River Basin), and colonist Antenor León (representing San Lorenzo). Although distant from the large landowners, the settlers had gained considerable prominence within the Agricultural League representing the interests of the medium-sized farmers of the region.

#### **THE REORGANIZING COMMISSION**

Once the military achieved greater homogeneity and loyalty in the administrative staff working in Piura, agrarian reform began to be applied more forcefully during the last months of 1970 (Arce Espinoza, 1983). The haciendas located within the Tambogrande district were divided and distributed cooperatively. Within San Lorenzo, the peasants deployed in the zones of expansion were constantly forced by the government to integrate their respective cooperatives and to participate actively in them under the threat of annulment of contracts. In the old and consolidated part of the valley – occupied by the settlers – the agrarian reform was applied, but in a mild way, only those plots that had been abandoned or were not directly managed by their owners were affected. According to the chronicles published by *El Tiempo* it can be assumed

that approximately 2,000 hectares of the San Lorenzo Valley reverted to the state between 1970 and 1972 (El Tiempo, 1970a, 1970b, 1970c, 1970d, 1971a, 1972, 1973b).

The implementation of the agrarian reform in Piura generated the open confrontation between Agricultural League's president, Francisco Hilbck, and the central government. According to Hilbck, the agrarian reform was also affecting small and medium-sized agricultural property as officials did not distinguish between uncultivated land because of lack of water – or lack of other resources – and truly abandoned land. With gestures like this the Agricultural League tried to get the support of the small and medium size owners of the region but it was too late. Relations between the military government and the Agricultural League had come to an end. In December the military dissolved the Chira-Piura Project Council that used to be controlled by the Agricultural League. The World Bank passed its option to fund the construction of the new reservoir, and it had already decided that the Yugoslav firm Energoprojekt would finance and execute the construction of the reservoir in Poechos and all the agriculture-related infrastructure. The services rendered by the Agricultural League were no longer necessary. The property structure in Piura was about to change forever.

The settlers saw an approaching threat of change, when in January 1971 the government ruled that Agrarian Zone No. 1 would take over the San Lorenzo Project. There would no longer be a special office in charge of the administration, technical advice or land reclamation in San Lorenzo. Now the valley has passed into the hands of the office that was in charge of the implementation of the agrarian reform in Piura. As in other parts of the country, the fear of total collectivization of the land dispersed quickly in San Lorenzo.

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1971, a large group of peasants led by Manuel Sullón Fernández – a representative originally from the Catacaos Indigenous Community – broke into an assembly demanding a total reorganization of the Agricultural League and was named by acclamation as president of the “Reorganizing Commission”. Sullón represented the Piuran peasantry sector that supported the reforms enforced by the military government (Arce Espinoza, 1983). The Reorganizing Commission led by Sullón began to “usurp” functions by registering new associates and convening assemblies according to their own agenda, even going so far as to storm the premises of the Agricultural League to demonstrate their strength. The Reorganizing Commission had the support of the Agricultural Zone No. 1, and the support of the Agricultural League manager, engineer Rómulo Franco. A few days later, Hilbck convened an extraordinary general assembly to shorten the current board term, but there were no candidates.

The expected assembly was held on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, but Francisco Hilbck did not get the support for his proposals and decided to resign so the reins of the Agricultural League were transferred to the most conservative sector of the hacienda owners (Arce Espinoza, 1983). It is important to note that in this moment the settlers of San Lorenzo decided to help their old rivals in this crusade against the collectivization of the land enforced by the military. Carlos Leigh, Rodolfo Bast Schaefer, Rafael Vega Riofrío (all of them hacienda owners), and Jorge Riofrío Manrique (several times president of the Settlers Association) formed a “Provisional Committee”. This committee organized a new electoral process. Days later, Ernesto Arens Schaefer was elected as the new president and settler Jorge Riofrío Manrique was elected as the new secretary of the Agricultural League.

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, with the backing of 400 peasants and the military authorities, the Reorganizing Commission broke the locks and entered the premises of the Agricultural League. Once inside, engineer Rómulo Franco, manager of the Agricultural League, read the statutes elaborated by the reorganizers. Engineer José Brunetti Taggi, director of the Agrarian Zone N° 1, gave a speech claiming the changes as part of the revolutionary process. Manuel Sullón proclaimed that the Agricultural League had been democratized to serve the poorest of the countryside.

Agrarian Zone N° 1 fully supported the group led by Manuel Sullón but not all in the offices of the Ministry of Agriculture located in Lima agreed to this type of maneuver. Making matters worse, the staff in Lima was not homogeneous either. Officials working for the military had diverse political trajectories and as a consequence, some were not convinced of the urgency to neutralize landowners at any cost while others feared the effects of implementing an organization like the Agricultural League into the hands of the peasants. Consequently, Sullón's statutes were never approved (Arce Espinoza, 1983, p. 67). Thus – in the midst of uncertainty – the battle between both groups lasted for several months. President Ernesto Arens Schaefer and Secretary Jorge Riofrío Manrique elaborated another body of statutes. But very few associates attended the assemblies or responded to the calls of the landowner Arens and the settler Riofrío. Meanwhile – in streets and crop fields – supporters of the reorganizers proclaimed that “the last bulwark of the oligarchy” had already fallen and that the land barons of the Agricultural League could no longer continue traveling abroad with the money “sweated” by the peasantry (El Tiempo, 1971b, 1971c, 1971d).

**SINAMOS**

On June of 1971, the military government created the National System to Support Social Mobilization (SINAMOS, an acronym which means “without masters”). This office was a supra-ministerial agency with a dual purpose, stimulation of material improvement of the population and mobilization of the poor seeking support for the military regime (Lloyd, 1978; Sulmont, 1978). The creation of this office was the solution found by the military to channel the popular mobilization to coincide with the principles of the revolution, to block political parties opposing the regime, and to raise awareness among the citizens (Lowenthal, 1980; Seligson & Booth, 1976; Stephens, 1983). For the implementation of SINAMOS, the military incorporated intellectuals of all kinds – Christian Democrats, Marxists, former APRA militants tired of the incoherences and betrayals of the founder Haya de la Torre, and even former guerrilla leaders – who held high positions within this organization offering their best contributions, but also imprinting their own biases (Gorman, 1980; Jaquette, 1972; Knight, 1975; Lowenthal, 1974, 1975; Malloy, 1974; McClintock, 1989).

SINAMOS faced a great opposition from the very beginning. Due to the vertical leadership style of the military government, the population was not clear on if this office would serve to connect the central government with the base level or would serve as a channel to give orders among the civilians. SINAMOS was perceived as an attempt to control popular organizations – at worst its representatives were considered infiltrators or members of the intelligence service – constituting an easy target for all the attacks made by APRA militants and by certain leftist groups – especially the Trotskyist sector – who sought the control of social mobilization (Angell, 1984; Campbell, 1973; Gilbert, 1979; Graham, 1991; Lewald, 1975; Philip, 1976).



## SETTLERS AGAINST SINAMOS

In April, SINAMOS absorbed the National Office of Cooperative Development (ONDECOOP) assuming the task of promoting cooperativism throughout the country and starting its activities in San Lorenzo. One month later the government restructured the country's agrarian organization by dissolving all types of pre-existing guilds, unions or leagues at the local and national levels. Thus – by decree – the military dissolved the National Agrarian Society and its regional allies as the Agricultural League. Shortly after, the office of SINAMOS in Piura received the goods of the Agricultural League. In the middle of this uncertainty, the settlers filled the vacuum left by the dissolution of the Agricultural League assuming the representation of the medium and small owners defending their properties against the agrarian reform. The first element of conflict between the settlers of San Lorenzo and the military was the constant threat of land invaders. The second element of conflict was the revision of the contracts of the settlers by the agrarian reform officials.

On the evening of Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1973, the colonists reduced and captured by force a group of invaders who entered the area known as Tejedores. SINAMOS was trying to lead and organize the land distribution process, but many sectors of the peasantry – some of them led by militants of political parties opposing the military government – were carrying out unauthorized land seizures. Settlers were not taken off guard because they were already guarding strategic places of the valley under a scheme of self-defense. The settlers blamed the SINAMOS for orchestrating this attack on San Lorenzo threatening to react with more violence if another invasion was repeated.

A few days later, Zona Agraria N° 1 began the process to hand out the final purchase and sale contracts to the settlers. But for this purpose all settlers would have to be evaluated according to the principles of agrarian reform. Lands that were not being worked directly by their owners would revert to the state. The settlers considered this as an attempt of massive expropriation. On May 29<sup>th</sup> more than a thousand settlers occupied the town square of Cruceta to protest in front of the office of the Ministry of Agriculture shouting that it was the last time they arrived peacefully and that next time they would burn down everything. The settlers demanded an automatic process of final adjudication – in a single ceremony for all – and requested to be present during documents' evaluation. The settlers rejected an individual assessment on a case-by-case basis. The director of the Agrarian Zone N° 1 assured that these measures were not part of a plan to collectivize the San Lorenzo Valley, announcing that his office was ready to issue 300 titles of property. But the settlers rejected the offer demanding a single delivery for all, not by groups. This official later announced that documents for an additional group of 400 settlers were also ready, but settlers continued to demand a single delivery for all.

The settlers of San Lorenzo were not the only ones who distrusted representatives of the central government. Several valleys formed a single block under the leadership of the president of the Settlers Association – and former Secretary of the Agricultural League – Jorge Riofrío Manrique. The colonists along with peasants from neighboring departments like Tumbes, La Libertad, Cajamarca, and Lambayeque, marched in the streets of the city of Piura on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1973. A sign that read “San Lorenzo Will Never Be A Slave To Agrarian Reform” was one of the most notorious among the crowd (El Tiempo, 1973a, 1973c, 1973d).

The conflict between the settlers and the officials in charge of the implementation of the agrarian reform prolonged for several months. But in the end, the military government agreed to the settlers' demands. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1975, more than 1,200 settlers received their contracts (only documents of 100 settlers were temporarily suspended for late payment). The ceremony was held in Cruceta, in the rice mill, the most visible symbol of the colonists prosperity. In all their speeches, colonists stated that they would defend their lands, even with their own lives (El Tiempo, 1975a). Due to the long conflict against the central government, neither ministers nor generals attended the ceremony. The settlers managed successfully to discourage the application of the agrarian reform into their lands and became individual proprietors totally independent of the central government.

## Chapter Five

1975 - 1980

### Agriculture vs Mining

#### **FRAGMENTATION**

From the border with Chile, General Francisco Morales Bermudez Cerruti overthrew General Juan Velasco Alvarado on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1975. General Velasco – sick, legless and on a wheelchair – accepted the denouement and withdrew from the government without offering resistance dying sixteen months later. General Morales Bermudez became a transitional president disabling the main policies implemented by his predecessor. Morales Bermudez brought Peru closer to the United States of America, softened government's rhetoric abandoning Marxist overtones, called for a legislative assembly to allow the civilians to elaborate their own constitution, summoned general elections to elect the new president through democracy, and gradually abandoned ambitious national projects like the Bayóvar Plan. During the first days of 1976 it was announced that the previous national plan – issued by the General Juan Velasco, the Inca Plan – would be forsake. On October of 1977, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez presented the new national plan – the Túpac Amaru Plan – and in February of 1978 it was decreed the deactivation of SINAMOS.

Before the end of General Juan Velasco's government, some components of the network of projects known as the Bayóvar Plan were inaugurated, such as the fishing port in Parachique and

the petrochemical plant in Punta Malacas. Also during General Velasco's presidency, the construction of the Nor-Peruvian Oil Pipeline – which would take oil from the jungle to Bayóvar – and the new reservoir in Poechos – to derive the water from the Chira River in the Piura River – had begun, but these two monumental engineering accomplishments were later inaugurated by General Velasco's predecessor, General Morales Bermúdez. However, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez did not attribute the same importance to large extractive projects and did not share the vision of integrating considerable portions of the national territory around industrial clusters.

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1976, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez inaugurated the Poechos dam, which is the main component of the Chira-Piura Project. The Poechos reservoir – capable of accumulating 1,000 million cubic meters of water, four times the capacity of the reservoir in San Lorenzo – would feed its own canal system covering an area of approximately 150,000 hectares and would definitely resolve the water scarcity in the middle and lower parts of the Piura River Basin. From now on, San Lorenzo's reservoir water has the sole purpose of meeting the needs of the valley which the military continued to expand based on the cooperative system.

On May of 1977, the oil from the jungle arrived for the first time at the boarding pier in Bayóvar. The Nor-Peruvian Pipeline was already in operation and the oil had reached the center of the future industrial cluster known as the Bayóvar Plan. On the night of June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1977, the first tanker began receiving oil. The military working in this part of the country continued to announce the future construction of an oil refinery, a metal refinery, more petrochemical plants and, of course, the extraction of phosphoric rocks from the Sechura desert.

But the dream of building a large industrial complex in Bayóvar would be diluted very quickly. General Morales Bermúdez transformed the Executive Committee of the Bayóvar Complex (CECOMBA) into a new office called the Development Agency of the Bayóvar Complex (ODECOB). The new office maintained the same objectives as the previous one but was doomed to be quickly deactivated. The new military in power abandoned the idea of building the industrial complex and concentrated solely on finding private investors to extract the phosphoric rocks of the desert. At that time, a Spanish company and a Mexican company were interested in this deposit.

In order to make this ore more attractive to investors, the government built a pilot plant to process phosphoric rocks. This small plant – capable of processing 20,000 tons of rock per year – was inaugurated on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1979. This plant was built and managed by the state-owned company MINEROPERU, and its main objective was to supply the national market. The future expansion of this plant was planned to penetrate the market of countries like Brazil, Mexico, and Cuba. During the inauguration speech, Minister of Energy and Mines, General Juan Sánchez González, stated that Tambogrande's mineral wealth would soon be used to set up another “development pole” (El Tiempo, 1979).

Finally, during the first months of 1980, the government of General Francisco Morales Bermúdez created a new state-run consortium called Bayóvar Promotion Company (PROBAYÓVAR) to deal with the administration of the ore in Bayóvar. The ambitious Bayóvar Plan disappeared and this part of the national territory was divided into disjointed projects that

would preferably be in the hands of private capital. From this moment on, the central government began to promote the Bayóvar phosphorous rock deposit and the Tambogrande iron deposit as two separate projects between different foreign investors. However – due to geographical proximity – it was usual for ministers to mention both projects as if there was some kind of synergy between them. At this point, government industrialization was no longer the main goal. From now on the central government would be simply interested in the attraction of foreign capital offering unconnected extractive projects.

#### **CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY**

Former President Fernando Belaúnde returned from exile in May of 1976, criticizing General Juan Velasco's administration for having indebted the country to international banking and for creating a major economic crisis. Belaúnde promised to rescue the country from bankruptcy, to eliminate corruption and to restore democracy. Fernando Belaúnde rejected the idea of convening a Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution. According to Belaúnde, it was not necessary to change the constitution either to maintain some reforms made by the military or to implement new reforms demanding a new electoral process to elect the new president as soon as possible. But the decision of the military was already taken. In 1977, General Francisco Morales Bermudez confirmed that a Constituent Assembly would draft a new political constitution.

In this political campaign, Acción Popular candidates attacked the large extractive projects, industrial projects and the agrarian reform, pointing out that these were useless and failed measures that had only generated higher fiscal expenditure. A few months before the electoral process, former president Fernando Belaúnde confirmed that Acción Popular would not

participate in the Constituent Assembly arguing that there were no guarantees for this assembly to work independently. Candidate Belaúnde concentrated all his efforts on his campaign to become president again. Belaúnde arrived in Piura on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 1978, and when he got off the plane he promised to solve the problems of the country taking into account the “local voices”. During his speech next to the cathedral, he attacked the Constituent Assembly as “pro-imperialist” and “fratricide”, offering his own version of the conflict with the International Petroleum Company that generated his exile in Argentina, and questioned the honesty of the military whom he criticized for having indebted the country with burdensome international loans. Days later *El Tiempo* published an exclusive interview in which Belaúnde repeated that the best way to take advantage of the natural resources of Piura – as for example the phosphorous rocks of Bayóvar – would be by placing these resources under the administration of private companies to avoid more useless fiscal expenditures (*El Tiempo*, 1978a, 1978b, 1978c, 1978d, 1978e). Like the rest of the candidates, Belaúnde was opposed to the state executing new extractive projects directly.

Luis Bedoya Reyes – founding leader of the Popular Christian Party (PPC) and candidate for the Constituent Assembly – arrived in Piura on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1978, holding a rally alongside the cathedral. Like candidate Belaúnde, the candidate Bedoya harshly criticized the military for the supposed failure of the agrarian reform, for having indebted the country asking for international loans without being accountable to the citizens, and for not using the cotton, rice, and oil to benefit the Piurans. This candidate emphasized the unfinished Plan Bayóvar as another proof that confirmed the failure of the military government.



The Peruvians elected 100 members to the Constituent Assembly on Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1978. After twelve months of discussing the incorporation of important issues such as decentralization and the defense of human rights, the new constitution was completed. On July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1979, the old and ill founding leader of the APRA, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, signed the new constitution at his home. Left-wing constituents – who were already protesting the control exercised by the APRA-PPC alliance in the drafting of the new constitution – refused to sign on the grounds that it was a document drafted by the right in favor of the big capital. After this event, the military decreed that the new presidential electoral process would take place in May of 1980.

#### **FRENCHS IN TAMBOGRANDE**

The mineral deposit of Tambogrande was not forgotten. It was on a waiting list. During this government, the Ministry of Energy and Mines continued to explore the riches of northern Peru, communicating the discovery of bentonite and barite along the coast; copper and silver in the district of Suyo; iron, silica, manganese, silver, lead and coal in Chalaco; iron and titanium in Zorritos; copper in Sallique; and copper in Cañaris. Along with all these announcements, the need to dig the ore in Tambogrande was always mentioned. But the mining potential of Tambogrande was estimated more by speculation than by specific data. In order to solve this problem, MINEROPERU signed an agreement with the French government to study the subsoil of Tambogrande district. According to statements given by Yves Perrín – chairman of the Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières (BRGM) – these studies would determine the exact composition of the minerals that were underneath the layer of sulfides. The French team began its explorations in April of 1977.

The presence of the French expedition in Tambogrande generated a state of alert among those who believed that agriculture was a path to development. A few days after the arrival of the French engineers, a delegation from PNUD and FAO visited the property of the colonist Godofredo García Baca, who at that time was the best known and most successful lemon producer in northern Peru. There – in the middle of the most visited plot in the San Lorenzo Valley – the Minister of Agriculture of Niue Island explained how and why his small country had decided to leave the uranium under ground prioritizing food production.

In June of 1979, the General René Balarezo Vallebuona was appointed as the new minister of energy and mines. From the beginning of his term – this general born in Piura, and artillery specialist – would devote himself to promote the exploitation of the mineral deposit in Tambogrande. On September of 1979, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez signed Decree Law No. 22672 declaring the exploration and exploitation of minerals in the district of Tambogrande a national necessity. This government removed the Tambogrande deposit from the waiting list and encouraged its exploration, hoping that the French decided to invest in its final exploitation. Thus, a new stage began in the long conflict between the settlers of San Lorenzo and the Peruvian state. This time, the conflict would be for the use of the territory between two different agendas: on one side the agricultural model and on the other the extractive model.

#### **1980 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN**

Some leaders who later would lead the resistance against the mining activities in Tambogrande participated in this election campaign. The colonist and engineer Godofredo García Baca participated in APRA's internal process seeking to become a candidate for the congress of the

republic. The colonist and engineer Jorge Riofrío Manrique – several times president of the Settlers Association and ex-secretary of the Agricultural League – ran as a candidate to the congress representing PPC. The former mayor of Tambogrande, landowner, and esteemed cultural patron, Carlos Schaefer Seminario, ran as a candidate for congress representing Acción Popular. In the ranks of the left, the young professor and future mayor of Tambogrande, César Crisanto Palacios, also ran for the congress representing the National Union of the Revolutionary Left (UNIR). Although none of the four mentioned managed to be elected, their electoral participation evidences that the resistance against the mining was constructed on the basis of previous political experiences and was led by characters enjoying wide local recognition.

To elect the congressional candidates, APRA held internal elections in all its bases all over the country. Between 1978 and 1979 the colonist García Baca was president of the Water Users Board of San Lorenzo and at the time of his nomination he was the president of the Settlers Association. From those two positions García Baca fought a battle for the rational use of the reservoir. García Baca was relentless with the offenders, punishing both settlers and strangers who illegally used the water. He imposed rigorous irrigation shifts, seized hoses, rebuilt broken floodgates, and even eliminated with fire and herbicides the crops installed in unauthorized places. García Baca explained to the APRA militants that various problems in the country would be solved if agricultural problems were solved first.

But the final decisions were made in Lima, not in Piura. The “quantitative” results of each province were “qualitatively” analyzed by an electoral committee installed in Lima. Presidential candidate Armando Villanueva del Campo explained that the final decisions would be made

based on “political transcendence and the services provided by the candidate in favor of his party,” a system he referred to as “functional democracy” (El Tiempo, 1980c, 1980e, 1980f). That way Lima favored the candidate César Trelles Lara, who successfully managed to reach the congress and later became regional president. APRA militants denied to Godofredo Garcia Baca the possibility to run for congress. During his rallies in different parts of the Department of Piura and the Department of Tumbes, presidential candidate Armando Villanueva del Campo, promised that APRA would work in favor of agriculture and in favor of oil field workers, would build new reservoirs, would set up new irrigation projects, would decentralize the country and above all would govern with great honesty. These promises were hard to believe when APRA had ruled out the most famous and influential settler of all – and the most successful lemon producer in Northern Peru – as a congressional candidate.

Among the PPC’s candidates for the congress was the several times president of the Settlers Association and former secretary of the Agricultural League, Jorge Riofrío Manrique, who ran an intense campaign and guaranteed that the PPC would work in favor of agriculture. PPC’s presidential candidate Luis Bedoya Reyes visited Piura to criticize the great extractive and industrial projects designed by the military government, including the mismanagement of oil richness and the imposition of the cooperative system in agriculture. Bedoya promised to abandon the military “Pharaonic” dreams in order to attend to the problems of the “poor” (El Tiempo, 1980a, 1980b, 1980d, 1980g). Like the rest of the candidates Bedoya promised to prioritize agriculture while flying over rivers, valleys, and dams. In order to reaffirm their pledges, the PPC candidates held a rally in Tambogrande – whose inhabitants felt threatened by the announced future mining activities – offering to defend agriculture.

Carlos Schaefer Seminario – former landowner, former mayor of Tambogrande, cultural patron and tireless promoter of education – was the first congress candidate to be proclaimed by the militants of Acción Popular in Piura. Presidential candidate Fernando Belaúnde held two additional rallies in this region, denying receiving money from the International Petroleum Company and promising to work for agriculture as well. In order to reaffirm this commitment – the candidate for Senate and former member of the Agricultural League – Orlando Balarezo Calle, held a rally in Tambogrande assuring that if Acción Popular came to power, agriculture would be prioritized over mining.

The young professor César Crisanto Palacios – future mayor of Tambogrande and future leader of the resistance against mining – ran as a candidate in the ranks of the National Union of the Revolutionary Left (UNIR), a coalition of groups of Maoist orientation coalesced with the objective to participate in this electoral process. In the middle of this election campaign, the national leaders of the UNIR visited Tambogrande to hold a rally and to discuss the party's position against the already announced mining exploitation. While national leaders believed that the arrival of hundreds of mining workers could benefit party ends by increasing the number of militants, local leaders like César Crisanto expressed their opposition by making it clear that they would support the interests of the peasantry (informants # 03 & 04). In the near future – after the electoral campaign – the young left-wing militants of Tambogrande would establish alliances with leaders of other parties to confront the central government in defense of agriculture.

#### **GENERAL BALAREZO IN TAMBOGRANDE**

On March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1980 – at the peak of the electoral campaign, with only two months remaining for the election day – the Minister of Energy and Mines, the Piuran General René Balarezo Vallebuona, arrived in Bayóvar to inspect the extraction of phosphates along with a group of Spanish investors. The small but efficient operating factory was already supplying the domestic market and had attracted interest in countries such as New Zealand that were in need of this type of fertilizer.

The following day, General Balarezo visited Tambogrande to inform that the mining project would be executed anyway. The minister explained the progress made by the group of French explorers and announced that a part of the city would have to be relocated. In his eagerness to calm and convince the inhabitants of Tambogrande, General Balarezo emphasized that the decisions would be taken solely on technical grounds and that the exploitation would not begin immediately.

On July 19<sup>th</sup> – with only nine days remaining for the end of General Francisco Morales Bermúdez's term and the inauguration of the new president – General Balarezo returned to Piura to receive the tribute in his honor organized by the provincial mayor. After inaugurating electrical equipment in the city of Sechura and in the city of Piura, the Minister reiterated that the mineral ore in Tambogrande would remain a priority for the central government and reported that, according to the French engineers, the subsoil of Tambogrande was rich in copper, silver, lead and zinc.

These visits and announcements made by the Piuran General Balarezo only made things worse. No one liked the idea of relocating the city. The idea of extracting minerals amid such a successful agricultural valley and the plan of drilling through a layer of sulfides amid the global epicenter of the El Niño phenomenon were also rejected. At the end of the political campaign, the leaders of Tambogrande would establish an alliance in order to confront the mining project. The visit of Minister Balarezo only served to alert the inhabitants of Tambogrande about the urgency of organizing a resistance movement.

On July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1980, Fernando Belaunde swore as the new president of Peru, promising to defend human rights, to promote freedom of expression, and to take advantage of natural resources in a rational manner without wasting fiscal money. Among the Piurans who came to the congress were the former provincial mayor of Piura – and ex member of the Agricultural League – Orlando Balarezo Calle, militant of Acción Popular; and APRA militants like Cesar Trelles Lara – who was selected instead of Godofredo García Baca – and José Carlos Carrasco Távora – who later became minister of energy and mines and a tenacious promoter of the Tambogrande Mining Project.

## Chapter Six

1981 - 1982

### Foundation of the Defense Front

#### CONFLUENCE

The Defense Front was founded in 1981 as a result of a confluence of leaders from rural and urban organizations who decided to confront the mining project promoted by the central government and by the French mining company Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières (BRGM). This confluence was, at the same time, an inter-partisan alliance as the most influential leaders involved were militants of rival political parties. Some of them tried to reach the congress in the previous election process of 1980. A fundamental aspect in this nascent coalition was the support offered by the District Municipality of Tambogrande. The mayor, Emilio Palacios Rosas, put his office in the service of the mobilization.

Among the most influential leaders who founded the Defense Front, the following stood out. First, the engineer Godofredo García Baca – president of the Settlers Association – represented two decades of accumulated experience. During the 1960s settlers confronted the cotton exporters and during the 1970s opposed to the agrarian reform promoted by the military, preventing the affectation of the valley of San Lorenzo. Now thousands of settlers lined up against the extraction of the minerals lying in the subsoil of the district. In addition, Godofredo



García Baca was one of the most active militants of the APRA in Piura and occupied managerial positions at a Departmental level.

Second, Francisco Celi Burneo, several times mayor and main leader of APRA within the district of Tambogrande. Third, Carlos Schaefer, appreciated cultural patron and also a former district mayor. It is necessary to clarify that Carlos Schaefer did not occupy a position within the Front of Defense and that he never was pronounced against mining. However, former mayor Schaefer was the most representative leader of Acción Popular in Tambogrande, and supported the administration of the acting mayor – Emilio Palacios Rosas – who was part of the Defense Front and who made the municipality available to protest.

Both Francisco Celi Burneo and Carlos Schaefer owned haciendas and both had gained unprecedented political legitimacy thanks to their promotion of educational and cultural initiatives. Celi created the first two high schools in the district during the 1960s. Before the creation of these two high schools, children could only study for free up to the primary level and very few children could be transferred to another city to start or finish their secondary studies (informants # 03, 06 & 08). These high schools created by mayor Celi transformed forever the district's political dynamics and the subsequent evolution of social mobilization against mining activities.

Many of the graduates of the schools founded by Celi traveled to the great cities of the coast to receive university instruction came into contact with new political perspectives which initiated their militancy to the left. Upon completion of their university studies, these young people

returned to Tambogrande to promote left-wing agendas in the district and to lead the popular demands against the central government (informants # 03, 04, 05 & 06). The concern of the leader of the APRA, Francisco Celi, to raise the educational level of the local youth had – as an unexpected result – the appearance of the left as a new district political force.

Carlos Schaefer, famous for his eagerness to preserve the district's cultural heritage through the care of schools, parishes and archaeological remains, built and equipped the municipal library using personal resources in the mid 1960s. Schaefer was responsible for acquiring the best books he could find and for hiring specialists in library science to train municipal staff (informant # 02). Schaefer, the main representative of Acción Popular in Tambogrande, contributed indirectly to the Defense Front because he promoted the successful candidacy of the mayor Emilio Palacios Rosas and then contacted him with the leaders of Acción Popular in Lima, thus facilitating the dialogue between the Defense Front and the central government (informant # 07). The presence of former mayor Celi and former mayor Schaefer at the time of the gestation of the Defense Front reaffirmed the importance of the municipality as an instance to solve the problems of the local population.

Fourth, César Crisanto Palacios, and Miguel Ortiz Ato, young university students who brought the left in Tambogrande. After joining the Defense Front, Cesar Crisanto would be elected three times as district mayor and Miguel Ortiz would be elected alderman several times consecutively during the 1980s and 1990s. With those electoral victories the young leftists of Tambogrande would maintain the municipality as an office in the service of social mobilization. After the

failure of the major center-right parties, such as the APRA and Acción Popular, the left became the dominant force of the district under the leadership of the university students.

In addition to keeping the municipality at the service of the mobilization, the young leftists kept alive an old mechanism of citizen participation – with colonial origins – the “cabildos abiertos” or “open assemblies”. Since the arrival of the Spaniard conquerors and during the republican era, the *cabildos abiertos* consisted on assemblies – usually held in the town square or in the main city plaza – where the neighbors opined about the municipal decisions or confronted the authorities on duty (Flusche, 1972; Pierson, 1922; Tapia, 1969; Weckmann, 1951). The young leftists consolidated this old practice as a mechanism to legitimize the decisions of the Defense Front.

In short, the Defense Front founded in 1981 was the result of the confluence of renowned local leaders who represented the experience accumulated by pre-existing grassroots organizations as the Settlers Association and under the auspices of a state office such as the district municipality. Former mayor Francisco Celi and former mayor Carlos Schaefer transferred all the municipal prestige gained during the 1960s and 1970s to the new Defense Front founded in 1981. Subsequently, young leftists, such as teachers Cesar Crisanto, and Miguel Ortiz, maintained the municipality as an office in the service of social mobilization until the early 2000s.

The engineer Godofredo García Baca was the main element of continuity in the history of the Defense Front, since he personally led all stages of the mobilization of the settlers of San Lorenzo. Colonist Godofredo García Baca led the protests against the cotton exporters over the

water of the reservoir during the 1960s, against the agrarian reform imposed by the military government during the 1970s, against the French mining company BRGM during the 1980s, and finally against the Canadian mining company Manhattan during the 1990s.

#### **NOTABLES AND CABILDOS ABIERTOS**

Except for very brief interruptions, during most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the district and provincial mayors were directly appointed by the central government. This interference in the administration of neighborhood affairs ended only in 1980 when the government of President Fernando Belaúnde began a cycle of municipal elections that has not been interrupted to this day. The old municipal model was known as the government of the “notables” because the central government designated the mayors after considering a list of influential, powerful or famous people. The system of notables was regarded as an imposition – executed from Lima – and people demanded the right to freely elect mayors through suffrage events. As part of this claim, it was argued that municipalities had the potential to constitute the pillars of a national process of decentralization and democratic strengthening. The political parties of the time were constantly promising to modernize the municipal system and to allocate adequate budgets to make these offices work for the benefit of the community.

Prefects were in charge of sending the “ternas” or “lists” with the names of the potential mayors to Lima. Prefects prospected for potential mayors in consultation with a wide variety of local intermediaries like landowners, religious authorities, traders, exporters, or union leaders. Ideally, mayors and their aldermen would have to represent the “fuerzas vivas” or the “living forces” –

term of the time to refer to “civil society” – because it was risky to have a mayor totally alienated from the population.

The government of notables was highly unstable. First, in the absence of economic remuneration, mayors and aldermen were not fully engaged in their municipal functions and very easily resigned from office without providing explanations. Second, the budget of the district municipalities depended on the provincial municipalities and rarely the distribution was considered equitable generating disputes between these two levels. Third, the legitimacy of mayors was always in question. Many mayors were accused of committing all kinds of irregularities, land traffic, fictitious property sales, falsification of documents and embezzlement, under the protection of politicians in Lima. The sum of these elements triggered clashes between militants of rival political parties involving assaults, storms and captures of municipal premises and threats of death.

The *cabildos abiertos* or popular assemblies were the most efficient mechanisms of citizen participation in those times of instability. Because the legitimacy of their decisions was always under suspicion, mayors usually held open assemblies to disseminate administrative information, to provide economic reports, or to listen to the opinion of villagers on crucial matters. In this way the municipal authorities obtained a certain democratic veneer. But at the same time the popular assembly was the most important tool that the civil society had to confront the mayors and aldermen. The affected sectors could also summon the population to stop the unpopular measures taken inside municipal halls, to reject the presence of authorities appointed by the prefect, and to demand the appointment of those who did have the support of the population.

In the context of a scarcely present central government, these open assemblies served several citizen initiatives like to demand administrative transparency or to resolve public affairs through collective decisions. In 1980 President Fernando Belaúnde began an era of municipal elections, but the open assemblies would continue to be useful to confront the impositions of the central government. Starting in 1981 the Defense Front would use the *cabildos abiertos* to legitimize their decisions in defense of agriculture and against mining.

#### **EXPULSION OF MAYOR MADRID**

For much of the twentieth century the responsibility for creating new schools fell on the shoulders of the mayors. In the absence of the central government and accelerated population growth, mayors created new schools and then sought the intervention of political allies in Lima to obtain legal recognition of the new school. If all these efforts were successful, the result was a school that only existed on paper because the budget for the new school was very poor, always arrived late, and in the worst case it never came. Therefore the construction of the premises and the implementation of these schools depended on the mayor and his ability to ask for donations. Usually these schools began to work in rented spaces or in municipal offices, then they received some land in donation and the parents realized annual collections to construct additional classrooms. Under these conditions Francisco Celi created two secondary schools: the Instituto Nacional Agropecuario N° 54 in 1961, and the Colegio Nacional Mixto Jorge Chávez in 1964 (informant # 08).

While the military government imposed mayors from Lima, the population did not passively accept these orders. The *cabildos abiertos* were used to confront the less appreciated notables. Popular assemblies as acts of rebellion coincided perfectly with the interests of political parties suppressed by the military government of the 1970s in order to show that the new regime was a dictatorship without popular support.

In February of 1975 the military government ratified Fernando Madrid as mayor of Tambogrande. This news was not well received by the population. Madrid was considered a hermetic mayor, little committed to the municipal tasks and only interested in his private activity as a medical doctor (informants # 03, 04, 05 & 06). The university students of Tambogrande, graduates of the two high schools created by Francisco Celi, were the most active organizing protests against the unpopular Mayor Madrid. A month after Madrid's ratification, *El Tiempo* documented the discomfort of the military authorities who referred to the university students as "rebels" and as "counterrevolutionaries unable to provide for the needs of their people" (*El Tiempo*, 1975b). The young lefties were still studying at universities in neighboring cities such as Piura and Trujillo, but on holidays they returned to Tambogrande to participate in popular demands with the aim of becoming the new district's political force.

On Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1976, the inhabitants of Tambogrande celebrated a *cabildo abierto* in which they decided to expel Mayor Fernando Madrid and made a list with three names of potential new mayors that was submitted to the military authorities. Unfortunately, the list and the claims were ignored. However, on Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, shortly before noon, the population gathered again in the town square in order to demand the resignation of the mayor. Arguing the

lack of the corresponding permit, the police repressed the demonstrators by capturing two university students. Thousands of neighbors attacked the police station demanding the release of the detainees. The police tried to repel the attack with the firing of pellets and occasional submachine guns, but at the end of the battle the police post was destroyed. As part of the protests the crowd stoned the court of peace, the parish house, and the mayor's private practice. A few days later the prefect formalized the resignation of medical doctor Fernando Madrid.

The group of young people who tried to install the left in Tambogrande led the protests against the unpopular Mayor Madrid under the generic label of "student association" (informant # 03). It was a popular revolt so it was not convenient to act under partisan labels. But the military knew about the activities of the leftist youth of Tambogrande. In revenge, central government authorities launched a persecution and the university students reacted entering deep into the crop fields or by escaping towards the big cities of the coast (informant # 04).

#### **MAYOR EMILIO PALACIOS**

Before giving power to civilians, the military government decreed a process to elect new municipal authorities. This new electoral process revived two old expectations. First, it was assumed that municipalities could function as offices truly representative of the popular will, providing the basis for a democracy that would be built from the bottom up. Second, it was assumed that municipalities would also be the basis of the country's decentralization process. These two expectations were crucial after eleven years of military rule and were widely exploited by political parties seeking to return to power.



The municipal campaign of 1980 had a special flavor in Tambogrande because the announced exploitation of the minerals occupied the center of the debate. Emilio Palacios Rosas, Acción Popular candidate promoted by Carlos Schaefer, promised that if people voted for him, he would do everything possible to clarify the future of the city as the military had already announced the relocation (informant # 07). Representing the leftist youth, César Crisanto Palacios, one of the leaders of the protests against Mayor Madrid in 1976 and a candidate for the Congress in 1980, also ran for mayor in the ranks of the UNIR. On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1980, the Peruvians elected their mayors. Francisco Hilbeck, former president of the Agricultural League and prominent militant of Acción Popular, became the new mayor of the Province of Piura, and Emilio Palacios, also from Acción Popular, became the new mayor of the District of Tambogrande.

#### **GUIDED VISIT TO CERRO VERDE**

In January of 1981, the Mining and Metallurgical Geological Institute (INGEMET) published some details of the negotiations between the Peruvian government and the Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières (BRGM) over the creation of a new company for the extraction of minerals in the District of Tambogrande. Facing the imminent beginning of the extractive activities, the new mayor of Tambogrande, Emilio Palacios Rosas, decided to intervene in representation of the population. As part of his electoral campaign Palacios had promised to “define” the future of the city. Due to the uncertainty many inhabitants had already stopped investing in their houses, commercial activities were virtually paralyzed, and very few farmers expanded the cultivated area within their agricultural properties. Mayor Palacios knew this problem because he had been dedicated to the trade of agricultural inputs (informant # 07). Now

on the municipal seat he had to plan the growth of the city but the future of the city was totally uncertain.

Former Mayor Carlos Schaefer facilitated a meeting between the acting mayor, Emilio Palacios, and his personal friend, Minister of Mining and Energy, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (informant # 07). The meeting was held in Lima on March 24<sup>th</sup>. Palacios and Kuczynski agreed that it would be best to set out the details of the mining project in the town square in front of the entire population. To this end, Minister Kuczynski made a commitment to visit the district. In addition, the minister proposed a guided visit to the facilities of the state-run mine, Cerro Verde, located in the Department of Arequipa, from which copper was extracted. The French planned to extract copper, so the best thing for Tambogrande's political authorities would be to witness the benefits of mining operations.

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, a public meeting was held in the municipal building to select the members of the delegation that would travel to Cerro Verde. At the express invitation of Minister Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, the former mayor Carlos Schaefer would travel anyway. The others elected were: the acting mayor Emilio Palacios, militant of Acción Popular; former mayor Francisco Celi, APRA's most influential leader; César Crisanto Palacios, leader of the left in the district; Maximiliano Jimenez Romero, representative of Christian Democracy and the delegate of the teachers' union; and the historian Miguel Rázuri as advisor to the mayor and coordinator of the visit (Razuri Aguilar, 1981).

On April 11<sup>th</sup>, the delegation of Tambogrande arrived at Cerro Verde, located over the Andes at 2,700 meters above sea level and approximately 30 kilometers away from the city of Arequipa. The first thing that the visitors observed was that it was an area with no major agricultural value. The mine was located in the midst of rocky hills with no vegetation cover, where piles of waste, crushing machines, steel pipes and chemical pools were abundant. The ecological differences between the fertile San Lorenzo Valley and the high Andean mountains of southern Peru were gigantic (informant # 03). In the offices of the mining company and in front of the representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, leaders of Tambogrande expressed their concerns about the relocation of the city, the potential pollution of the environment and the potential destruction of the agricultural area (Razuri Aguilar, 1981). The guided visit only served to convince this group of leaders about the urgency to build an inter-party institutional platform to prevent mining activities in Tambogrande.

The press recorded the return of the delegation as if it were the beginning of a process of collaboration between the District Municipality of Tambogrande, and the Ministry of Energy and Mines, with the objective of taking advantage of the minerals as soon as possible. The future relocation of the city was taken for granted by the press. But the journalists were collecting only the opinion of the central government spokesmen. In fact, Mayor Emilio Palacios, former mayor Francisco Celi, and future mayor Cesar Crisanto, were planning the best way to build an opposition platform.

**FOUNDATION OF THE DEFENSE FRONT: FRECIDET**

On May 3<sup>rd</sup> a *cabildo abierto* was held in the town square of Tambogrande in order to listen to the population's opinion regarding the mining project and to establish a strategy to counteract the central government's power. In this open assembly it was decided to constitute a Defense Front that would lead and represent the popular opposition (Cruz & Canterác, 2006, p. 69). On May 12<sup>th</sup>, an assembly was held in the municipal building with the aim of formalizing the creation of the Defense Front. This meeting was attended by 67 representatives of different grassroots organizations, unions of all sorts, and even state offices, both from the urban sector and from the rural sector like student associations, post office workers, national electric company representatives, drivers, teachers, workers, political parties, dry forest hamlets and villages located on the left bank of the Piura River, hamlets and villages located inside the valley of San Lorenzo, court of peace officials, sports clubs, merchants, bakers, religious groups, cultural associations, settlers, water users, and the friends of the library club. The Defense Front was born as a coalition of many pre-existing grassroots organizations in the district that put their resources at the service of social mobilization. In this first assembly, the representatives of all those organizations chose by voting the formal name of the Defense Front: Civic Front of Defense and Development of Tambogrande (FRECIDET).

The arguments of those who participated in the first assembly were recorded in the book of minutes. Engineer Godofredo García Baca emphasized that agriculture was an economic activity of great importance for the country. The young teacher César Crisanto mentioned that the visit to Cerro Verde had shown that mining generated very few jobs compared to agriculture. Other participants emphasized the ecological risks posed by mining activity on water, vegetation and the general population. At this first meeting, attendees recorded in the minutes the need to

convene a “pro-environmental” organization to conduct a study and report on these types of risks. The ecological arguments were not just well-intentioned statements. A few months later members of the Defense Front met with a professor at the National University of Trujillo with whom they evaluated the possibility of carrying out an environmental study, and received a group of professors and students of the geography specialty of the National University of San Marcos that arrived from Lima to carry out an environmental assessment study (Frente Cívico de Defensa y Desarrollo de Tambogrande, 1981).

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, the second assembly of the Defense Front was held with the objective of electing those who would occupy the formal positions assuming the responsibility of representing the social mobilization. Former mayor Francisco Celi – APRA’s main figure in the district – was elected president. The young teacher Miguel Ortiz, militant of UNIR, was chosen as vice-president. The young teacher César Crisanto, also militant of UNIR, was chosen as secretary. The engineer Godofredo García Baca, president of the Settlers Association and APRA militant, was chosen as coordinator of San Lorenzo. Ramón Alama Riofrío, former worker in the cotton haciendas and then agricultural leader during the military government, was chosen as coordinator of the dry forest population located on the left bank of the Piura River. José Encalada Varona was chosen as coordinator of the urban sector and slums. Acting mayor and Acción Popular militant, Emilio Palacios, was elected as secretary of public relations.

#### **KUCZYNSKI IN TAMBOGRANDE**

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, the Piuran newspapers announced that an agreement had already been signed between the Peruvian government and the French government to carry out a new study that

would finally define the feasibility of the mining project. According to *El Tiempo*, the study would cost US \$ 6 million and if the result were positive the exploitation would be carried out jointly between both governments. Days later, leading a commission of settlers, the engineer Godofredo García Baca traveled to the city of Lima to formally manifest their opposition before the Ministry of Energy and Mines and before the Congress.

On Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:45 p.m., Energy and Mines Minister, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, landed by helicopter right in Tambogrande's city market. As part of the protocol, the minister was declared an "illustrious guest" by the mayor (*El Tiempo*, 1981a, 1981c, 1981d). Once in the town square, Kuczynski explained some details of the mining project and of the future relocation of the city. In the usual fashion of these *cabildos abiertos*, the former mayor and president of the Defense Front, Francisco Celi, responded loudly saying that the mining project was absolutely unnecessary from any economic point of view, that the population would defend both agriculture and the environment, and that they will resist against the mining project with their own lives (informants # 06 & 08).

## **LATENCY PERIOD**

After the minister's visit, the Defense Front would continue to function for a few more months, demanding debates to discern between agriculture and mining, expressing its arguments to the press, strengthening ties with grassroots organizations and seeking outside allies. But it soon entered on a period of latency. The law seeking to allow the mining activities of the French company BRGM in Tambogrande did not obtain the final approval of the Congress (De Echave, Diez, et al., 2009b, pp. 22-23). The war against the terrorist group Shining Path increasingly

worried public opinion, the price of minerals in the international market began to fall severely affecting the national economy, the strikes of the workers in the state-run mines multiplied, and finally, in July of 1982, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski resigned his position as minister announcing that he would travel to the United States to work in the private banking sector (El Tiempo, 1981b, 1982a, 1982b, 1982c, 1982d, 1982e, 1982f). Everything indicated that the central government would stop promoting the mining project for the moment. At the same time a new municipal electoral process was approaching and the leaders of the Defense Front would be dedicated to the campaigns of their respective parties. The last official assembly of the Defense Front was celebrated on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1982 (Frente Cívico de Defensa y Desarrollo de Tambogrande, 1981). The Defense Front would be reactivated by future mayor Manuel Reyes at the end of the 1980s.

## Chapter Seven

1983-1985

### The Archbishop and the Reconstruction

#### **EL NIÑO 1983**

The El Niño phenomenon of 1983 was one of the most destructive climatic events of the twentieth century. In northern Peru, the most evident consequence of El Niño is a prolonged period of rains so intense that it floods and isolates whole cities erasing from the map anything that interrupts the furious passage of the water. Part of the Sechura desert turns into a huge lagoon known as La Niña, the landscape turns green, and the underground aquifers – that will support the life of plants and animals during the dry years – are recharged.

Between January and May of 1983 the main cities of the north coast of Peru were isolated receiving no food, oil, or medicines. The roads were blocked, dead insects piled up in the streets and the collapsed drainage flowed everywhere. The Andean areas were disconnected from the coast while different parts of the route were controlled by assailants. The mayors whose jurisdictions were close to the sea used all kinds of boats to buy the most essential supplies in Ecuador. Talara's facilities ceased to function and ships arriving in search of oil could no longer be supplied. Stomach, respiratory and cutaneous diseases severely affected the population and plagues of crickets, worms, fungi, ants, mosquitoes, rodents and snakes proliferated.



In the midst of the disaster, the Piurans realized that hundreds of square kilometers of trees planted around rivers, dikes and canals were illegally cut, loosing the natural barriers that could have mitigated the damage in large areas. The El Niño phenomenon made the public opinion of Piura to consider environmental issues more seriously, especially the fight against deforestation and desertification. These issues were also discussed during the previous two decades, but main concerns used to be how to overcome drought periods. Before, the problem was the lack of water. Now, the problem became the inability to control the destructive abundance of water. This climate event left a regional debate on the conservation of local ecosystems. And the *algarrobo* tree continued to be the symbol of the delicate ecology of the deserted Piuran coast.

In the midst of this climatic catastrophe and the war against Shining Path, President Fernando Belaúnde attacked the non-governmental sector, especially the church, accusing foreign nuns and priests of spreading ideological garbage and inciting the masses toward fratricidal violence. But what the citizens observed did not match the president's words. In the north of Peru, highest religious authorities and the members of the congregations working at the grassroots level performed a great humanitarian work. The Bishop of Chulucanas, Monsignor Juan McNabb, dedicated himself to rehabilitate forgotten aerodromes and airstrips abandoned by the Peruvian Air Force after the war with Ecuador in 1941. These air bridges allowed reaching the highest parts of the Andean provinces with food and medicines by American priests and other authorities.

The Tambogrande district was severely beaten. The Piura River flooded the town square. Water ran down all the ravines and creeks destroying houses and roads. The pipes that brought the drinking water from the San Lorenzo reservoir were ripped and buried by avalanches of mud and

stones. The road between Tambogrande and Sullana was broken and blocked in several sections. The hamlets of the dry forest, on the left bank of the Piura River, were totally isolated with no possibility of receiving help. In the San Lorenzo Valley the water destroyed bridges and canals. Hundreds of urea sacks stored in the open were washed away polluting dozens of square kilometers.

The Benedictine Fathers and the Sisters of Notre Dame accommodated the refugees in schools or any other type of place whose roofs still resisted the heavy rain. The number of people affected was multiplying rapidly, but the provision of additional shelters was practically impossible, there were not enough buildings with strong roofs. Former Mayor Carlos Schaefer collaborated as a delegate of the Red Cross commission in this district. The most active, visible and influential religious authority was the Archbishop of Piura and Tumbes, Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias Pastor. Monsignor Cantuarias received in Lima an important sum collected by Caritas in the campaign "From Brother to Brother" conducted by the charismatic speaker Ricardo Belmont through Panamericana Television. With this donation the archbishop continued to care for the population that did not receive any kind of help from the government.

## **CIVIC FRONT**

The magnitude of the disaster and the inefficiency of the central government to solve the problems reactivated in Piura the old claim for the decentralization of political decisions and the local administration of natural resources. Fernando Belaúnde had come to power after a campaign in which he promised to decentralize the country by implementing a system of regional governments, to better distribute the income obtained by exploitation of natural

resources, and to strengthen municipalities as democratic offices. While the rain was still falling and the central government was still absent, the Piurans demanded that the government should allocate the necessary budget for the reconstruction. Quickly all demands merged as a claim for oil canon. Because the Provincial Mayor of Piura – and former president of the Agricultural League – Francisco Hilbck maintained his loyalty to President Fernando Belaúnde, the doors of the municipality were closed for claims against the central government. Social mobilization would have first to be strengthened in the streets and then it would find the way to enter the municipality.

In April of 1983 a coalition of local personalities and political figures adopted the name of “Frente Cívico” or “Civic Front” to organize and represent social mobilizations against the central government. This alliance of leaders constitutes what in sociological theory is known as a Social Movement Organization (SMO), an organization that crystallizes in the belly of social mobilization adopting more or less stable and formal forms with the objective of representing the demands before the authorities (McAdam et al., 1988, 1996).

The most important figure of the Civic Front was the Archbishop of Piura and Tumbes, Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias. Next to him were the lawyer Luís Paredes Maceda, leader of the APRA and future provincial mayor of Piura and future first regional president; the professor Robespierre Bayona Amaya, leader of left and future congressman; and respected medical doctor Jorge Gamio Vargas, leader of the PPC. These four figures integrated the “collegiate” or “shared” presidency of the Civic Front. Beneath them was an extensive network of coordinators covering almost all the districts, villages and hamlets of the department, along with guilds,

unions and associations in all productive branches. The Civic Front was the result of a political alliance built under the auspices of an important religious authority (informants # 37 & 38).

The collegiate presidents sent a telex addressed to President Fernando Belaúnde requesting immediate actions to attend to the victims, to rebuild the damaged infrastructure and to economically reactivate the region. The political, administrative and economic decentralization of the country was included in the claim. The first meeting organized by the Civic Front was held on April 17<sup>th</sup>. After a march through the streets of the city, thousands of Piurans gathered in front of the cathedral atrium to listen to the main speaker, Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias. The archbishop was energetic in asking for unity to overcome this natural disaster. Cantuarias said that he had been entrusted with the responsibility of leading the Catholic people and consequently could not be indifferent to the worst tragedy in history by locking himself in a temple. He also responded to those who disqualified him for not being born in Piura by telling them that the wealth of a region is in the men who tread on its soil, whether or not born in it. On that day, Archbishop Cantuarias became a very uncomfortable character for the central government as he asked to supervise the use of the money that would soon arrive from Lima for the reconstruction of Piura. Cantuarias was promoting citizen vigilance in a highly corrupt country.

A month later, on May 18<sup>th</sup>, President Fernando Belaúnde arrived in Piura accompanied by numerous ministers to sign the law for the reconstruction in the areas affected by the El Niño phenomenon. The ceremony was held within the Municipality of Piura, office under the leadership of the former president of the Agricultural League, Francisco Hilbck, committed

member of Acción Popular. But outside the municipality the political climate was very different. When leaving the president was confronted by a crowd throwing stones blaming him for the people's hunger. Finally, Law No. 23630 was signed on June 15, determining that 10% of the income obtained from oil and gas exploitation in Piura and Tumbes would benefit both departments. This was the first great political victory of the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias and the Civic Front. However, social mobilization continued because the law was not yet enforced.

### **NGOs & RECONSTRUCTION**

After the El Niño phenomenon of 1983 nothing was the same. The population was convinced of the inefficiency of the central government and offended by the laziness of the politicians installed in Lima. Along with the strengthening of old claims – such as decentralization and the oil canon – the non-governmental sector gained unprecedented legitimacy. The Piuran NGOs were an expression of the enormous agricultural potential of this part of the country and of the environmental conscience that arose during the decades of 1960 and 1970 in which long periods of drought caused a much more serious reflection on the effects of the deforestation. In the 1980s, two NGOs stood out with special brilliance. First, the Center for Research and Promotion of the Peasantry (CIPCA), an NGO founded during the early 1970s by a group of Jesuits committed to strengthening the peasantry. Second, the Peruvian Central Services (CEPESER), an NGO founded in the late 1970s by a group of Peruvian intellectuals under the initiative and leadership of Elsa Fung Sánchez, former director of the educational program of the San Lorenzo Project and a former official of SINAMOS in Piura. These two NGOs have carried out – and continue to do so – an invaluable work studying the different ecosystems of Piura.

During the reconstruction period, the Piurans received support from foreign governments and international non-governmental institutions such as the Government of Switzerland, the Government of Canada, Caritas, the US Agency for International Development (AID), the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) and The International Labor Organization (ILO). Local NGOs like CIPCA, CEPESER, and IDEAS, deployed their work in almost every corner of Piura and Tumbes channeling part of the resources that came from abroad. In the midst of the catastrophe, the presence and contribution of the non-governmental sector contrasted even more against the state's usual absence.

Some donors sought to work directly with local NGOs, religious institutions, parishes or municipalities, trying to avoid the ineptitude and corruption of the state. The most illustrative case was the donation of 800,000 German Marks received by CEPESER. This donation generated the anger of the president of the republic, Fernando Belaúnde, because that amount exceeded by far the annual budget of several state offices combined (informant # 02). In response to the president's fury, German donors issued a letter highlighting that, in contrast to bureaucratic state offices, CEPESER's actions were efficient, direct, quick and decentralized (Correo, 1983; El Tiempo, 1983).

#### **SOCIAL REFLECTION WORKSHOPS**

Aiming to promote citizen vigilance during the process of reconstruction, the Archbishop of Piura and Tumbes organized a series of seminars attended by university authorities, specialists from various disciplines, representatives of the central government and the leaders of all political parties. Monsignor Cantuarias wanted to make visible the objectives, the use and the destination

of public funds. These seminars highlighted the most important issues of the moment like decentralization and the oil canon.

In July, the Piuran grassroots organizations ratified their interest in continuing as members of the mobilization network known as Civic Front authorizing the collegiate presidents to hold new rallies against the central government. The next municipal elections were close and President Belaunde's allies – such as Mayor Francisco Hilbck – tried to delegitimize the protests, saying the members of the Civic Front were just looking for a job in the next municipal administration.

The rally was held on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1983. Again, thousands of people gathered in the atrium of the cathedral to listen to Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias who reminded President Fernando Belaúnde that the consequences are always disastrous when governments do not listen to their citizens. All the speakers demanded the immediate implementation of a regional government. On August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1983, Supreme Decree No. 334-83-EFC was signed regulating the distribution of the oil canon for Piura and Tumbes established in Law No. 23630. This was the second political victory of the Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias and the Civic Front.

Soon the new municipal authorities would be elected. Three of the four collegiate presidents of the Civic Front were running as candidates: Lawyer Luis Paredes Maceda (APRA) for mayor, professor Robespierre Bayona Amaya (IU) for mayor, and medical doctor Jorge Gamio Vargas (PPC) for alderman. The Civic Front continued in functions during the electoral process. The presence of Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias guaranteed the neutrality of the decisions made by the collegiate presidents.

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, the Civic Front was received by President Fernando Belaúnde in Lima. This delegation of notable Piurans was led by Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias. Belaúnde opposed citizen's vigilance over the way oil canon was estimated. Belaúnde also objected to the possibility of creating a transitional regional government. After hearing the report of those who were in government palace, the bases of the Civic Front were in favor of a regional strike. But the strike was postponed due to the closeness of the municipal elections.

### **1983 MUNICIPAL CAMPAIGN**

On Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, Luis Paredes Maceda of APRA was elected as the new Provincial Mayor of Piura. Jorge Gamio Vargas (PPC) and Eriberto Arroyo Mío (IU) –also members of the Civic Front – were elected as aldermen. In the District of Tambogrande, Cesar Crisanto (IU) was elected as the new mayor. Teacher Miguel Ortiz, teacher Leonel Panta, economist Lorgio Carmen, and lawyer Ramón Nima, were elected as aldermen. All of them were graduates of the high schools created by former Mayor Francisco Celi in the early 1960s and the founders of the Defense Front in 1981. The former mayor and cultural patron, Carlos Schaefer was elected as alderman by Acción Popular.

Both municipalities became offices in the service of the social mobilization against the central government. Mayor Paredes represented the social mobilization claiming for oil canon and for an effective decentralization. Mayor Crisanto represented the popular rejection against a mining project. The social mobilization entered into both municipalities through the electoral processes.



After the municipal elections two new elements of conflict between Piura and Lima appeared. First, the central government tried to cut the annual budget for Piura. Second, the central government refused to include the oil extracted from the continental shelf in the estimation of the canon. The grassroots organizations supporting the Civic Front resumed the idea of a regional strike. But, this time, all the responsibility to lead and represent the social mobilization fell to the provincial municipality. Mayor Luís Paredes Maceda became the most visible figure of the protest. On January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1984, all economic activities were paralyzed throughout the department of Piura chanting against President Belaúnde. On February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1984, Supreme Decree No. 002-84-EM/VM was signed incorporating oil extracted from the continental shelf in the canon's accounting. This was the third great achievement of Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias and the Civic Front.

#### **BATTLING COMMITTEE**

Relations between Piura and the central government continued to worsen. The central government was still trying to reduce the annual budget of the works that were realized in the region alleging that Piura already received money from the oil canon. The main authorities of Piura – prefect, aldermen, mayors and parliamentarians – responded to the call made by Mayor Luis Paredes Maceda and agreed to execute a civic strike. This group of authorities, led by Mayor Paredes, adopted the name of “Comité de Lucha” or “Battling Committee”. The Civic Front was already totally deactivated. The Archbishop of Piura and Tumbes, Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias, participated in the meetings and supported the decisions of this new committee, but adopted a much lower profile letting the new political authorities to represent the social mobilization. On December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1984, thousands of Piurans halted their activities again and

went on regional strike. During the central rally – held as usual in the atrium of the cathedral – Mayor Luís Paredes praised the ability of the Piurans to suspend their party rivalries and their ideological differences in order to protest together against the central government. Behind the crowd, like a common citizen, Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias listened to the speakers, standing on the sidewalk among street vendors, housewives, and children.

This time the protest was unsuccessful. The commission of the Congress ignored the clamor of the streets and cut the budget of Piura. In response, a group of Piuran representatives began a hunger strike. The provincial mayor, Luis Paredes Maceda, summoned all the provincial and district mayors of the department of Piura to design the new strategy. But the protest would have to wait because the electoral process to choose the new president of the republic was getting close. In just six months President Fernando Belaúnde would have to leave the Government Palace.

#### **CABILDOS ABIERTOS IN TAMBOGRANDE**

The administration of Mayor César Crisanto consolidated the presence of the left in Tambogrande. Mayor Crisanto established an alliance between the urban sector and the rural sector and joined the religious institutions and NGOs to execute several initiatives to benefit the poorest inhabitants of the district. Above all, this group of young leftists displayed a permanent use of *cabildos abiertos* or popular assemblies as mechanisms of citizen participation.

The Crisanto's administration assumed the reconstruction of Tambogrande after El Niño. The municipality rebuilt the main plaza and the drainage system. In the rural area the municipality

implemented water supply systems for human consumption and in the urban area the municipality extended the electric service in the slums and more precarious areas of the city. The municipality of Tambogrande managed to have presence and maintain contact with the 123 villages throughout the district at that time.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1984, Mayor César Crisanto and the councilors held a *cabildo abierto* in the town square to decide how to curb the abuses of some lemon industrialists. After the mango, the lemon had become the most important and numerous fruit tree of the San Lorenzo Valley. Following the example of the Province of Chulucanas – the main lemon producing province – factories were established within the District of Tambogrande to manufacture lemon essential oil, a substance of great demand in the international market for the manufacture of cosmetics and industrial foodstuffs. These industrial facilities dumped citric acid into the public sewerage, creeks and rivers generating severe damages everywhere. When the young aldermen of Tambogrande went to close down one of the factories polluting the Piura River, the owner reacted with violence by physically assaulting them. In response, the mayor and the aldermen held an open assembly in search of popular support to be able to supervise and punish those companies.

In February of 1985, a copy of a report that BRGM had presented at the Congress arrived in the municipality. In that report the mining company detailed that the amount of copper in Tambogrande's ore was profitable and expressed its intention to initiate the extraction (informant # 04). In response, Mayor Crisanto and his collaborators convened the population of the district, including both the urban and rural sectors, to discuss this issue as part of the municipal agenda.

On Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, thousands gathered in the town square to discuss the document submitted to the Congress by BRGM. Attendees publicly rejected any kind of mining activity within the district and agreed to remain ready for mobilization. Thus, Mayor Crisanto and the aldermen managed to keep the municipality as an office serving the agricultural agenda. With these events the founders of the Defense Front – now turned into municipal authorities – managed to keep the inhabitants alert themselves in case of the arrival of the promoters of extractive activities. The young lefties of Tambogrande kept alive a very old tradition of popular assemblies to solve municipal issues and stayed ready for mobilization.

#### **1985 ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN**

During the electoral campaign, all presidential and congressional candidates who visited Piura blamed the government of Fernando Belaúnde for the economic crisis, for the rapid advance of terrorism throughout the national territory, and for the inefficiency of the state bureaucracy. The favorites promised to decentralize the country, to defend Piuran agriculture, and to review the contracts the state had signed with international oil companies, and even to recover the oil in order to solve the country's economic crisis. On Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1985, the Peruvians elected their new president. The APRA obtained 46% and the Izquierda Unida 21% of the votes. Since none of the candidates exceeded 50%, a second round of elections had to be held, but the candidate of the left refrained to participate. Thus, Alan García, only 36 years old, was elected as the new president.

José Carlos Carrasco Távora (APRA), future minister of energy and mines, and future promoter of the mining project in Tambogrande, was re-elected as a parliamentarian. Future regional president of Piura, César Trelles Lara (APRA), was also re-elected. And former president of the Agricultural League and future minister of agriculture, Juan Coronado Balmaceda (APRA) was elected as a parliamentarian. In the ranks of the left, former members of the Civic Front, Robespierre Bayona Amaya, and Eriberto Arroyo Mio, were elected as parliamentarians.

## Chapter Eight

1986-1992

### Peace Yes Violence No

#### **DIAKONIA**

In March of 1987, Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias decided to confront the infiltration of the terrorist group Shining Path in grassroots organizations through the creation of a new office within the Archbishopric of Piura and Tumbes which he called “Diakonia for Justice and Peace” (informant # 02). This office would defend human rights through a network of local promoters dedicated to the monitoring of all types of abuse against the most defenseless citizens (informants # 09, 10, 11 & 12). The religious inspiration for the creation of Diakonia came from Isaiah 32:17: “the fruit of righteousness shall be peace” (El Tiempo, 1987b, 1987c, 1987e). As Cantuarias explained, justice is the pre-requisite and the main foundation of a peaceful society. A society in which children, women, peasants and employees are constantly mistreated is a society in which violence is easily spread.

President Alan García continued with his plans to nationalize the entire banking system. As a reaction, the world-famous writer Mario Vargas Llosa launched a political movement of opposition. Archbishop Cantuarias did not stay out of these events by publishing an extensive communiqué in which he pointed out that Jesus Christ never condemned the mere possession of material goods, but he had pronounced harsh words against wealthy people who ignored the

needs of the rest. Cantuarias exhorted not to be fooled by an aggressive dialectic that simplifies everything in terms of “oppressive capitalism” or “liberating socialism” (El Tiempo, 1987a).

On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, presidential candidate Mario Vargas Llosa gave a speech from the atrium of the cathedral of Piura demanding to defend the rights guaranteed by the constitution of 1979 and to follow the example of countries that had not arrived at extremes like the nationalization of the financial system to thrive. This intellectual was well received by the sector rejecting the inefficient and corrupt state bureaucracy at the time, and enthused those who believed that a massive privatization plan was the only alternative to solve the country’s problems. In this visit, the writer said that he agreed with the reflections of the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias.

#### **MURDER OF RICARDO RAMOS PLATA**

On December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1987, the president of CORPIURA and APRA militant, Ricardo Ramos Plata, was shot dead inside the National University of Piura (UNP). Before running away, the assassins detonated a bomb made of dynamite and nails over his body. The clergy met with the Archbishop Cantuarias in the cathedral and from there marched towards the cemetery with the objective of arriving first and receiving the coffin with a ceremony. Cantuarias led the march repeating to the press that it was necessary to go out and to confront the terrorists in the streets.

The APRA militants carried the coffin from the CORPIURA’s premises en route to the cemetery amid partisan slogans. The Archbishop said in his speech that peace was not a white dove that would spontaneously come down from heaven. Cantuarias preached that peace is a tree growing out of the seeds of justice and liberation. The Archbishop’s political stance was uncomfortable

for the APRA, a party that had a white dove as one of its most widely used symbols. The APRA deputies attacked Cantuarias shouting “infiltrator!” in his face, insinuating that Cantuarias was a subversive acting in disguise. The rest of the militants interrupted the Archbishop by singing the APRA’s Marseillais or shouting “speak as a priest!” The Archbishop was forced to exit the cemetery and he was joined by those who rejected APRA’s attitude. The following day, Canturias celebrated a mass inside the university in which the professor Ricardo Ramos was assassinated. Students and teachers accompanied the family of the deceased in a march towards the cathedral calling for justice and peace, central elements in the sermons of Archbishop Cantuarias. A few days later, El Tiempo confirmed that Ricardo Ramos was assassinated by Shining Path.

#### **DIRECTOR GARCÍA BACA**

The first region created by the APRA – the Grau Region – was formed from consolidated territories of the Department of Piura and the Department of Tumbes in March of 1988 by Law N° 24793. During the ceremony, President Alan García assured that all the profits from the exploitation of natural resources in Piura would no longer go towards Lima. Months later, the central government transferred several state-run strategic companies, placing the responsibility of the electricity production, the extraction of phosphoric rocks from the desert of Sechura, and the management of fishing ports, on the shoulders of the newly created Grau Region Government.

On April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1988, colonist and engineer Godofredo García Baca was sworn in as the new director of the Chira-Piura Project. During the swearing-in ceremony, Godofredo García Baca



stressed, first, the need to have honest citizens willing to work for the country's development, warning that all the lazy and immoral would be fired. Second, García Baca promised to work as a personal representative of the peasantry aiming to improve agricultural productivity. Third, García Baca stated that the Alto Piura Project – the irrigation of the upper part of the Piura River Basin with the water of the Huancabamba River – was a personal challenge for being born in Chulucanas.

Days after assuming the position, Godofredo García Baca traveled to Lima leading a delegation of Piurans looking for a personal interview with the President Alan García to ask him to reserve a percentage of the Huancabamba River for irrigating the high part of the Piura River Basin. The efforts of the settler Godofredo García Baca and the rest of Piuran notables worked. Weeks after President Alan García issued a supreme decree reserving part of the water for the future Alto Piura Project. From his new office, the colonist García Baca also integrated a committee of Piuran personalities demanding the organization of the regional elections.

### **CARRASCO VS CANTUARIAS**

In November, Archbishop Cantuarias published a message denouncing the corruption that affected all levels of government and almost all spheres of social life. In his message, Cantuarias warned of an even greater danger: the loss of confidence in the democratic system. In the eyes of the Archbishop, it was evident that the majority of the people no longer believed or expected anything from their authorities and this left much room for the emergence of authoritarian projects. That month, the Diakonia for Justice and Peace organized a series of conferences to discuss the human rights guaranteed by the 1979 Constitution.

Also that same month, the minister of energy and mines, Piuran and APRA militant, Jose Carlos Carrasco Távora, attacked the Archbishop Cantuarias affirming on the radio that Cantuarias was dedicated to promoting violence and to defending the terrorism. Even more, the minister insinuated that the Archbishop was involved in the murder of Ricardo Ramos Plata. Carrasco made the remarks for the first time on a radio station in Sullana and then ratified his words on a radio station based in Lima. Minister Carrasco's statements reflected the discomfort generated by Cantuarias in the central government.

The Peruvian Episcopal Conference issued a statement in support for Cantuarias and a group of senators from the Izquierda Unida called for the resignation of the minister. During the seminar on human rights organized by Diakonia, hundreds of signatures were collected and the main organizations of the civil society published a communiqué rejecting the calumnies against Cantuarias. Two days later, Minister José Carlos Carrasco Távora arrived by a military airplane to apologize with the Archbishop Cantuarias. After a brief meeting with Cantuarias, Carrasco made statements to the press trying to end this incident. But his visit did not stop the wave of protests against him. Masses of solidarity were celebrated, editorials were written, press releases were published, Catholic schools suspended classes and the students marched in the streets, and agricultural organizations continued to demonstrate. Cantuarias accepted the apologies, declared that the relations between the Piuran church and the APRA remained cordial, and requested to stop the protests. After the incident, Cantuarias resumed his promotion of human rights ignoring the discomfort that his work was causing in the central government. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1988, Diakonia, several Piuran NGOs, and other social organizations, held a celebration in the

cathedral atrium commemorating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

#### **MURDER OF ERIBERTO ARROYO MIO**

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1989, the congressman, Piuran peasant, militant of Izquierda Unida and former member of the Civic Front, Eriberto Arroyo Mio, was killed after he dropped his children at school in the Lima district of Chaclacayo. Arroyo lacked police protection and was surrounded by four armed men receiving a bullet in the head. Some deputies and senators insisted that this peasant leader had been assassinated by the paramilitary command Rodrigo Franco, the supposed armed arm of the APRA.

Two thousand peasants gathered at the Piura airport to express respect and the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias celebrated a mass in honor of the deputy Arroyo. The coffin was carried out of the temple enshrouded in the Peruvian flag and was honored by bands of the army, air force, and navy. The coffin procession began its way to the cemetery among thousands of peasants walking in the streets. There were no political accusations or partisan chants, only slogans against terrorism, and the radios kept silent in protest against political violence. The coffin was buried in the presence of fifty deputies – militants of different political parties – and to the sound of sad songs interpreted by musical bands from the lower part of the Piura River Basin, an area in which Arroyo had worked in his youth.

#### **PIURA, LIFE AND PEACE**

Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias continued to preach his main message which was that to stop the terrorism it was necessary to act in solidarity and to take to the streets with courage. In March of 1989, Diakonia organized the “First Regional Meeting on Faith and Violence” with the participation of peasants, teachers, workers, slums’ representatives, union leaders and state officials. Among the speakers, were senators, ministers and senior members of the Peruvian Catholic Church. The objective was to reflect on two fundamental themes: “faith” and “politics.” Cantuarias observed that – as a mechanism of survival – the citizens were divorcing those two terms; “faith” was being restricted only to temples or processions totally dissociated from everyday “politics.” The archbishop criticized the people who claimed to be “apolitical” since “politics” was “the duty that all citizens must do to improve society and therefore it is up to all to realize it.” Cantuarias stressed that being a good Christian implied to be a good politician. “If we are really good Christians we cannot be apolitical, all work done, every effort that the citizen makes to improve society, is political.” The Archbishop was relentless against the militants who placed the interests of their respective parties above everything else, even above their own consciences. According to Cantuarias those militants were simply “partisans” but not “politicians” (El Tiempo, 1989c). The aim of this seminar was to encourage citizens to take an active part in a good, healthy, and constructive political life.

Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias also criticized those who used the term “revolution” in the streets and plazas. Cantuarias was alluding to representatives of the state – as well as to President Alan García – who used that term to pretend that APRA was transforming the country, as well as to terrorist groups like Shinning Path and the MRTA that were bleeding the country by invoking revolutionary principles. Archbishop Cantuarias pointed out that first they had to be

revolutionaries of their own lives fulfilling their obligations as parents and spouses by taking care of their children. In another castigation against President Alan García, Monsignor Cantuarias warned Catholics not to be deceived by demagogues that all they did was to spread false promises (El Tiempo, 1989d).

During the second half of 1989, the main Catholic authorities of the country organized a campaign called “Peru, Life and Peace”. Diakonia was the office in charge of implementing this campaign in Piura. Monsignor Cantuarias obtained the subscription of universities, slums’ organizations, professional colleges, agrarian associations, unions, NGOs and state offices. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1989, representatives of the Piuran civil society gathered in the auditorium of Colegio Santa María publicly announcing the starting of the “Piura, Life and Peace” campaign. Students from all educational levels and institutions participated in this campaign by painting murals, designing posters, composing protest songs, singing, debating, marching in parades, integrating musical bands and theater groups, and playing in basketball and soccer tournaments. As part of this campaign launched by Monsignor Cantuarias, Piuran radios aired songs demanding ceasefire.

On November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1989, the leaders of the most important parties marched in Lima rejecting the political violence that was tearing the country apart. Among those figures was the world-wide known writer Mario Vargas Llosa, who at that time was the most likely candidate to become the new president. Diakonia – under the direction of Monsignor Cantuarias – echoed that sentiment by organizing a rally through the streets of the city of Piura. On November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1989, tens of thousands of people chanted the motto “Peace Yes, Violence No” rejecting all kinds of terrorism.

## ELECCIONES MUNICIPALES Y REGIONALES DE 1989

On Sunday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 1989, the Peruvians elected their new mayors and – for the first time – the new regional authorities. The APRA – political party of President Alan Garcia – was totally discredited. The Frente Democrático (FREDEMO) – political alliance led by the writer Mario Vargas Llosa – was the main opposition party and the most important political force in the country at that time.

Frank McLauchlan, FREDEMO militant, became the new provincial mayor of Piura. In Tambogrande, Professor Manuel Reyes Temoche, candidate of the Izquierda Unida, became the new district mayor. With the return of the left to the district municipality, this state office was one more time in support of the mobilization in opposition to mining in Tambogrande. During his administration, Mayor Reyes would reactivate the Defense Front and wage an arduous battle in defense of agriculture. The members of the Regional Assembly elected Luís Paredes Maceda as president of the Grau Region after an agreement between APRA and Izquierda Unida. During his term as regional president, Luís Paredes Maceda would be one of the most important allies of the Mayor Reyes in the mobilization against mining in Tambogrande.

Within the Regional Assembly were two important figures. First, medical doctor Jorge Gamio, former collegiate president of the Civic Front. Second, Juan Carvajal Infante, the Settlers Association president. The settlers succeeded in being elected to one of the ten seats reserved for civil society representatives. At that time, the Settlers Association had 28 years of experience and remained the most politically active and influential agricultural organization in the region.

The Grau Regional Government was in the hands of one of the most respected politicians of Piura: Luís Paredes Maceda. But the task was not easy. State offices and companies were in bankruptcy and the APRA – just a few months to the end of its term – was still hiring staff, inflating the payroll, and using all resources at hand in the new electoral campaign, leaving a potentially disastrous deficit to the next government. In order to avoid building everything from scratch, *El Tiempo*'s editorialists recommended to seek the expertise from Piuran NGOs, including from CEPESER and CIPCA as well as using the knowledge accumulated by these institutions.

Those fears became more evident than ever when APRA deposed the settler Godofredo García Baca and appointed Freddy Aponte – former provincial mayor – as the new director of the Chira-Piura Project. It was only six months before the end of Alan García's term when the most famous settler of all became an obstacle in the APRA's electoral campaign. García Baca – an APRA militant himself – had dismissed and legally sued a large number of officials involved in acts of corruption and immorality. But above all, García Baca refused to use vehicles or official machinery in APRA's proselytizing events.

#### **LUÍS PAREDES VS ALAN GARCÍA**

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1990, President Alan García established the Regional Assembly of the Grau Regional Government – the first region created by APRA – in the small town of Tangará, on the coast of Piura. At this ceremony, President García promised that regional governments would act with absolute autonomy and would use their own natural resources to achieve local progress.

The ceremony was sealed with a hug between the president of the republic, Alan García, and the president of the Grau Region, Luis Paredes Maceda, both APRA militants.

The regionalization initiated by García's administration was an extremely rushed project. García's administration had only six months remaining and public companies transferred to the regions were either on the brink of bankruptcy or already broken. There was little infrastructure left to be decentralized after several years of inflation and a bloody war between government and subversion. Consequently the new regional governments would soon begin to protest.

Luís Paredes Maceda – now president of the Grau Region – launched a wave of protests against the central government demanding a solution to the problems besetting its jurisdiction. Piura was still dependent on old oil engines to generate electricity and there was no money to continue buying fuel, the payment of the oil canon was always delayed, the Agrarian Bank was insolvent, the Alto Piura Project was abandoned and the most important ecological zones of the region – like the mangroves of Tumbes – lacked protection. Luís Paredes Maceda confronted the president of the republic 43 days after shaking hands in the small town of Tangará.

The main rally took place on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 1990. Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias was the keynote speaker offering a message of courage, peace, faith, and hope. During his speech, Luís Paredes Maceda invoked the legacy of illustrious Piurans such as Luciano Castillo, Hildebrando Castro Pozo, Juan Velasco Alvarado, and Eriberto Arroyo Mio. President Luís Paredes Maceda threatened the militants of his own political party – the APRA – warning that he would not allow



any act of corruption or immorality, and harshly criticized Shining Path for having unleashed a useless bloodbath.

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1990, approximately 10 million Peruvians voted. The shocking event was that the world-famous writer Mario Vargas Llosa did not get the necessary votes to become the new president. The Peruvians would have a runoff to choose between Mario Vargas Llosa and the unknown university professor, Alberto Fujimori. El Tiempo explained the Fujimori phenomenon as the result of a “disoriented” electorate which had lost “faith in ideologies and confidence in traditional politicians” (El Tiempo, 1990a, 1990d, 1990f). In this electoral process, Piurans like Jose Carlos Carrasco Távora, and César Trelles Lara, obtained their third re-election as deputies in the ranks of APRA.

#### **CARRASCO PROMOTES MINING IN TAMBOGRANDE**

During the first months of 1990 – in the middle of the electoral campaign and with very few days left for the end of the APRA government – the Piuran deputy José Carlos Carrasco Távora updated the law written in 1981 to favor the French company Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières (BRGM). This time, Carrasco reformulated the law introducing new clauses. First, ensuring that the mining activities would not affect the population, the city, agriculture or the ecosystem. Second, indicating that the mining taxes and royalties would correspond to the regional government.

The Piuran congressmen who supported the activities of the French company took advantage of the regionalist fervor arguing that the Tambogrande Mining Project was the opportunity feed the

meager budget of the Regional Government Grau. Parliamentarian Domingo Riqueros Durand suggested the expansion of a Regional Mining Plan to make the most of all existing deposits, including the minerals in Tambogrande. On the contrary, senator Andrés Luna Vargas fiercely opposed Tambogrande Mining Project – promoted by the French company – under ecological and economic grounds. Senator Luna Vargas called for the creation of a Special Project to manage the coastal basins of the Grau Region aiming to stop desertification, deforestation, and illegal logging.

In April, Andrés Luna Vargas met with the members of the Regional Assembly to alert them about the law prepared by José Carlos Carrasco Távora. According to Senator Luna Vargas, the aim of Deputy Carrasco was to get President Alan García's signature – before the end of his administration – declaring the mining activities in Tambogrande a matter of national necessity authorizing the activities of the French company. The majority of the members of the Regional Assembly – including the regional president, Luis Paredes Maceda and the provincial mayor of Piura, Frank McLauchlan – agreed that this mining project would cause ecological problems affecting the agricultural activities of the San Lorenzo Valley.

Andrés Luna Vargas sent a letter to President Alan García requesting the rejection of the law drawn up by Deputy Carrasco. This document is valuable because it condenses the arguments of those opposing the mining project. First, according to Senator Luna Vargas, Grau Region's opinion had not yet been consulted. Second, the opposition of the settlers of Tambogrande was widely known. Third, the 1979 Constitution gave priority to agricultural activities over other types of economic endeavors. Fourth, mining would negatively impact the ecosystem placing a

greater risk over the irrigation and colonization in San Lorenzo. Fifth, the clause indicating that mining would not cause any damage was “only a statement without technical support” because there were no studies explaining the mitigation measures that would be adopted to protect the population and the environment (El Tiempo, 1990j).

It was clear that the political strength of APRA would be reduced to its minimal expression after the electoral process. The deputy Carrasco was taking advantage of the last days of this term to obtain the authorization needed by the French company. However, the promoters of this mining project did not take into account some factors that would play against them. First, the Regional Assembly – in which there was a settler – had already expressed its preference for the profitable agriculture of the San Lorenzo Valley, ruling out any unnecessary risk. Second, environmental awareness of citizens was not the same after so many years of drought and then after the El Niño phenomenon of 1983. Third, Deputy Carrasco was remembered for having defamed Oscar Cantuarias by maliciously linking the Monsignor with the murder of an APRA militant. Fourth, the new Tambogrande mayor, Professor Manuel Reyes, was ready to defend the agricultural agenda by reactivating the Defense Front. Fifth, the Settlers Association had three decades of experience confronting the central government, and remained as the most politically influential agricultural organization in the region.

#### **REACTIVATION OF THE DEFENSE FRONT: FRELIT**

In Tambogrande, the law promoted by Deputy José Carlos Carrasco Távora in favor of the French company BRGM generated the reactivation of the Defense Front founded in 1981. This time, the Defense Front adopted the formal name of Front of Struggle for the Interests by

Tambogrande (FRELIT). One of the main proposals defended by Mayor Reyes in this new stage of mobilization would be the need to hold a popular referendum to decide between agriculture or mining (De Echave, Diez, et al., 2009b, p. 26).

Professor Manuel Reyes, militant of UNIR, and candidate for the Izquierda Unida, arrived in the municipality of Tambogrande after having spent several years of social service dedicated to the preservation of the library built and donated by former mayor and cultural patron, Carlos Schaefer, in the 1960s, lead the teachers' movement calling for a single union, and supported several programs organized by the sisters of Notre Dame and the Benedictine monks in favor of the youth and the poor (informant # 06).

On Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1990, Mayor Manuel Reyes held a *cabildo abierto* or a popular assembly in the town square to reaffirm the general rejection against the mining project and to evaluate possible measures of protest. It was decided to block the roads during a 48 hour period, and to march towards the city of Piura to gain the support of the Grau Regional Government and to get greater visibility in the press. On Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Reyes held another *cabildo abierto* to confirm the commitment of the population in the mobilization. Mayor Reyes sent a telex to President Alan García asking for the annulment of the law, prepared by the deputy José Carlos Carrasco Távara. The 48-hour strike began on Wednesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>. The inhabitants of Tambogrande blocked the roads interrupting the traffic en route to Sullana, Las Lomas, Ayabaca, and to the Ecuadorian city of Macara.

Mayor Manuel Reyes was clear before the press. First, the municipality and the Defense Front were in favor of agriculture. Minerals are exhaustible resources and their extraction generates very few jobs. In contrast, agriculture is permanent, sustainable and generates a large number of jobs. Mayor Reyes pointed out, that at that time, Tambogrande district had approximately 90,000 inhabitants, of which only 35,000 were in the city, noting that 75% of the district's total population was engaged in agricultural or livestock activities. In contrast – according to information provided by the French engineers themselves – mining activities would generate only 900 jobs in Tambogrande for both professionals and workers. Second, the extraction and chemical treatment of minerals would contaminate the San Lorenzo Valley, the lower and middle basin of the Piura River, and the dry forest. Third, mining operations threatened the agro-export potential of the San Lorenzo Valley (El Tiempo, 1990c, 1990g, 1990k, 1990o).

The 48-hour strike culminated on Thursday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, with a demonstration in the town square in front of the municipal offices. The regional vice president attended this meeting to offer his support. This rally became a *cabildo abierto* because on the plaza the leaders and representatives of the grassroots organizations decided to submit a project of intangibility to protect the San Lorenzo Valley for the consideration of the Regional Assembly.

The law prepared by Deputy Carrasco was already approved by the Congress and was in the hands of the President Alan García who never answered the telex sent by Mayor Reyes. Consequently, the people of Tambogrande continued their protests as it was agreed in the popular assemblies. On Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1990 – with only four days until the run-off

election between Mario Vargas Llosa or Alberto Fujimori – thousands of inhabitants of Tambogrande converged on the city of Piura to protest against the mining project.

Demonstrators were welcomed by the regional president, Luis Paredes Maceda, who, along with the former mayor of Tambogrande, Cesar Crisanto, gave a speech defending agriculture and ecology. From a pickup truck, Luis Paredes Maceda, announced that he had already sent a fax to the President Alan García requesting the rejection of the law drafted by the deputy José Carlos Carrasco Távara. The regional president recalled that the San Lorenzo Valley had endured “thirty years of struggle against nature” and that this effort could not be ignored by a few politicians who defended the interests of a foreign company. During his speech, the former mayor of Tambogrande, César Crisanto, described the deputy José Carlos Carrasco Távara as a “traitor” for reactivating the mining project (El Tiempo, 1990b, 1990h).

At that moment, the mayor of Tambogrande, Manuel Reyes, was in Lima seeking to personally meet with President Alan García. The members of the Regional Assembly sent another fax – addressed to the President García – arguing that mining would transform the ecological system affecting agriculture. That night the inhabitants of Tambogrande slept in the streets in the City of Piura. The next day, the regional president announced that he had received a call from the central government requesting more details about the opinion of the Regional Assembly in this conflict. A few days later, on June 10<sup>th</sup>, Peruvians elected Alberto Fujimori as their new president. Manuel Reyes did not stop his campaign in defense of agriculture. On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, Mayor Reyes held a debate in the hall of the municipality between representatives of the Grau Region and representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, who discussed the potential impacts of

mining on the local ecosystem with delegates of various peasant committees, trade unions and grassroots organizations.

Finally, the proponents of the agricultural agenda received the response they were waiting for. On June 26<sup>th</sup>, Piuran deputy and APRA militant, César Trelles Lara, announced that President Alan García had decided not to sign the law. It is very difficult to determine why President García did not sign the law prepared by Deputy José Carlos Carrasco Távora. What is known is the version provided by the president's spokesmen. First, the mining project lacked an ecological study and therefore the potential impacts of the mining activity were unknown. Second, the mining project did not consider the opinion of the regional government (El Tiempo, 1990i). It should be noted that President García neither signed nor rejected the law, simply refrained from taking a stand. Therefore, the law would return to Congress (De Echave, Diez, et al., 2009b).

## **FUJISHOCK**

The government of President Alberto Fujimori had anticipated the implementation of drastic economic measures to stop hyperinflation. State subsidies and price controls on a long list of commodities such as sugar, flour, milk, oil, gasoline and gas would soon be eliminated. As uncertainty and despair increased, looting proliferated throughout the country. Traders in Tambogrande were attacked by the crowd and police began an investigation to capture suspected instigators. Among the detainees, were the former mayor of Tambogrande, César Crisanto, and other leftist leaders and members of the Defense Front. The detainees in Tambogrande were represented by the network of human rights defenders created by the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias.

The expected message to the nation was transmitted on national television on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1990. The minister of economy had the responsibility of presenting the new legal measures and announcing the new prices. No one knew for sure if these measures would stop hyperinflation, so Minister Juan Carlos Hurtado Miller had no better idea than to close his message with the phrase “may God help us”. This economic shock – known as the “Fujishock” – incremented the wave of lootings all over the country.

The colonists were positioned at strategic points in the San Lorenzo Valley to stop possible hordes of looters. The ticket price to travel from Tambogrande to the City of Piura rose by 800%. The road to Huancabamba was controlled by assailants. Traders were forced to sell or give away the products they had stored to prevent the attacks. Several Piuran institutions were organized to distribute aid among the poor. The Regional Bank of the North made available to Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias an important donation to begin the tasks of social assistance. The Diocese of Chulucanas – led by Archbishop Juan McNabb – distributed thousands of daily rations of food donated by CARITAS through parish kitchens.

#### **LUÍS PAREDES VS ALBERTO FUJIMORI**

That same month, in August of 1990, the Grau Regional Government received the administration of the Electronoroeste Company (ENO) assuming the responsibility of making payments for the necessary oil to operate the generators producing the needed electricity. But there was a pending problem: oil was still managed by the central government and PETROPERU had closed the credit line, refusing to deliver the fuel unless the corresponding payments were made. The



underground water pumping system was running on electricity, so without oil the City of Piura would soon be without drinking water. The Alto Piura Project – several times promised by former President Alan García – would have been the solution, but it was never executed.

The regional president, Luís Paredes Maceda, contacted the central government to ask for an extension of the credit line. The regional president also demanded respect for the regionalization process and for human rights. It was clear that Alberto Fujimori had no interest in continuing the process of regionalization initiated by the APRA. His small party – Cambio 90 – had not participated in regional elections and therefore had no representatives in those offices. After several months of trying to get Lima's support, President Paredes called for a regional 48-hour strike demanding the return of all the oil that had been extracted from the fields of Talara during the last hundred years. Indignation against the central government was enormous. The Piurans could not pay for their own oil and for that reason they would be without electricity and without drinking water. Alberto Fujimori was the great enemy of regionalization.

## **ECODEVELOPMENT**

Amid the conflict between the Grau Regional Government and the President Alberto Fujimori, a new group of congressmen resumed the representation of the interests of the French company BRGM interests. This group of congressmen argued that Tambogrande Mining Project would solve the financial problems of the regional government. However, this approach would not work. First, the regional president was in favor of agriculture in the San Lorenzo Valley and he had already manifested his point of view through official letters and speeches in the streets. Second, the members of the Regional Assembly had already adopted the perspective known as

“ecodevelopment” promoted by CEPESER and were trying to develop their own code of environmental protection. The Tambogrande Mining Project was considered an unnecessary ecological risk that would endanger local agriculture.

Two years before the installation of the Grau Regional Government, the Piuran NGO CEPESER had initiated a campaign to disseminate an approach known as “ecodevelopment” aiming to reconcile two old desires. First, the use of natural resources to achieve regional progress. Second, the conservation of local ecosystems. In November 1988 the IX National Congress of Biology had been held in the City of Piura. At that congress, a group of ecologists, engineers and NGO directors – from Piura and Lima – set up the Ecodevelopment Workshop (TADE) with the objective of reconciling environmental “conservation” efforts with the desired industrial, social and economic “development”. This group of intellectuals proposed the adoption of an approach known as “ecodevelopment” according to which development plans would maintain a harmonious balance with nature, would avoid any kind of destruction, and would be conceived within a long-term perspective rejecting any type of economic short-sightedness. The TADE promoted this approach by publishing a document entitled “The Declaration of Piura” in the regional newspapers (Correo, 1989b; El Tiempo, 1988a, 1989b; Ibáñez Talledo, 1989). Subsequently, members of CEPESER and TADE published their ideas in specialized journals, further expanding the “ecodevelopment” as a technical proposal (Earls, 1990; Fung Sánchez, 1990; ITDG / CEPESER / PIRWA / IDEAS, 1993; Torres Guevara, 1988).

As soon as the Grau Regional Government was instated, CEPESER professionals strengthened their collaborative links with officials working in that office, building strategies to protect the

region's ecological diversity. Thanks to this close collaboration, arose the idea of a regional legislative framework aiming to promote the intelligent use of all natural resources taking into account the rights of future generations.

This idea came to fruition in September of 1990, when the regional government approved Regional Decree No. 015, creating a commission made up of representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations with the objective of developing a strategy for the conservation of the environment and the use of natural resources. Weeks later CEPESER fulfilled this task by publicly delivering – in the hands of the members of the Regional Assembly – a document entitled “Development and Conservation of Natural Resources and the Environment in the Grau Region: A Proposal” (El Tiempo, 1990n). Ecodevelopment was a solution to harmonize the economic development of the region with the preservation of local ecosystems was adopted by the regional government and was well received by the press.

#### **CODE OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1990, with only a few days left before the end of his term, former President Alan García had signed Law No. 25238, constituting a commission composed of senators, deputies and technicians to review the “Environmental and Natural Resources Code” prepared by the executive. That code would be finally approved by the government of President Alberto Fujimori through the promulgation of Law No. 613 signed in September of 1990.

What is interesting about the Environmental and Natural Resources Code – Law No. 613 – is that it enforces the implementation of Environmental Impact Studies (EIA) as a requirement for

the approval of any public or private project that could cause damage to the environment. However, it did not clearly state how such studies should be drawn up or at what point in the approval process they should be presented. Law No. 613 simply stated that EIAs would be drafted by “public or private institutions duly qualified and registered with the competent authority” and that the cost would be borne by the “owner of the project or intended activity.”

This lack of clarity introduced a new element of controversy in the Tambogrande mineral debate. Those promoting the extraction of minerals cited Law No. 613 as an absolute guarantee that the environment was no longer in danger because it was already protected by Peruvian law. Opponents of the mining project criticized the attitude of the central government, which was supporting the interests of the French company without having conducted an EIA to know all possible impacts. Others, pretending a neutral position, argued that only the execution of an EIA could determine – in a scientific way – if the mining activity would result in a risk for the agricultural activity in the San Lorenzo Valley.

As a result of these initiatives, Piura ended up having two different normative bodies that seemed to protect the environment. First, the code that the Grau Regional Government developed in collaboration with non-governmental organizations such as CEPESER as dictated by Regional Decree No. 015 and under the approach known as ecodevelopment. Second, the Environmental and Natural Resources Code approved by the central government through Law No. 613. These two normative bodies officialized the conflict for Tambogrande’s mineral richness as an environmental conflict.

#### **FLORES PROMOTES MINING IN TAMBOGRANDE**

The deputy Lourdes Flores Nano – leader of the PPC and president of the congressional Energy and Mining Committee – arrived in Piura on Friday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1990 in the evening at the head of a delegation of 18 members composed of parliamentarians, advisors and staff members of the BRGM company. The next day, they set out in the morning for the Sechura Desert to inspect the extraction of the phosphoric rocks. This commission sought to take advantage of the region's enthusiasm for the autonomous management of natural resources and the opinion of entrepreneurial sectors who claimed a potential complementarity between Bayóvar phosphates and Tambogrande minerals.

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 p.m. Deputy Lourdes Flores arrived in the Tambogrande's town square. Mayor Manuel Reyes did not agree to meet with Congresswoman Flores since he had previously stated that there was nothing to talk with the promoters of mining (informant # 06). The opposition was general, the mayor represented the democratic will, and the municipality was totally at the service of social mobilization. The president of the Settlers Association, Hernán Roa Burneo, was the spokesman of the agricultural agenda. Roa – who had gained prominence during the protests against the central government – was in charge of telling Deputy Flores that the inhabitants of Tambogrande opposed mining and the settlers were willing to defend their agricultural properties at any cost (informant # 13).

In response to the rejection, the members of this commission stated that the dialogue would not be exhausted in the town square and that it would continue at a strictly “technical” level. In addition – stated the visitors – legal rights over the ore would be transferred to the Regional

Government Grau therefore it would be that office that approved or disapproved the mining project. The commission presided by Lourdes Flores Nano hoped that the economic urgency of the regional government was so severe that it would end up accepting the investment of the French company.

The next day, Mayor Manuel Reyes held a press conference in the municipality to refute the arguments of Deputy Flores. Two professionals born in Tambogrande, the engineer Porfirio Núñez, and the veterinary doctor Miguel Ontaneda, explained the risks that the mining activity exerted over the health of humans, plants and animals (informant # 06). The mayor emphasized the economic importance of San Lorenzo. The valley had an area of 52,642 hectares, produced 255,955 metric tons of food per year and the total annual production was valued at 24 million dollars (El Tiempo, 1990m).

In the City of Piura, Lourdes Flores Nano was received by the Regional Assembly. According to Flores, the region's energy problem – shortages of oil, electricity and potable water – had a “strictly financial” solution: the exploitation of the Tambogrande's polymetallic ore. Lourdes Flores emphasized two things. First, that the decision to extract these resources was the exclusive power of the Grau Region and no one else. Second, Peru already had the Environmental and Natural Resources Code – Law No. 613 – which guaranteed the protection of the ecosystems. At the meeting, the BRGM staff assured that the project had been redesigned in such a way that the extractive activities would not affect the activities of the local population and promised to pay higher salaries to those who worked for them; 500 dollars a month. This salary was a fortune in those times of crisis.

Mayor Manuel Reyes reacted by holding a popular assembly on Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup> with the participation of grassroots organizations, peasant representatives and inhabitants in general. The people ratified Mayor Reyes as president of the Defense Front agreeing to continue with the mobilization to counteract the maneuvers of the congressmen. The political and business sector, supporting the French company described as “ignorant” all those opposing the extraction of minerals and demanded “trust” in both the French company and the state (Gulman Checa, 1990; Zegarra Caminatti, 1990).

The proposal of Deputy Lourdes Flores before the Regional Government Grau did not coincide with the new environmental awareness of the time. The ideas of the Regional Assembly members and the claims of the San Lorenzo Valley settlers were in tune with “ecodevelopment,” the approach disseminated by CEPESER. The use of natural resources had to be carried out without destroying the ecosystem, within long-term schemes and had to give priority to renewable resources. On the contrary, the proposal of Deputy Lourdes Flores and the French company BRGM responded to economic and short-term criteria.

#### **SAN ROMÁN PROMOTES MINING IN TAMBOGRANDE**

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1990, the congressional president, Máximo San Román, signed Law No. 25284 declaring mining activities in the district of Tambogrande a national necessity. The law prepared by former Minister of Energy and Mines, Juan Carlos Carrasco Távora – was neither approved nor rejected by former President Alan García – just returned to Congress and was finally signed by San Román. Article N° 2 of this law authorized the French company Bureau de

Recherches Géologiques et Minières (BRGM) to participate in the mining project and Article N° 7 authorized the transfer of the special rights managing the ore from the central government to the Regional Government Grau.

The mayor of Tambogrande and also the president of the Defense Front, Manuel Reyes, celebrated on Sunday, November 25<sup>th</sup> at ten o'clock in the morning a *cabildo abierto* or popular assembly in Tambogrande's town square. Representatives of the main local organizations decided to continue the social mobilization. The following day, on Monday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, Máximo San Román, President of the Congress and First Vice-President of the Republic – the one who signed Law N° 25284 – inaugurated the forum “Present and Future of the Mining and Energy in the Grau Region” organized by the Faculty of Mining Engineering of the National University of Piura (UNP) and held at the Teatro Vegas Castillo. During his speech, San Román avoided any kind of responsibility by saying that he enacted the unpopular law following a “constitutional mandate” because that law had already been approved by both chambers during the previous government. In his speech, he asked the Piurans to “wake up” and to take advantage of their natural resources to improve their quality of life. He also criticized rice farming in the San Lorenzo Valley for its consumption of excessive water. After the opening ceremony, the mayor of Tambogrande, Manuel Reyes, approached Máximo San Román handing him a document detailing the potential damages that mining can cause to agriculture and water. Taking advantage of the presence of the press, Mayor Reyes announced that the protest would continue as it was agreed in open assemblies.



The Tambogrande Mining Project was extensively discussed in this forum. Above all, it was discussed which institution should carry out the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Several Piuran institutions volunteered to carry out the EIA, like the Faculty of Mining Engineering of the UNP and the Piuran branch of the Peruvian Association of Biologists. In this forum, representatives of the Regional Government pronounced themselves in opposition to mining exploitation in San Lorenzo arguing that according to the Constitution agricultural activities took precedence over any other economic activity.

This event also showed that the opinions of the new Piuran congressmen were divided. On one side, a group of deputies emphasized that Peru is a country with very little territory suitable for agricultural cultivation and that the majority of the population economically actively depended on agriculture. Consequently, any type of ecological risk of San Lorenzo, the Piura River basin, or over the dry forest should be avoided. On the contrary, congressmen in favor of the French company assured that the exploitation of Tambogrande's mineral ore constituted a sure path to progress and development, criticized the reaction of the mayor of Tambogrande, and asked for patience until the scientific opinion was known. On the last day of the forum, on Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, the district mayor of Tambogrande, Manuel Reyes, gave a presentation providing detailed figures on the economic importance of agriculture in the San Lorenzo and rejected the proposal of the representatives of the French company who claimed that the risks of contamination were minimal with the use of modern technology.

The following day, on Thursday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, a statement appeared in the newspapers – signed by the Settlers Association and by the Water Users Board – rejecting mining activities. In

this statement, settlers reminded the central government that the San Lorenzo Project was the most important colonization and irrigation program of the entire Peruvian history created to serve as an example of a peaceful and modern agrarian reform. Settlers reaffirmed that – in defense of their agricultural holdings – they would confront – at any cost – the central government and the Congress. That same day, hundreds of inhabitants of Tambogrande marched through the streets of the City of Piura protesting against the French company and against all the politicians supporting the mining project. The president of the Grau Regional Government, Luis Paredes Maceda, expressed his solidarity welcoming the settlers – at the door of his office and with a microphone in his hand – joining the speeches in defense of agriculture.

Months later – in February 1991 – the mayor of Tambogrande, Manuel Reyes, complied with one of the agreements taken in a popular assembly, formally requesting the intangibility of the San Lorenzo Valley before the Regional Assembly. Mayor Reyes continued to hold debates and seminars in the salons of the municipality with the presence of deputies, university professors, representatives of agricultural organizations, union leaders, and grassroots organizations.

#### **AUTO-COUP**

The cholera epidemic arrived in Piura in February of 1991. The overcrowded jail in the District of Castilla was identified as the main infection site, and the poor condition of the sanitary services of national schools was crucial in the spread of contagion. The rationing of drinking water that affected the city for several months made things worse. In the District of Tambogrande, cholera advanced without obstacles. The city drainage flowed directly into the Piura River contaminating the water consumed by hamlets and villages of the middle and lower

basin. Because there were neither medicines, nor personnel, all the sick had to be evacuated to the hospitals in Sullana or Piura. The mayor Manuel Reyes organized a public collection to address the disaster.

Neighboring countries prevented the entry of Peruvian food or burned products that had already landed. Trying to avoid contagion, Peruvians stopped consuming fish, which reduced lemon sales by approximately 60%, affecting the economy of the San Lorenzo Valley, which was the main producer of limes at the national level. The sick and the dead were counted by thousands in all departments. The economic bankruptcy and incapacity of the Peruvian state to control the epidemic was described by the Piuran – former senator, former minister, and old enemy of the San Lorenzo Project – Javier Silva Ruete, with the phrase “the state cannot deal even with cholera” (Núñez Reaño, 1991).

The rains in the first months of 1992 were extremely destructive. The main rivers of the region flooded fields, towns and cities. The regional president, Luis Paredes Maceda, sent a report to President Alberto Fujimori detailing the damages caused by the rains demanding compliance with Lima’s financial commitments to the Grau Region. Due to poor road conditions and lack of liquidity, Electronoroeste (ENO) could not get enough oil to produce electricity. The City of Piura had electricity and water only two hours and the resurgence of cholera was feared. The impact on the crop fields was equally desperate. On March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1992, the agricultural unions of the Grau Region blocked the main roads that were still passable and held a rally in which they spoke out against the neoliberal measures implemented by President Alberto Fujimori. One of

the main speakers was the Archbishop of Piura and Tumbes, Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias, who called for greater energy in the demands against state abandonment.

However, this new wave of protests was interrupted by the coup d'état perpetrated by Alberto Fujimori. On April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1992, President Alberto Fujimori closed the Congress initiating a military dictatorship – with a civilian face – that would last for eight years. The new regime closed all the regional governments, reversing the advances in the defense of the environment and in the defense of the human rights realized by the Regional Government Grau. From then on, Lima would send transitional regional presidents who would manage the great projects like Chira-Piura Project or Bayóvar Project, which would eventually return to the hands of the central government. Alberto Fujimori's coup was well received by the majority of Peruvians. State ineptitude, bureaucratic corruption, economic crisis, and the bloody endless war on terrorism allowed Fujimori to establish a neoliberal regime with broad popular support.

One of the most urgent concerns of Alberto Fujimori was the formation of a democratic veneer to legitimize his decisions. To this end, he organized the election of a new congress that would draft a new constitution to consolidate neoliberalism in Peru. Candidates for the Democratic Constituent Congress (CCD) – like all candidates in previous electoral processes – visited Piura and swore to reinstate the regionalization interrupted process, to defend the interests of the peasantry, and to promote citizen participation. The members of the CCD were elected on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1992. Afterwards, Alberto Fujimori would be involved in two other political campaigns: the organization of a national referendum to approve the change of the Constitution

and the organization of a new electoral process for his own re-election. President Fujimori would also achieve these two objectives consolidating his permanence in power.

#### **MURDER OF LUIS PAREDES MACEDA**

On July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1992, Luis Paredes Maceda was assassinated by militants of Shining Path inside the National University of Piura (UNP). Upon leaving the classroom, Paredes was startled by the explosion of a low-intensity homemade bomb and then was shot in the head. July 11<sup>th</sup> was declared a day of regional mourning. The mourners formed a long funeral procession and walked for almost five hours making stops in the offices where Paredes had served the people of Piura including the Provincial Municipality of Piura, National University of Piura (UNP), and Regional Government. Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias celebrated a mass attended by thousands. Luís Paredes Maceda was buried near two other Piuran leaders also killed by Shining Path: Ricardo Ramos Plata, and Eriberto Arroyo Mio.

Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias confronted Shining Path, putting himself on the front line one more time. The Archbishop proposed a series of silent marches for peace all around the parishes of the city of Piura. Cantuarias continued to encourage the Piurans to leave their homes to demonstrate that the Catholic people were more united and stronger than ever. On the eve of the silent marches, on July 16<sup>th</sup>, Shining Path set off a car bomb loaded with 500 kilos of anfo and dynamite on Tarata Street – in the district of Miraflores, in the city of Lima – killing more than twenty civilians and leaving about 150 wounded.

The following day, July 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. thousands of Catholics heard mass in their respective parishes remembering Luis Paredes Maceda and praying for the return of peace to Peru. Then they marched silently through the surrounding streets carrying signs rejecting the bloody subversive violence. Archbishop Cantuarias celebrated a mass in the Cathedral of Piura, attended by university officials, students, co-workers and relatives of Luis Paredes Maceda, who also prayed for the victims of Tarata Street. The terrorist attacks continued relentlessly during the following weeks. In the City of Piura, Shining Path detonated explosive devices at the Technological Superior Institute of Piura, at the Regional Bank of the North, in the Ideas Center, and in the Municipality of Piura.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

Despite the bloody war against terrorism and the unimaginable levels of pauperization to which Peruvian society descended, the Piuran environmental consciousness was consolidated during the 1980s. The El Niño phenomenon of 1983 strengthened the image of the non-governmental sector and evidenced the consequences of deforestation. Despite all the adversities, NGOs, municipalities and universities promoted the celebration of “World Environment Day,” “Earth Day” and “Piura Forestry Week”. In this decade, CIPCA’s build a seed bank with native species of the region; Radio Cutivalú aired programs on agriculture and the preservation of nature; the University of Piura (UDEP) conducted a reforestation program; the Peruvian Foundation for the Conservation of Nature organized workshops on eco-journalism; and CEPESER promoted the approach known as ecodevelopment. In January of 1991, El Tiempo celebrated its 75th anniversary by highlighting that they were at the forefront of ecology thanks to the adoption of

ecodevelopment. The editorial line of *El Tiempo* was proud of its commitment to the diffusion of an environmental and regionalist conscience (El Tiempo, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c).

Several opinion pieces were published in which topics of regional interest were discussed, such as the importance of underground water in a desert region, the protection of mangroves, the fight against deforestation, the urgency to abandon chemical pesticides, and the necessary adoption of agricultural techniques that are more environmentally friendly. These articles were accompanied by news of ecological conflicts in other regions of the country – such as the interest of foreign oil companies in extracting oil from national sanctuaries in the jungle or pollution on the south coast because of copper refinement – and international news on the fight for the conservation of whales, the hole in the ozone layer, greenhouse gases, the melting of polar ice caps, the disappearance of islands in the Pacific Ocean, environmental costs of industrial development in countries such as Taiwan, and the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

Following the trend of the previous two decades articles were published highlighting the innumerable ecological services provided by the *algarrobo* tree: temperature control, nitrogen fixation, erosion prevention, feed for livestock and supplies for natural medicines. Those who demanded the protection of the *algarrobo* referred to this tree as the “first citizen of Piura”, the “regional tree” or the “vegetable symbol of the region”. Deforestation was evidence of the poor management of natural resources. Oil was extracted from Piuran territory from the beginning of the twentieth century, but 50% of the population cooked with firewood, bread and bricks were made by burning wood and about 12,000 hectares of forest disappeared every year in the Department of Piura alone. It was a territory rich in oil, but neither the population, nor the local

industry could pay for gas or kerosene (Correo, 1989a; El Tiempo, 1989a, 1990e, 1990l, 1992; Núñez Reaño, 1989).

## **LIMES**

The 1980s was the worst decade in Peru's history and San Lorenzo suffered hard blows. However, this valley not only overcame all the burdens, but also solidified itself as the first national producer of lemons. This was the decade in which the fruits of San Lorenzo affirmed their presence in the international market. Although the government had abandoned the settlers in 1965 – canceling the construction of a modern city that would concentrate the industrialization of the products in the area known as Cruceta – the original concepts and foundations of the San Lorenzo Project proved to be correct. This valley continued to shine like an oasis of prosperity even during the worst years of massive hunger and hyperinflation.

In this decade San Lorenzo reached a total extension of 54,000 hectares, a property of approximately 7,000 settlers. Of this total, between 32,000 and 42,000 hectares were annually cultivated. Within the cultivated area there were almost 14,000 hectares of fruit trees. Each of these hectares devoted to the permanent production of fruit had – according to estimates of the time – a value of 8,000 dollars. According to 1988 data, San Lorenzo had 5,000 dairy cows, 44,000 cows for meat production, 30,000 sheep, 26,000 goats, and 14,000 pigs. And as a result of unplanned and highly disorganized efforts towards industrialization, there were six rice pillar mills and six factories of lemon essential oil, a product of high demand in the international market with which cosmetics and cookies are made (Carrasco Vásquez, 1989; El Tiempo, 1986,



1988b, 1988c, 1988d, 1988f; Zavala, 1992). During the 1980s, San Lorenzo became the most important lime-producing valley of Piura and of the whole country.

In 1988 the “First National Congress of Lime Producers” was held in the City of Piura. Engineer Jorge Riofrío Manrique – several times president of the Settlers Association and former secretary of the Agricultural League – was part of the organizing committee of this event. Engineer Godofredo García Baca – San Lorenzo’s most famous colonist and the most successful lime producer in Northern Peru – was the first presenter at the event and had explained the most appropriate techniques to obtain the best benefits of this crop. This event highlighted the importance of lime as a main element of one of the few industries in the region – the manufacture of lemon essential oil – but above all the lime was highlighted as the main ingredient in the most typical and representative dish of the coast of Peru: *cebiche* (Alvarado Chuyes, 1988; El Tiempo, 1987d, 1988e; Robles Rázuri, 1988). It was during the 1980s that the limes of San Lorenzo became one of the most important ingredients of Peruvian cuisine.

#### **NO TO THE MINE, YES TO LIFE**

During the conflict between Tambogrande and the French company BRGM, the business administrator, agricultural business specialist, future member of the collective of Piuran intellectuals known as Piura Life and Agriculture, and future minister of agriculture, Luis Ginocchio Balcazar, published a series of editorials in which he defended San Lorenzo emphasizing the comparative advantages that Piura had in establishing a solid fruit industry.

Ginocchio refuted those who maintained that Peru was a mining country arguing that more than 50% of foreign currency depended on that activity. For Ginocchio this description did not coincide with the reality of Piura where 60% of the economically active population were engaged in agriculture (Ginocchio Balcazar, 1992). His articles documented the consolidation of Piura fruits in the international market. For example, the inclusion of the “Peruvian Key Lime” flavor in the Haagen-Dasz ice cream catalog in 1987 and the arrival of the first mangos treated with a hot water system in the United States of America in 1991 (Ginocchio Balcazar, 1991a, 1991b). According to this Piuran intellectual, in a country like Peru – with so little agricultural territory – the protection of valleys such as San Lorenzo should be the number one priority.

His article titled “Pollute and Eliminate” published in November of 1990 was the clearest and most direct of all. According to Ginocchio, the export of food – especially organic – would be one of the most profitable niches in the international market during the twenty-first century. This offered insurmountable advantages for an agricultural region like Piura where there were two reservoirs of water and regulated irrigation systems. For Ginocchio, installing a mine – in the middle of the valley with the greater agroindustrial potential of all – evidenced several errors in those working in the central government: misappropriation of natural resources, failures in the use and administration of the territory, and ignorance of national reality. The author finished this article with the phrase – written in capital letters – “NO TO THE MINE, YES TO LIFE” (Ginocchio Balcazar, 1990). This phrase echoed the two great non-governmental campaigns of the 1980s. The campaign launched by Diakonia for Justice and Peace in defense of human rights, and the campaign launched by NGOs like CEPESER in defense of nature.

## Chapter Nine

1993-2004

Agriculture Yes Mining No

### **ARREST OF MAYOR CRISANTO**

In Tambogrande, the members of the Defense Front and its collaborators were the main protagonists in the municipal elections of 1993. Former Mayor Manuel Reyes reactivated the Defense Front in 1989 and sustained an intense campaign of mobilization during a three-year period. However, Fujimori's government ended up favoring the French company BRGM by signing the Law No. 25284. The population knew that the protests would have to continue and that the municipality was the key office in which to oppose the impositions of the executive and the legislature.

In this new election campaign, the four most popular candidates were linked to the Defense Front. Emilio Palacios Rosas, the first mayor to establish the municipality as a tool to support the protest movement. César Crisanto, member of the group of university students who installed the left in Tambogrande, founding member of the Defense Front in 1981, and former mayor. Marco Antonio Nima Panta, also a member of the group of young university students who installed the left in Tambogrande and also a member of the Defense Front founded in 1981. And Carlos Herrera, poet, musician and composer known for his defense of agriculture and the environment.

César Crisanto won the elections on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1993. Miguel Ortiz, also from the group of university students who supported the left in Tambogrande and also a founding member of the Defense Front in 1981, was elected as alderman. The election outcome was a response to the political context. At the national level, Alberto Fujimori controlled all the state powers as well as the mainstream communication companies. At the regional level, only the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias remained as a potential ally. The responsibility to lead the social mobilization was still on the shoulders of the mayor.

On Saturday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1993, police arrested Mayor Cesar Crisanto while he was working on his father's farm in the San Lorenzo Valley. The only accusation against him was that he had held a leading position in the Unified Education Workers' Union of Peru (SUTEP) and that he had been attended a teachers' assembly in which alleged harangues were proclaimed in favor of Shining Path in 1991. According to the reasoning of the judiciary, because some of the members of the teacher's union were militants of Shining Path, therefore Crisanto would also be part of that terrorist organization as well. The information was provided by a member of Shining Path who – in return for accepting the law of repentance – provided a long list of innocent people (informant # 03). Three days after the arrest – and without being found guilty – Mayor Crisanto was presented to the press wearing a striped suit and the numbers “119-93” printed across his chest. These kinds of presentations were frequent at the time and sought to increase the popularity of President Fujimori praising his alleged firmness against terrorism.

More than 3,000 residents of Tambogrande arrived in the city of Piura demanding the release of Mayor Crisanto. At the head of this march, were Tambogrande's first alderman, Miguel Ortiz,

and former mayor, Manuel Reyes, who reported to the press that this was a complot to facilitate the work of the promoters of the mining project. While the inhabitants of Tambogrande marched through the streets of Piura, Mayor Crisanto was placed in a cell at the penitentiary in the District of Castilla. During his transfer, the mayor reiterated that this was a reprisal for opposing the Tambogrande Mining Project.

The mayor's arrest activated a network of grassroots organizations in Tambogrande joined by other organizations from neighboring districts such as Las Lomas, Paimas and Suyo. All Tambogrande's villages – about 160 at that time – peasant committees, mothers' clubs, soup kitchens, slums, unions, lemon, mango and rice producers, teachers, students and parishes mobilized to achieve the mayor's freedom. The unions of drivers and the settlers of San Lorenzo provided the vehicles and the fuel, facilitating the travel of thousands of people to the City of Piura. In an attempt to put a stop to the demonstrations, Mayor Crisanto was transferred to the Pisci Prison in the City of Chiclayo, in the neighboring Department of Lambayeque. While all this was happening, the Minister of Energy and Mines announced that the privatization of the mineral ore in Tambogrande was already in process (El Tiempo, 1993a).

Due to the efforts made by the Municipal District of Tambogrande and former Piuran congressmen, Mayor Crisanto's case was taken into account by the Human Rights Commission of the Congress. The president of this commission, Róger Cáceres Velásquez, personally handled the case by reviewing the irregularities committed by the judge and demanded the evidence that supported the police detention. On October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1993, Congressman Cáceres arrived at Tambogrande's town square and was received by a crowd of more than 5,000 people demanding

the release of the mayor. The prosecuting authorities justified their actions by claiming the existence of a video cassette – allegedly seized at the home of Mayor Crisanto – with images of the burial of a prominent Shining Path member. Tambogrande was a city in which there were no citizen's rights. Critics of Fujimori's government, and those involved in resistance against mining, were under constant surveillance. Some disappeared into the countryside, others took refuge in the convent of the Benedictine monks, and others were surrounded by dozens of neighbors who slept on the floor to obstruct the capture if the police broke the door during the night (informant # 05). Only in Tambogrande five teachers were arrested and imprisoned.

The sustained mobilization of Tambogrande and the efforts made by the Commission of Human Rights of the Congress finally rendered results. Mayor Crisanto was released and arrived in Tambogrande on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1993. There was no evidence against him, the alleged video cassette did not exist and the defense took advantage of the weak allegations. While one repentant member of Shining Path had accused Crisanto in exchange for benefits, another member of Shining Path – captured along with the former – insisted that Crisanto was only a teacher with no ties to that terrorist group (informant # 03).

Mayor Crisanto arrived in Tambogrande where thousands of supporters awaited. Crisanto, with a Peruvian flag and a crucifix in his hands, ascended to the stand along with Congressman Róger Cáceres Velásquez and the wives of the teachers who were still in prison. Crisanto thanked the people for their efforts to achieve their liberation by reiterating that their imprisonment was aimed at frightening those opposed to mining: “The government knows our position and the opinion of the people, which is to defend the agriculture and the ecology” (Correo, 1993; El

Tiempo, 1993b). But the political persecution was unrelenting. Congressman Cáceres promised to forge on this case, though the release of the rest of the detainees would take several months more.

### **MAYOR ALFREDO RENGIFO**

On November 12<sup>th</sup>, 1995, Cesar Crisanto was re-elected as mayor of Tambogrande for his third term. Miguel Ortiz Ato – another member of the group that gave rise to the left in Tambogrande and also a member of the Defense Front founded in 1981 – was again elected as alderman. This time Mayor Crisanto would have to confront the arrival of the Canadian mining company, Manhattan Mineral Corporation (MMC), and its political consequences. The concessions of this company appeared in Piuran newspapers during the second half of 1996. Mayor Crisanto would also have to confront a new way of doing politics. Engineer Alfredo Rengifo Navarrete returned to his native Tambogrande in the early 1990s after working in countries such as Argentina and Brazil, and immediately became involved in local politics aiming to “transform” and to “modernize” the district (informant # 14). The left, led by Mayor Crisanto, was the group with more years in the municipal government, so the rivalry between Rengifo and Crisanto was instantaneous.

Alfredo Rengifo was elected mayor on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1998, after a sour campaign against the left-wing militants of Tambogrande. It was hoped that Rengifo would put an end to the supposed chaos that existed in Tambogrande by correcting the errors of what was described in the pages of *El Tiempo* – using the neoliberal language of the era – as the “authoritarian government” of the leftist Mayor Crisanto (*El Tiempo*, 1998). Nevertheless the left continued to exert influence in

the municipality through Miguel Ortiz, who was re-elected as alderman and would continue denouncing the advance of mining. With the election of Mayor Rengifo, the municipality stopped supporting the protest against the mining project.

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1999, Alfredo Rengifo was sworn in as mayor. Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias celebrated a mass in Tambogrande in front of hundreds of believers. The Archbishop stressed that it was the only mass he performed as part of the swearing in of a mayor despite having received dozens of invitations. Thanks to the extensive network of parishes, prayer and pastoral groups – in direct coordination with Diakonia for Justice and Peace – Archbishop Cantuarias knew that the conflict would soon be reactivated. During the mass, the Archbishop asked for transparency so that everybody would know the advantages and disadvantages of mining.

During his first official speech in the town square, Mayor Alfredo Rengifo said that the mine was a reality, that the minerals existed, and that in the face of these facts it was wiser to obtain additional information. Rengifo explained that it was necessary to wait for the results of the Environmental Impact Study (EIA) to then take the most beneficial decisions. Rengifo repeated that opposition to the Tambogrande Mining Project had been instrumentalized – “like a Trojan Horse” – by the politicians who ruled Tambogrande before him (El Tiempo, 1999). It was clear that Rengifo would open the doors of the municipality to the mining promoters. This time the social mobilization would have first to confront the mayor and then, after that, to find a way to enter the municipality to continue with a strategy created in 1981.

## **CANADIANS IN TAMBOGRANDE**



In 1996, the Canadian company based in Vancouver, Manhattan Mineral Corporation (MMC), acquired the mining rights held by the French company BRGM in the District of Tambogrande and began a process of acquiring new mining rights on both sides of the Piura River (De Echave, Diez, et al., 2009b, pp. 27-28). Later, the Canadians announced as a novelty the existence of gold in addition to the already known presence of copper and zinc that had been corroborated by the French engineers (Cruz & Canterác, 2006, p. 29). According to the Constitution, foreign companies cannot possess strategic resources – such as mineral deposits or water sources – at less than 50 kilometers from the international border. To overcome this obstacle, the administration of President Alberto Fujimori issued Supreme Decree No. 016-98-EM, Supreme Decree No. 014-99-EM, and Supreme Decree No. 015-99-MS declaring mining activities in Tambogrande as a matter of “public necessity.” Thanks to all these exceptions, Manhattan was able start projects in the District of Tambogrande (Cruz & Canterác, 2006; De Echave, Diez, et al., 2009b).

The contract was signed on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1999. Manhattan was granted the option of constituting a corporation in joint venture with the Peruvian state in order to exploit the deposit. According to the agreement, Manhattan would own 75% of the operations and the state-owned MINEROPERU would be the owner of the remaining 25%. The Canadians announced that they would invest US \$ 11 million in the exploration phase with a total investment of US \$ 200 million. Manhattan also announced their pledge to the Peruvian environmental laws as well as to the international standards promoted by institutions such as the World Bank and countries like the US and Canada.

Manhattan offered to permanently employ 120 people in the exploration stage and a total of 1,500 people in the excavation stage. As part of this proposal, the Canadian company announced that it would soon begin training the inhabitants of Tambogrande so that they could work in the mining activities. Manhattan began the recruitment of people interested in receiving small sums of money a day to work in rotating fifteen-day periods. The mining company succeeded in attracting mainly women who were barely connected with the agriculture along with former public employees, some teachers, and people seeking employment in the service sector. Those who signed up were sent to look after the drilling machines or to clean roads. In addition, the mining company started an aggressive advocacy campaign by giving talks in soup kitchens and schools.

This company launched a series of charitable actions and in some of these campaigns the Tambogrande District Municipality was used as an ally. In September of 1999, Mayor Alfredo Rengifo handed out kitchen utensils. The press reported that these tools were purchased from donations made by some NGOs and private companies such as Manhattan. In November, Mayor Rengifo and Manhattan agreed to build a sports complex and signed an agreement to promote small and medium-sized enterprises. The first vice president of the republic attended the signing of this agreement expressing the support of the central government. In all these events, Mayor Rengifo repeated that the opposition against the mine was promoted by political interests and asked to wait for the completion of the exploratory drillings and the Environmental Impact Study (EIA). The mayor also rejected any act of violence against the mining company and asked for calm until Manhattan released its plans to relocate the city.

**REACTIVATION OF THE DEFENSE FRONT: FDVSLT**

The left-wing militants in Tambogrande reactivated the Defense Front in order to confront the Canadian company. This group was led by former mayor César Crisanto and acting alderman Miguel Ortiz, both founding members of the Defense Front in 1981. Along with them was Segundo Moreno, future mayor of Tambogrande. This group of teachers sought allies with the purpose of reactivating social mobilization (informant # 15). Former mayor César Crisanto – the leader of the left in the district – could not assume the presidency of the Defense Front because the Alberto Fujimori’s regime had accused him – without evidence – under the charge of terrorism and presented him to the press in prison clothes. The image of Crisanto was very vulnerable and it was necessary to find a new face that would be difficult to attack (informants # 03, 05 & 06).

The teacher group began to visit institutions. The first two, were the Settlers Association – the oldest organization in San Lorenzo – and the Water Users Board – the organization managing the valley water. After several decades – and disputes between fruit producers and rice farmers – the Settlers Association was simply a voluntary organization without sufficient resources to sustain the mobilization (informant # 15). The case of the Water Users Board was absolutely different. The influence of this board was enormous because it distributed the irrigation water and no settler was able to evade the water fees.

Bruno Fossa Villar, the president of the Water Users Board, was a prominent neighbor in the valley. His family’s estate was expropriated during the military rule of the 1970s, leaving only 50 hectares after the division. Years later, this family consolidated itself as an important

economic conglomerate. Bruno Fossa headed a series of businesses including more than 600 hectares dedicated to the cultivation of fruits, and a company manufacturing and exporting lemon essential oil (informant # 15). After obtaining the necessary approval, the president of the Water Users Board announced that his resources – and the resources of the association he represented – would be at the service of the defense of agriculture. The left-wing teachers, and the president of the Water Users Board, visited Mayor Alfredo Rengifo by offering him the presidency of the Defense Front (informants # 03 & 15). Two decades of mobilization – starting from 1981 – had demonstrated that the democratic and legal legitimacy emanating from the municipality was vital to strengthen the protest movement. Alfredo Rengifo declined, on the grounds that he would not repeat the pattern of previous authorities who had used the opposition of the mining project as an electoral springboard or as an excuse to remain in power (informants # 14 & 15).

That decision was Alfredo Rengifo's worst political error. Contradicting the will of the residents of the district, Rengifo drastically reduced his chances of being re-elected and his term continued to be viewed with suspicion. The rejection of the mayor complicated the search for the public representative of the Defense Front. The solution was the formation of a "collegiate" or "shared" presidency between the president of the Settlers Association, Napoleón Nathals, Father José Manuel Gómez, head of the parish of San Andrés de Tambogrande, and the psychologist Francisco Ojeda. The new group of leaders started their activities in August 1999 under the formal name of the Defense Front of the Valley of San Lorenzo and Tambogrande (FDVSLT) (Cruz & Canterác, 2006, pp. 44-45; De Echave, Diez, et al., 2009b, pp. 31-32).

The collegiate – or shared – presidency was short-lived due to the voluntary resignation of two of its members. The public representation of the social mobilization fell exclusively on Francisco Ojeda, who would remain as the only president until becoming mayor. Ojeda was invited by those who reactivated the Defense Front, taking into account several factors. First, Ojeda did not militate in any political party and therefore would not be associated with any kind of left-wing ideology. Second, Ojeda was born in a sector of the San Lorenzo Valley known as El Pedregal, he was the son of a family of farmers, and he owned tens of hectares that he was personally and efficiently conducting. Third, Ojeda had successfully completed his psychology studies at a university in Lima. Fourth, Ojeda owned an educational center where school teachers became professionalized and earned a degree that enabled them to continue working. Ojeda put his entire infrastructure at the disposal of the mobilization. The massive assemblies of the Defense Front were held in the sport fields, some classrooms became offices, and other spaces were offered to accommodate visitors (informants # 06, 16 & 17). The psychologist Francisco Ojeda was in perfect harmony with the dominant style of doing politics in Fujimori's era. Ojeda, with no political background of any kind, was an independent professional and supposedly free of any kind of ideological load. In addition, his image was highly attractive to the rural sector.

The psychologist Francisco Ojeda assumed the representation of the social mobilization against the central government initiated by the settlers of San Lorenzo Valley in 1961 and later joined and supported by the District Municipality of Tambogrande since 1981. All strategies of protest were already tested and practiced and the last one to be implemented – the popular referendum – was already proposed during the previous decade. Ojeda would be the new representative of a population with experience protesting against the central government.

Ojeda was accompanied by highly seasoned leaders representing the major grassroots organizations in the district. Ojeda's first advisor was the engineer Godofredo García Baca, who transferred all the experience accumulated by the Settlers Association from decades of protests since 1961. Godofredo García Baca – the most famous, influential and respected colonist – was always close to Ojeda, constantly encouraging and accompanying him (informant # 16). In addition, the Defense Front was composed of left-wing leaders such as César Crisanto, Miguel Ortiz, and Manuel Reyes – all of them former municipal authorities – who transferred their extensive experience leading the social mobilization against the mining project since 1981 (informant # 36). Finally, the Defense Front had the support of the exporter Bruno Fossa who represented the industrial potential of the San Lorenzo Valley and was the voice of the thousands of members of the Water Users Board.

#### **DEBATES, POPULAR ASSEMBLIES, AND DIRECT ACTIONS**

When the Defense Front was reactivated in 1999 the term *cabildo abierto* was already completely disused but this Social Movement Organization (SMO) continued to use this practice of citizen participation to legitimize the decisions of its members. Now, the population would be summoned to the town square using the terms “neighborhood assemblies” or “popular assemblies” in continuation with a strategy started in 1981 by the founders of the Defense Front and kept alive by the left-wing militants of Tambogrande during two decades.

The first debate was convened on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1999, by Father José Manuel Gómez – at that time in charge of the parish of San Andres de Tambogrande – who invited the population, the

defenders of the agricultural agenda, and the representatives of the mining company, to participate in a forum entitled “Looking for the Truth, Implications of a Possible Exploitation of Tambogrande Polymetallic Ore”. The first *cabildo abierto* or popular assembly convened by the Defense Front was held on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1999, and attended more than 10,000 inhabitants who marched demanding for the revocation of the Mayor Alfredo Rengifo. Although supporters of the mining project tried to boycott this event by dispersing anonymous leaflets written with the subversive language of the 1980s, the Defense Front obtained the support it needed to exercise the public representation of the protest. The Municipal District of Tambogrande and Manhattan also organized public forums trying to convince the population about the supposed benefits of the mining project. Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias participated in one of these debates organized by the municipality trying to maintain an image of neutrality – which was erroneously perceived by the peasantry that he was in favor of the Canadian company – but in actuality, Archbishop Cantuarias was in search for external allies with experience in environmental conflicts.

While the Defense Front was in reorganization, and Archbishop Cantuarias was looking for the support of Lima-based NGOs with experience in environmental conflicts, the population – rural and urban – acted directly against the workers and representatives of the mining company. In the rural area, the settlers stopped mining company’s trucks and prevented the circulation of the municipal employees. Many of these cases ended up in stonings, beatings, burned vehicles, and destroyed drilling machinery. Subsequently, in the urban area, one of the most recurrent targets would be the model houses that the mining company exhibited in order to promote the relocation of the city. Manhattan had contracted the services of the National Institute of Urban Development (INADUR) to study the relocation, ensuring that they would comply with the

guidelines of institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. But the population was against that idea and the model houses were attacked several times.

The mining company reacted by opening legal proceedings against the alleged perpetrators and the anti-terrorism division of the police initiated their own investigations. The first ones to be identified as responsible for the material damages suffered by the company were the members of the Defense Front including the teacher and former mayor César Crisanto, and the psychologist and future mayor Francisco Ojeda.

#### **TECHNICAL TABLE**

Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias succeeded in convening a group of NGOs with experience in the defense of human rights and in defense of environmental causes related to mining activities. These NGOs clustered together on a platform they called the “Technical Table” whose purpose would be to advise the Defense Front on legal issues, to improve ecological and economic arguments, advocacy, propaganda and diffusion. The office created by Archbishop Cantuarias in 1987 to stop Shining Path penetration into grassroots organizations in the region and to defend the human rights of the most vulnerable population – Diakonia for Justice and Peace – would act as a bridge of trust between the Defense Front and the Technical Table. Archbishop Cantuarias had great legitimacy at the regional level – leaders representing social mobilization relied on him – and Diakonia had several years of experience working in alliance with NGOs and foreign governments supporting humanitarian causes (informants # 09, 10, 11 & 12). Among the NGOs that made up the Technical Table were Lima-based NGOs like – CEAS, Labor, SPDA,



FEDEPAZ, and CooperAcción – and international NGOs like Oxfam Great Britain, and Oxfam America.

The Episcopal Commission on Social Action (CEAS), an office of the Peruvian Episcopal Conference created in 1965 with the objective of promoting human rights following the precepts of the social doctrine of the church. Civil Association Labor, founded in 1981 with the aim of strengthening the labor movement on the southern coast of Peru, strengthening the unions of the state-owned mining company MINEROPERU and the private company Southern Peru Corporation. Little by little this organization would incorporate in its agenda other type of social initiatives encompassing broad areas including the strengthening of the women's movements, infantile nutrition, health services, urban planning, and the defense of the environment denouncing the damages caused by the Southern Peru Corporation in the Moquegua River Basin and in the Locumba River Basin (informant # 18).

The Peruvian Society for Environmental Law (SPDA) was founded in 1986 by a group of law students aiming to contribute to the construction of a new environmental legislative framework to resolve the gaps and conflicts generated by a military government that had radically transformed the country in areas as sensitive as the regulation of agricultural property and the management of natural resources (informant # 19). The Ecumenical Foundation for Development and Peace (FEDEPAZ) was founded in 1993 by a group of professionals committed to defending and promoting human rights. This organization arose after the coup initiated by Alberto Fujimori in 1992 before the necessity to defend hundreds of people unjustly accused of committing terrorist acts. Years later FEDEPAZ expanded its scope of action combining the defense of

human rights with the defense of the environment (informant # 20). CooperAcción, an organization dedicated to promoting development in coastal areas, and mining and energy resource exploitation zones, was founded in 1997 against the backdrop of the Alberto Fujimori's government intense promotion of private and international investments (informant # 21). All these NGOs clustered around the Technical Table acquired the support from Oxfam Great Britain and Oxfam America offices located in Peru.

Among the most visible contributions of the Technical Table were the recommendation to hold a district referendum and an advertising campaign – to promote the Tambogrande lemon production – highlighting its irreplaceable importance in Peruvian gastronomy – and the execution of independent environmental studies. In 2001, thanks to the legal advice provided by the Technical Table – and the financial contribution from Oxfam Great Britain – the District Municipality of Tambogrande organized the first district referendum in the world to democratically oppose a mining project (Oliver-Smith, 2010). In credit to the efforts of NGOs working in Tambogrande, this referendum became an important part of the repertoire of strategies applied in similar mobilizations. Tambogrande's model set the precedent for referendums in future cases such as Esquel in Argentina, 2003; Sipakapa in Guatemala, 2005; Majaz in Perú, 2007; and Tía María in Perú, 2009.

In 2002, the NGOs of the Technical Table hired a group of publicists to influence public opinion, highlighting the importance of Tambogrande's limes for the Peruvian gastronomic culture. The lime was used to spark a debate about the best practices in territorial management, and to convey the idea that mining cannot be practiced anywhere (informants # 09 & 21). The main

thoroughfares of Lima were flooded with colorful posters that read “Can You Imagine a Life Without Lime?”, “Without Lime There Is No Cebiche” or “Without Lime There Is No Pisco Sour”. This creative campaign – which was a framing strategy as well as a scale shifting strategy – has been extensively analyzed by those who study social movements (Haarstad, 2005, 2007; Haarstad & Fløysand, 2007).

In 2001, North American engineer, and expert in environmental and hydrological issues, Robert Moran, analyzed the documents that Manhattan used to make public on a regular basis. Moran exposed enormous weaknesses in the studies carried out by the mining company. Manhattan planned to divert the Piura River in order to dredge a massive pit in an area cyclically dominated by the El Niño phenomenon – in an ecosystem apparently arid on the surface, but rich in groundwater – and the weakest point of its studies was linked precisely with a matter as crucial as water. Moran’s report was published by Oxfam America, the Mineral Policy Center, and the Environmental Mining Council of British Columbia (Moran, 2001). In 2002, the economist Juan Aste Daffos – a Peruvian expert in environmental issues – completed an economic assessment of the San Lorenzo Valley, documenting that the agricultural model was much more profitable and sustainable than the mining model promoted by the central government. This study was published and disseminated by Oxfam America and Oxfam Great Britain (Aste Daffós, 2002).

#### **THE TAMBOGRANDE COLLECTIVE**

Some of the NGOs, associated with the Technical Table also integrated another platform called “Colectivo Tambogrande” or “Tambogrande Collective”. This collective was a much more flexible coalition consisting of the most diverse institutions such as municipalities, youth groups,

religious organizations, Piura-based NGOs, Lima-based NGOs, students and intellectuals. This institutional platform functioned on specific goals. Unlike the Technical Committee – in which each decision had to be well thought out and widely discussed among all the member organizations – the interaction was much more sporadic between the members of this collective (informant # 21).

### **CONACAMI**

The National Confederation of Communities Affected by Mining (CONACAMI) was founded in 1999 as a result of the opposition in the town of San Lorenzo de Viccos, in the Department of Cerro de Pasco, in the Central Andean region. This non-governmental organization was composed of social leaders – representatives of populations facing the multiple consequences of extractive activities – and used to work in coordination with several national NGOs – such as SPDA, Labor, and CooperAcción – and international NGOs such as Oxfam America (informants # 22, 23 & 24).

CONACAMI's founding in 1999 coincided with the reactivation of the Defense Front of Tambogrande in order to resist the Canadian mining company, Manhattan. As a result of the close collaborative relationship between the leaders of CONACAMI and the leaders of the Defense Front, both organizations benefited from each other. CONACAMI achieved a presence in the most famous environmental conflict in the country broadening its visibility worldwide. Members of the Defense Front came together with leaders from other regions of the country, learning from different experiences, visiting multiple conflict scenarios, and shared the experiences of Tambogrande throughout the national territory (informants # 27, 26 & 27). It is

important to emphasize that CONACAMI was not part of the Technical Table. The representatives and founders of CONACAMI coordinated directly with the leaders of the Defense Front without limiting or compromising their agendas with the NGOs clustered around the Technical Table (informants # 20, 23 & 24).

### **PIURA LIFE AND AGRICULTURE**

The Defense Front members also received direct advice from a Piuran intellectual group named “Piura Life and Agriculture” (Cruz & Canterác, 2006; De Echave, 2009). Among its most outstanding members were Godofredo García Baca, Fidel Torres, Marlene Castillo, and Luis Ginocchio. During the previous decades, members of this group had participated in important regional debates – discussing issues such as decentralization and agricultural industrialization – and made important contributions of the work they did as part of different Piura-based NGOs.

The agronomist Godofredo García Baca had led the settlers’ protests against the central government since his arrival in the San Lorenzo Valley in 1964. García Baca had been president of the Settlers Association, president of the San Lorenzo’s Water Users Board, representative of mango growers of Piura and of Peru, director of the Chira-Piura Project. Additionally, García Baca was a tireless advocate of lime cultivation, of organic agriculture, and of the industrialization of agricultural products in Piura (informant # 28). Biologist Fidel Torres had extensive experience researching the ecosystems of northern Peru from his position in CEPESER, a Piura-based NGO founded in the late 1970s (informants # 02 & 29). Engineer Marlene Castillo had several years of agricultural, ecological, and social research in Piura. Also, Castillo was part of a group of Piuran professionals, entrepreneurs and intellectuals demanding

the decentralization and regionalization of the country in the 1990s. Castillo was recognized by her work in support of the peasantry as the director of CIPCA – a Piuran-based NGO founded by Jesuit priests in the early 1970s – and later as director of PIDE-CAFÉ – an NGO dedicated to providing technical support to small coffee producers in the Piuran Andes (informants # 09 & 30). The business administrator Luis Ginocchio was an expert in agricultural business. In the 1990s, Ginocchio published a long series of newspaper articles defending the urgency to industrialize the agricultural products of Piura and attested to the importance of valuing the privileged climatic and geographical conditions of Piura to conquer the world food market, especially through the adoption of organic techniques.

These intellectuals accompanied the Defense Front members in numerous public debates to counter the lack of knowledge among the promoters of mining. Piura Life and Agriculture provided permanent advice to the Defense Front, sharing and transferring all the professional prestige they had gained during the previous decades (informants # 09, 16 & 30). It is necessary to emphasize that this collective of intellectuals was not part of the Technical Table. The above-mentioned Piuran intellectuals contributed directly with the members of the Defense Front (informant # 28). The study completed by biologist Fidel Torres, detailing a comprehensive list of risks of mining operations in the global epicenter of the phenomenon El Niño, is among the most important contributions made by this collective of intellectuals (Torres Guevara, 2002).

#### **CREA PUEBLO**

The Collective of Reflection and Political Action CREA Pueblo was another group of intellectuals, professors, students and university activists from Piura who joined the defense of

Tambogrande. CREA Pueblo emerged as a citizen reaction against Alberto Fujimori's attempts to remain in office for a third consecutive term. This group began its activities to protest against the dictatorship in January of 2000 by organizing marches by the streets of Piura City, and by collecting signatures to demand the return of democracy (informant # 31). The most prominent spokesperson for this group was the psychiatrist Julio Castro, who also advised and accompanied the members of the Defense Front. Castro fiercely confronted the journalists who launched and sustained campaigns to discredit and defame the Archbishop Cantuarias, the members of the Defense Front, and the NGOs around the Technical Table. It is necessary to point out that CREA Pueblo was not part of the Technical Table. The relations between CREA Pueblo and the Defense Front were personal and permanent (informants # 17 & 31).

#### **DRILLING IN THE URBAN AREA**

On November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1999, Mayor Alfredo Rengifo signed Decree No. 010-99-MDT authorizing the perforations of the Manhattan Company into the urban area. Four days later, on Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, Manhattan began its explorations in the city of Tambogrande. That same day, the neighbors hurled rocks into the gears of the drilling machinery on Ayabaca Street, overturned a pickup truck, set fire to three trucks, and damaged a house the company used as a warehouse. That night a crowd attacked the mining camp, burning two oil cisterns. To avoid the attacks, the company hired women who formed human cordons around the machinery. They also employed multiple policemen to patrol their facilities. The drilling lasted until May of the following year and also resulted in many clashes. While some neighbors stood guard on streets, sidewalks and gardens to prevent the company from drilling on their property and surrounding areas, others accepted the offered payments in exchange for access to their land unleashing bitter family

conflicts. Defense Front members were followed by strangers and their relatives received death threats. The city seemed to be seized by an enemy army.

In response to the drillings, the Defense Front held a *cabildo abierto* or popular assembly in the town square. First, this organization was still in the process of consolidation and needed the people to ratify its members. Second, popular legitimacy was needed to initiate a recall against the mayor. Third, it was necessary to approve a referendum to resolve the debate between agriculture and mining. With the support of 7,000 peasants from various sectors of the valley – holding posters saying “Agriculture Yes, Mining No” – the Defense Front leaders rejected the mayor’s position, who had accused them of being “terrorists”, and obtained the endorsement to organize a march to the City of Piura.

The march would take place some months later. On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2000, presidential candidate Alejandro Toledo – who boasted that he was reinstating democracy for Peruvians – visited the San Lorenzo Valley, promising that his government would give priority to agriculture over any other type of activity. In only a few days time, the Peruvians would elect the new president while Alberto Fujimori was seeking his second re-election. In this context, on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, more than 3,000 tambograndinos marched through the City of Piura with slogans such as “San Lorenzo Is Not For Sale” and “Agriculture Yes, Chino No.” One of the objectives of the demonstration was to show the world that the mining project was imposed by a dictator that only protected the interests of foreign companies. In the atrium of the cathedral, the people of Tambogrande rejected the illegal government of Alberto Fujimori and thanked the support given by the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias.



## MAYOR RENGIFO CHANGES OPINION

On June 12<sup>th</sup>, members of the Defense Front and Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias met with the Canadian president of Manhattan, Graham Clow, who recognized the Defense Front as a legitimate interlocutor pledging to withdraw all judicial charges against the leaders of the mobilization. A couple of weeks later, the leaders of the Defense Front held a popular assembly outside the San Andrés Parish, in the town square, to report on Graham Clow's offerings. Thousands of villagers decided to continue with the revocation process against the mayor and gave their support – once again – to Francisco Ojeda to remain as the president of the Defense Front.

In July, the Peasant Community Santiago Apostle of Locuto, located in the southern shore of the Piura River, broke the agreement signed with Manhattan. Hundreds of commoners gathered in assembly, decided to dismiss their representatives for bad financial management, and in protest against the mining company for not adhering to the multiple promises they had offered. Now the new leaders of this peasant community were affiliated with the Defense Front, and Manhattan no longer had permission to operate within the dry forest on the southern bank of the Piura River (informants 09 & 32). Similarly, the leaders of the Peasant Community Ignacio Távara Pasapera – also located in the same ecosystem – were organizing resistance against Manhattan and coordinating with the Defense Front (informant # 33).

The Defense Front had the backing of the organized population on both sides of the Piura River, received advice and logistical support from the NGOs of the Technical Table, and was publicly

recognized as a legitimate actor by the president of Manhattan. Facing this situation, Mayor Alfredo Rengifo called for an open assembly or *cabildo abierto* in the town square on August 20<sup>th</sup> to announce to crowds of thousands that he had decided to support the agricultural agenda, to renounce the mining project, and to defend the district referendum result even if he would be revoked. Mayor Rengifo explained that he could not prevent the encroachment Manhattan because this company had been present in the area since 1996 – before he was elected – and because this company already had the endorsement of the central government. Mayor Rengifo also tried to end rumors by reassuring the crowd that Manhattan had not financed his electoral campaign and that all the work executed by his administration was completed without any mining company funds.

As in the previous two decades since 1981, the municipality was again focused on the agricultural agenda. But unlike the previous stages of the protest, the mayor was not a member of the Defense Front. On the contrary, there was a conflict between these two levels of popular representation. This singularity generated a problem of representativeness between the District Municipality of Tambogrande and the Defense Front. Which one of these two institutions would be the legitimate voice of the population? Mayor Rengifo invoked the Organic Law of Municipalities stating that the mayor was the representative of the inhabitants of the district, but Francisco Ojeda had the direct support of the population and the members of the Defense Front constantly held popular assemblies to legitimize their decisions. This problem would be resolved by the election of Francisco Ojeda as the next mayor of Tambogrande.

Three days later, on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Defense Front held a district strike protesting the relocation of the city. The roads were blocked, preventing traffic to Piura, Sullana, Ayabaca, Las Lomas, Suyo, and to the Ecuadorian city of Loja. As in previous occasions, thousands of apocryphal fliers – written in a language similar to that used by the Shining Path during the 1980s – were circulated in the streets of the city to discredit the protest.

### **BURNING THE MINING CAMP**

In February of 2001, the Defense Front called for a 48-hour strike urging President Valentin Paniagua repeal all of the legal provisions – approved during Alberto Fujimori’s authoritarian regime – that allowed mining activities in the District of Tambogrande. President Paniagua was serving as interim president since Alberto Fujimori resigned by fax from Japan. The Defense Front demanded that all mining company activities cease until the next democratically elected government assumed state functions.

Before dawn, the roads to cities like Sullana, Piura, and Ayabaca, were already blocked at several points with stones, shrubs and logs. During that morning – Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup> – a group of approximately 600 demonstrators marched towards the mining company’s camp and police arrested three young men. But instead of being escorted to the police station, the youths were held inside the camp. The population threw stones on the policemen who guarded the place demanding the release of the prisoners. The police fired tear gas and the demonstrators dispersed. This clash left an undetermined number of wounded on both sides. Around noon, the Defense Front representatives and a group of aldermen entered the mining camp to coordinate the release of the youth. Outside, the number of people surrounding the camp grew. Just as the door was

opening a new shower of stones began. Approximately 4,000 protesters, chanted the motto “Agriculture Yes, Mining No”, and did not hear the members of the Defense Front who were exiting. A barrage of stones hit the heads and bodies of the Defense Front mediators. The police managed to disperse the protesters by firing more tear gas. During this confrontation, the model houses built by the company suffered serious damages.

During the night the electrical utility service was interrupted and the offices that Manhattan had near the town square were attacked. Some press bolstered support of the mining project by publishing articles citing anonymous sources alleging that the attacks were perpetrated by “one hundred hooded thugs” who “terrorized” the local population acting in a state of “drunkenness”. According to these accounts in favor of the mining company, some neighbors thought that the hoodlums were “subversives” or “terrorists” (Correo, 2001c, 2001e). The next morning, the documents, desks, and other furniture of the mining company offices were piled up and burned in the vicinity of the plaza.

Shortly before noon on Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, Manhattan’s camp was surrounded by about 6,000 protesters throwing stones at the 500 policemen in the interior. A helicopter from the National Police approached, but could not land. At 12:10 p.m., the policemen surrendered, knocked down one of the back walls with an armored personnel carrier vehicle, and left the place. Three official pickup trucks had to be left behind because they would have hindered the escape. The tear gas bombs were gone, the reinforcements never arrived, and there were well over eighty wounded policemen. As the police marched outside the city, the mining company’s president watched from a helicopter, assessing the defeat. Thousands of demonstrators pierced

the perimeter wall with picks and shovels, demolished the model houses, destroyed offices, and burned documents. The fire consumed drilling machines, fuel tanks, cargo trucks and police vehicles.

A few hours later, the Archbishop of Piura and Tumbes, Oscar Cantuarias, called a press conference that was transmitted live by Cutivalú Radio. Next to Cantuarias were the Bishop of Chulucanas, Daniel Turley, and the District Mayor of Tambogrande, Alfredo Rengifo. Cantuarias insisted that the arrival of Manhattan had created division in the streets, inside families, and at every level of the social fabric. Cantuarias criticized the politicians in power in Lima who authorized the imposition of a mining company in defense of an economic model that benefits few. For the Archbishop, agriculture was the best option and there was no guarantee of the future behavior of politicians or mining companies. Bishop Turley represented the families of his religious jurisdiction – bordering the District of Tambogrande – opposing the mining project as a threat to agriculture and the environment. Mayor Rengifo criticized those invoking the principle of “national interest” as a pretext to defend a “macroeconomic” perspective. These three authorities demanded the immediate withdrawal of the mining company. At 5:00 p.m., an estimated 12,000 people gathered at Tambogrande’s town square. The villagers chanted “Agriculture Yes, Mining No” while waving Peruvian flags and green flags. The first speaker was Francisco Ojeda, who interpreted the burning of the mining camp as a human reaction to the indignation and the threat. According to Ojeda this event was the end of the frontal struggle against Manhattan and all the efforts should concentrate on seeking the repeal of the legal provisions issued by the central government.

The following day, on Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, candidate Alejandro Toledo arrived in the region in search of votes. During his speeches in cities such as Piura, Sullana, and Chulucanas, Toledo referred to Tambogrande, saying that he respected foreign investment but above all he respected the popular will. Toledo promised agricultural credits – by saying that “agriculture is the best we know how to do” – promised to restore democracy in the country, to create “dignified jobs”, and to implement the Alto Piura Project (El Tiempo, 2001e; Pacheco, 2001).

### **MURDER OF GODOFREDO GARCÍA BACA**

A month after the burning of the mining camp – and just a week before the presidential elections – the settler Godofredo García Baca was ambushed by a hooded man and killed with a bullet in his heart. The investigations carried out by family members determined that the criminal was a well-known local delinquent who had served in the Peruvian Air Force. The engineer García Baca was the main element of continuity in the long mobilization of the settlers. Since his arrival in the San Lorenzo Valley, he had led absolutely all of the protests against the central government during four decades; in defense of reservoir water against cotton-producing landowners during the 1960s and then against foreign companies that sought to extract minerals from the subsoil during 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

Godofredo García Baca was born in 1936 on the Sol Sol hacienda where his father rented farmland (informant # 34). After finishing primary school in Chulucanas, he moved to the City of Piura to attend secondary school in the San Miguel School graduating in 1953. While in Lima, he studied agronomic engineering at the Agrarian University of La Molina specializing in entomology. After some years of teaching at the Agrarian University, Godofredo García Baca

arrived to San Lorenzo in 1964 and since that year his farm became a learning center for the students at the Agrarian University of La Molina, University of Piura (UDEP), and the National University of Piura (UNP), in search of new techniques or advice to complete their research (Alzamora Cáceres, 2001; Correo, 2001a, 2001d; El Tiempo, 2001f; Ginocchio Balcázar, 2001).

The engineer García Baca offered free training in the cultivation of fruits, promoted the adoption of organic agriculture, and perfected drainage techniques to cope with rainy seasons (informant # 28). The plot of Godofredo García Baca's farm was not only famous for its high productivity, but also for having weathered several El Niño events suffering minimal damages due to the efficiency of the drainage systems that he himself had designed and implemented (informants # 28, 31 & 35). In recognition of all these efforts, Godofredo García Baca received the San Luis Prize for the Conservation of Nature in 1993 (informants # 28 & 31). One of the most visible contributions of García Baca was the introduction of the Neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*), a native species from India that offers innumerable ecological services (informants # 28, 31 & 36).

Godofredo García Baca occupied all possible positions in the valley. He was the school director of the Instituto Nacional Agropecuario N° 54, president of the Settlers Association, president of the Water Users Board, founder of the Defense Front in 1981, chairman of the mango producers' committee of San Lorenzo, president of the association of mango producers of Peru, and the executive director of the Chira-Piura Project (informant # 02). The only thing in which García Baca did not succeed was in getting his APRA colleagues to choose him as a candidate for the Congress (informant # 35).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2001, Godofredo García Baca was heading towards his plot located in a sector of the San Lorenzo valley known as Somate Bajo. The truck was driven by his son, Ulises Garcia Perez. At 8:45 a.m. the truck had to slow down as one of the curves of the trail was blocked by branches and stones. A guy with his face covered came out of the bushes and without saying a word shot Godofredo García Baca. Relatives, friends and villagers considered the assassination to be a premeditated act aimed at frightening those opposing the mining company. Godofredo García Baca was the most qualified settler to criticize and refute the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The District Municipality of Tambogrande declared three days of mourning and the press recalled the murder of two other famous APRA militants – Ricardo Ramos Plata, and Luis Paredes Maceda – both killed by Shining Path when terrorism was the main enemy of the Piurans.

Godofredo García Baca was buried on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001. Thousands of people marched from the parish of San José Obrero to the Jardines del Recuerdo Cemetery. During the procession, the coffin was covered with one of the oldest flags of the APRA: a red flag with a yellow silhouette of South America in the center. On the day of the burial – and still without doing any investigation – the police ruled out the mining company as a possible intellectual author stating that the motive was robbery. Two days later, APRA's candidate, Alan García, held a rally in the City of Piura – as part of his presidential campaign – paid tribute to the memory of Godofredo García Baca, promised to support agricultural interests, and pledged to continue with the defense of San Lorenzo Valley. On April 8<sup>th</sup>, the Peruvians held an election, but none of the candidates surpassed 50% of the votes. There would have to be a runoff to chose between Alenjandro



Toledo and Alan García. Both candidates had promised to defend the San Lorenzo Valley, so the inhabitants of Tambogrande kept waiting.

### **ZAPATA BROTHERS**

Due to the authorities' disregard, the sons of Godofredo García Baca sought witnesses to investigate the crime. From this effort, Meléndez Zapata Atoche was identified as the main suspect. This young man had served in the Peruvian Air Force and was a member of a large family involved in crimes committed with similar characteristics which included ambushes, balaclavas, and 38 caliber revolvers. This family's house was near the property of Godofredo García Baca and near where the previous crimes were committed. The Zapata brothers were feared in the area, famous for the impunity they enjoyed, and because they were always released for lack of evidence.

The police investigation was extremely inefficient and the judicial authorities collaborated very little. The whole process – from beginning to end – was plagued with errors and oversights. The police did not seal the scene of the crime nor did they look for the prints that the killer might have left in the vicinity or in the truck. Immediately the investigation was directed against the son of Godofredo García Baca, who was the first one to undergo the atomic absorption test. The Zapata brothers were subjected to the atomic absorption test more than fifteen days after the murder and the judge never ordered a search of the house of the family under suspicion.

A thirteen-year-old girl saw Meléndez Zapata Atoche getting out of the truck and taking off the rag that was covering his face as he fled through the bushes. The girl had identified the killer, but

the Peruvian justice representatives did not respond. The Zapata brothers' legal defense tried to dismiss the testimony alleging "ophthalmological" problems and then "mental" problems in the witness. To prevent the girl's statements from being withdrawn, psychiatrist Julio Castro – founder of the group CREA Pueblo – was permanently present, corroborating the coherence with which the girl answered the questions from the judges and prosecutors. During the following months and years the police and judicial authorities continued to act in the same way, allowing the suspect to remain at large.

#### **PRESENTATION OF SIGNATURES**

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the Tambogrande District Mayor, Alfredo Rengifo, the Archbishop of Piura and Tumbes, Oscar Cantuarias, and the Bishop of the Diocese of Chulucanas, Daniel Turley, presented to the press 28,374 signatures collected as part of the "Agriculture Yes, Mining No". The signatures were presented to the transitional president, Valentín Paniagua, to the Congress, to the Canadian Embassy, and to other various international institutions such as the World Bank, in order to demonstrate that the population rejected the mining project (informants # 16 & 18).

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001, just 30 days after the assassination of Godofredo García Baca, members of the Defense Front met with Energy and Mines Minister Carlos Herrera Descalzi, and with the Manhattan CEO in Peru, Roberto Obradovich. The Archbishop of Piura and Tumbes, Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias, participated as an observer. The Defense Front members were clear in stating that Manhattan should not return neither to the city nor to the valley. The Defense Front denounced the ongoing defamation campaign in which everybody in the district was labeled a "terrorist." In contrast, the minister argued that the signed agreements between the Peruvian state

and the Canadian company had to be honored, that the completion of the EIA of the mining company was absolutely necessary in order to make informed decisions, and that the conflict was the result of inaccurate information. Finally, the minister called for confidence because the legislation guaranteed protection to the environment.

#### **ROBERT MORAN'S FIRST CONFERENCE**

Thanks to the combined efforts of Diakonia for Justice and Peace and the international NGOs around the Technical Table, the North American specialist in geological sciences and hydrology, Robert Moran, gave a lecture on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001, in the City of Piura. Based on the study of the documents that the mining company made public, Moran revealed that Manhattan was operating well below the standards demanded in countries like US or Canada. Moran pointed out several weaknesses in the proposal of the mining company. For example, the company consistently repeated that it would use modern “technology” to minimize environmental impacts, but never provided information on the type of “technology” it planned to use. One of most alarming shortcomings was related to the use – or protection – of groundwater and surface water. This crucial issue was virtually absent in all Manhattan documents.

The intellectuals in the collective known as Piura Life and Agriculture had already participated in innumerable debates breaking the monopoly on the invocation of technical arguments. The Piura Vida and Agriculture members had demonstrated with scientific arguments the high vulnerability of the ecosystem that would be impacted by this mining company. These Piuran intellectuals were backed by more than two decades of research done by Piuran NGOs – such as CEPECER and CIPCA – embodied in hundreds of publications. Now the North American

hydrologist Robert Moran placed the scientific debate on a global stage. Moran's most important contribution was to show – with the evidence produced by the mining company itself – that Manhattan's studies were well below international standards. Moran's involvement made it virtually impossible for Manhattan representatives shield themselves invoking the standards promoted by the World Bank or by first world countries.

The Robert Moran conference made the participation of international NGOs in the Technical Table more visible than ever. The presence of the two offices that Oxfam had in Peru – the Oxfam America office, and the Oxfam Great Britain office – were particularly noteworthy. Moran's studies had been directly supported by Oxfam America (with headquarters in Washington, DC, USA), by the Mineral Policy Center (also with headquarters in Washington, DC, USA), and by the Environmental Mining Council of British Columbia Vancouver, Canada). The international support of the inhabitants of Tambogrande did not go unnoticed by representatives of the central government.

Two days after Moran's conference, the president of Manhattan in Canada, the manager of Manhattan in Peru, and the manager of Klohn Crippen – the company responsible for the elaboration of the Environmental Impact Study (EIA) – met in Lima with Oxfam Great Britain's representative in Peru, Martín Beaumont, and the hydrologist Robert Moran. At the meeting, Oxfam's representative explained that the Technical Table was not against mining in general, only against the destruction of one of the country's most productive agricultural valleys. But this meeting was not productive either. The representatives of Manhattan defended their studies – blaming the population for obstructing the collection of data – and delegitimized members of the

Defense Front accusing them of being influenced by Shining Path (Semana, 2001). From this moment on, the representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Mines would constantly quote and call Oxfam's contributions claiming to be considering international standards.

## **EXTERNAL RESOURCES**

In August of 2001, Oxfam America published the report written by Robert Moran (Moran, 2001). That same month, with the objective of distributing the criticisms against the EIA raised by the American Robert Moran – and by Peruvian professionals such as Fidel Torres, and Juan Aste – Diakonia for Justice and Peace published in El Tiempo on August 19<sup>th</sup> an extensive booklet titled “A Look for a Decision: Mining and its Impacts in Tambogrande” (El Tiempo, 2001j).

The booklet begins by recollecting the history of the San Lorenzo Valley remembering the monumental public investment and the loans granted by the World Bank. Now, all those invested fiscal resources are threatened by a Canadian “junior” mining company – which had had no previous experience in mining operations – that had come to the country in a climate of global deregulation. Second, Diakonia pointed out that the laws regulating Environmental Impact Studies (EIA) are weak, flexible, and in favor of mining companies. These studies are elaborated and financed by the mining company and the consultants in charge of its elaboration never abound in the potential negative impacts facilitating the work of the politicians who will approve those studies. Although local communities know in great detail the characteristics of the environment they inhabit, they lack the necessary training or the scientific credentials to respond to an EIA. Diakonia criticized the attitude of those who constantly denied potential impacts

despite the fact that the EIA was not yet concluded. Third, Robert Moran's assessment showed that Manhattan's studies did not meet the standards set by the British Columbia Office of Environmental Studies in Canada, or the standards of the World Commission on Dams. Fourth, although the ecosystem was rich in groundwater – and the *algarrobos* were there as living proof of it – the documents published by Manhattan showed the company's lack of interest in detailing the possible impacts on the water system.

Manhattan harshly criticized the findings of engineer Robert Moran. In response, Oxfam America published a letter signed in Washington pointing out that Manhattan – on its website – ensured and promoted the access to “external resources” by the local population in order to allow “effective and informed negotiations”. In this letter, Oxfam made it clear that its intervention was due to an invitation made by the Defense Front and that its intervention aimed at to provide all those “external resources” that the population of Tambogrande needed (El Tiempo, 2001i).

#### **PRESIDENT TOLEDO**

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2001, Peruvians elected Alejandro Toledo as their new president. A week later, the Defense Front published a letter addressed to the elected president and to the new congressmen demanding the immediate withdrawal of Manhattan for having benefited from decrees signed during the corrupt dictatorship of Alberto Fujimori (El Tiempo, 2001g). The candidate Alejandro Toledo had visited San Lorenzo Valley twice promising – among other things – to hold a referendum to address the problem. But Alejandro Toledo – already seated in his new office – repeatedly refused to meet with the Defense Front members. The dominant agenda in the central government was evident. President Toledo gave a speech in Arequipa supporting mining

activities as a fundamental strategy to achieve the country's economic and development objectives. In addition, President Toledo appointed Pedro Pablo Kuczynski – who had visited Tambogrande in 1981 to promote the mining project when he was minister of energy and mines – as the new minister of economy. Since the new president did not fulfill his promises, the mobilization would have to continue. From now on all efforts would concentrate on holding the popular referendum. In a popular assembly held on June 17, people of Tambogrande decided that a referendum was the only way left to resolve the conflict in the most democratic way possible.

#### **RELIGIOUS MEETING IN SULLANA**

On July 14<sup>th</sup>, nuns and priests – 170 in total – from different parts of Piura and Tumbes gathered in Sullana. These religious representatives decided to oppose the Tambogrande Mining Project and elaborated a pronouncement that would be published days later. Right after the meeting, Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias advanced to the press the main criteria discussed. First, they objected to mining activities in Piura based on ecological arguments. According to Monsignor Cantuarias, it was enough to observe the Piuran desert coast to notice the presence of the *algarrobo* trees. These trees are the indication that there is underground water sustaining life, although on the surface we see a sandy landscape. The religious leaders viewed the proposed open-pit mining operations – and the massive treatment of minerals with chemicals such as cyanide, arsenic and others – as a serious threat to the ecosystem.

Second, the religious community objected on the basis of political arguments. According to Cantuarias, there were neither laws, nor adequate state agencies to oversee mining companies, and the politicians' records evidenced their constant subordination to large private investments.

Third, they objected on the basis of economic arguments. The majority of lemons and mangoes produced in Piura went to the international market. Cantuarias asked what would happen if developed countries stopped buying those fruits because of fears of contamination. According to the Archbishop, in comparison to mining, “agriculture gives less income, but to more people” (Elías, 2001).

The pronouncement written in Sullana constitutes an important document to understand the combined arguments that supported the rejection of the mining project in this period of social mobilization: protection of the environment, respect for democracy and defense of human rights. According to the signers of the declaration, people need nature to live and the right to life is an indisputable human right. In addition – in a democratic system – communities potentially affected by mining should previously consent or reject any proposal that might jeopardize their human rights (El Tiempo, 2001h). This group of religious leaders reiterated that the most appropriate solution would be a referendum.

#### **MUNICIPALITY CREATES THE REFERENDUM**

The municipality was the source of legal legitimacy of the referendum. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the Tambogrande District Municipality – under the leadership of Mayor Alfredo Rengifo – created the “Consulta Vecinal” or “Neighborhood Consultation” as a mechanism for citizen participation through Council Agreement No. 020-2001-MDT-CM and Municipal Ordinance No. 012-2001-MDT-C. The district referendum – or “Neighborhood Consultation” as it was called in the legal documents issued by the municipality – was a landmark in Peruvian history and a precedent that would be replicated in other countries.



The promoters of the mining project opposed the consultation arguing that the population did not have enough information to make adequate decisions because the EIA was not yet finished. But those who defended the referendum asked why citizens are considered “well-informed” when choosing presidents, congressmen or mayors that never fulfill their electoral promises. These proponents argued that a referendum is as democratic as the national elections are. Supporters of the neighborhood consultation noted that representatives of the central government did not even attempt to file an unconstitutional action against the legal provisions issued by the Tambogrande District Municipality because the new mechanism was absolutely legal (El Tiempo, 2002b; Fairlie, 2002; Medina Pacherre, 2002; Rosa Vega, 2002).

#### **FIRST ROUND TABLE**

On October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2001, the members of the Defense Front, the mayor of Tambogrande and other representatives of agricultural, peasant and religious organizations met with the Minister of Energy and Mines, Jaime Quijandría, and the Minister of Agriculture, Álvaro Quijandría, in the Ombudsman’s office in Piura. That same day a letter written by Defense Front was published in newspapers asking for the nullity of the legal exceptions granted by Alberto Fujimori’s authoritarian regime in favor of Manhattan, recalling the promises made by the candidate Alejandro Toledo in San Lorenzo, and demanding the holding of a popular referendum (El Tiempo, 2001c; La República, 2001).

At the meeting, the proponents of the agricultural agenda maintained that the referendum would be the most democratic mechanism to resolve the conflict. The ministers expressed the urgency

for completion of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) arguing that it was the only document that could determine the compatibility between agriculture and mining. The Quijandría brothers subordinated their opinions to the culmination of the EIA. As long as this study did not conclude, neither of the two ministries would be officially pronounced. In order to overcome the obvious distrust of an EIA – financed and supervised by the mining company – the ministers announced that the central government would hire an independent consulting firm – selected by the civil society of Piura – to evaluate the quality of the EIA. But this meeting ended in a deadlock. While members of the Defense Front demanded that a district referendum should be held first, the ministers demanded that the mining company should culminate the EIA first.

Days later, these ministers formalized their proposal through Office No. 745-2001-EM/DM addressed to the Ombudsman. In that document, these ministers indicated that Manhattan had received four additional months to complete the EIA, that the government would evaluate the EIA “as transparently as possible,” and that the state would hire a consultant selected by Piuran civil society to review the EIA. It is important to note that in the document the ministers stated they were acting in accordance with the recommendations of the North American expert Robert Moran and that they even enclosed a copy of Moran’s report published by Oxfam America.

#### **MARCH WITH MANGOES AND LIMES**

In response to the proposal, on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Defense Front held a popular assembly in Tambogrande. Thousands of people took – among others – two important decisions: not to continue meeting with the representatives of the central government unless the referendum is executed first and to march towards the City of Piura demanding the execution of the referendum

as a democratic mechanism to solve the conflict. The Tambogrande District Municipality had requested the execution of the referendum – before the National Electoral Process Office (ONPE) and before the National Elections Board (JNE) – and was waiting for the official answers (Rengifo Navarrete, 2002).

The relations between the president of the Defense Front, Francisco Ojeda, and the Ombudsman, Walter Albán, deteriorated rapidly. Ojeda called into question the neutrality of this office lamenting that the Ombudsman had not defended the human rights of Tambogrande over the interests of a foreign mining company. The Ombudsman declared not to share “extreme” positions (Correo, 2001b; El Tiempo, 2001b, 2001d). Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias – representing the Piuran clergy – supported the Defense Front’s decision. A popular consultation should be held. The legal provisions approved by the Tambogrande Municipal District creating the neighborhood consultation as a mechanism of citizen participation appeared in the official newspaper El Peruano in its edition corresponding to November 24<sup>th</sup> (El Tiempo, 2001a). There were very few days left until the planned march and the mayor of Tambogrande was still awaiting the response from the ONPE or the JNE.

On November 28<sup>th</sup>, approximately 10,000 tambograndinos arrived in the city of Piura to demand the implementation of the neighborhood consultation and ONPE and JNE were not yet officially pronounced. This time the people of Tambogrande marched while carrying mangoes, lemons, watermelons, and papayas, to display the agricultural richness of San Lorenzo and to galvanize public opinion around food security and cultural gastronomy. Chanting the motto “Cantuarias, Friend, Tambogrande Is With You” the crowd walked towards the offices of the Archbishop.

Monsignor Oscar Cantuarias greeted them from the balcony and supported the efforts with an invigorating speech. Then the people continued their march towards the main square of the city chanting slogans like “The People, Claims, Popular Consultation,” “Agriculture Yes, Mining No” and “Water is a Treasure.” Once in the atrium of the cathedral, the speeches began with a tribute to the memory of Godofredo García Baca.

Finally, ONPE responded on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2002, by issuing Resolution No. 020-2002-J/ONPE pledging to provide legal and technical advice in order to conduct the neighborhood consultation. Although this office was originally expected to conduct the electoral event, Mayor Alfredo Rengifo considered it a triumph since this government office was recognizing the right of the population to decide on issues of great importance to their future and well-being. Due to the limited assistance offered by the ONPE, the responsibility for executing the referendum fell to the District Municipality of Tambogrande.

Manhattan reacted by stating that the resolution issued by the ONPE was “illegal” since ONPE had no jurisdiction over mining matters. The Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) issued Resolution No. 066-2002-EM / DM challenging the resolution issued by the ONPE. Ministry spokespersons claimed that the ONPE had no competence in environmental matters and reaffirmed that the MEM was the only authority that could approve or disapprove an EIA. Proponents of the mining project insisted that the EIA should first be concluded, because without such information the referendum would be just a simply “emotional” or “blind” event.

#### **OXFAM FUNDS THE REFERENDUM**

Days continued to pass, and ONPE still did not resolve the challenge posed by the Ministry of Energy and Mines. Under these circumstances, Mayor Alfredo Rengifo took the initiative and convened the Neighborhood Consultation through Decree No. 003-2002-MDT-A. At a conference held on April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Municipal Theater, Mayor Rengifo announced that Oxfam Great Britain would fund the referendum with a budget of US\$ 22,000. The money would not be delivered to the municipality, but directly delivered by Oxfam to the private consultant who would organize the event, Fredy Giraldo, who had previously worked for the ONPE and was recognized as an expert on electoral matters (informants # 12, 14 & 39).

The Neighborhood Consultation would be held on June 2<sup>nd</sup> and the transparency of the event would be verified by international observers who were convened and invited by the Technical Table. Alfredo Rengifo mentioned he had overheard in the corridors of the Ministry of Energy and Mines that they would not allow “a small town to dictate the country’s mining policy.” Rengifo replied that he would not permit the “sacrifice of a small town” under the excuse of a fake “national necessity” (Coronado, 2002; Correo, 2002a; Mauricio Trelles, 2002). Six days later, ONPE published the Resolution Jefatural No. 098-2002-J/ONPE rejecting the challenge raised by the Ministry of Energy and Mines. Until that moment, everything indicated that the ONPE would advise the Neighborhood Consultation.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, appeared – in the official newspaper El Peruano – the Resolution No. 137-2002-J/ONPE leaving no effect on any of the previous resolutions. The ONPE would not participate in any way, not even giving advice. Mayor Alfredo Rengifo and consultant Fredy Giraldo reassured the public by saying that ONPE’s withdrawal would not affect the implementation of the

Neighborhood Consultation. First, the District Municipality of Tambogrande remained as the source of legality as it always was the case. Second, all the necessary logistics were guaranteed thanks to the economic contribution of Oxfam Great Britain. Third, the transparency of the process would be certified by international observers summoned by the Technical Table.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD CONSULTATION**

The Neighborhood Consultation was held on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2002. Thousands of people from all corners of the district went to vote. It was rainy season and many had to cross the Piura River floating over inner tubes. More than forty international observers – from countries such as Canada, Germany, Holland, Italy, and France – ensured the transparency of the process filling the void left by state offices that refused to participate in the referendum. The Electoral Committee and the Center of Computation were installed in the Municipal Theater. The official results were presented at 8:30 p.m. The “No” won with 93.95% of the casted votes. In front of national and foreign journalists, Mayor Alfredo Rengifo stressed that this was a democratic precedent that had to be replicated in other districts with similar conflicts and – at the same time – an international example of citizen participation because in a “globalized” world the important decisions “are not taken in the central government anymore” (Correo, 2002b, 2002c; El Tiempo, 2002a).

In Lima, Defense Front President, Francisco Ojeda, delivered the results of the Neighborhood Consultation at the Canadian Embassy and explained that the referendum was made in response to a legal body that prevented citizen participation. In the congress, Mayor Alfredo Rengifo defended the Neighborhood Consultation as a victory in the history of Peruvian democracy and a

model of citizen participation in a globalized world and Ulises García Pérez continued denouncing all police and judicial irregularities that prevented punishing those who silenced his father. Representatives of the central government continued to subordinate the official opinion of the ministries to the culmination of the EIA denouncing the protests in Tambogrande as a campaign to drive away foreign investment, and local promoters of the mining project continued to accuse Oxfam of being a foreign institution that was intruding on national issues aiming to perpetuate Peruvians in poverty.

## **SECOND ROUND TABLE**

The Ministry of Energy and Mines ignored the outcome of the Neighborhood Consultation and continued with the legal procedure. The Defense Front responded by announcing that Tambogrande would not participate in the Information Workshops or in the Public Hearings. Instead, there would be a 72-hour strike. In this context, the Ombudsman's Office organized another round table. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, representatives of the central government and agricultural advocates gathered in front of baskets with lemons and mangoes. The round table was led by the Ombudsman, Walter Albán. Oxfam Great Britain's representative, Martin Beaumont, participated as an observer.

Jaime Quijandría, Minister of Energy and Mines, and Alvaro Quijandría, Minister of Agriculture, announced that a new regulation for citizen participation in the process to approve EIAs was in preparation. These ministers promised a longer comment period on the EIA and the celebration of the Informative Workshops and Public Hearings took into consideration the closest locality to the intended mining operations. They also handed out a list of 16 "internationally qualified"

consulting companies so that the people of Tambogrande could choose one in which they had “confidence.” The central government would cover the costs and the selected consulting firm would review the EIA in an “independent” manner. But this meeting was not useful either. The Defense Front President, Francisco Ojeda, the Water Users Board President, Bruno Fossa, and the Tambogrande Mayor, Alfredo Rengifo, demanded only one thing, that the central government must take the Neighborhood Consultation into account. The will of the population of Tambogrande was known throughout the world, but it was still ignored by the executive.

#### **MAYOR FRANCISCO OJEDA**

On Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2002, the president of the Defense Front, Francisco Ojeda, was elected as the new district mayor of Tambogrande. The enormous support Ojeda had in the rural district sector was the basis of a new political party created around himself and around the most popular slogan of the moment, “Agro Sí” or “Agriculture Yes”. The social mobilization would be, once again, directly represented by the mayor. As observed by the director of CooperAcción and member of the Technical Table, José De Echave, municipal elections confirmed the outcome of the Neighborhood Consultation demonstrating the massive opposition to the mining project. Those who occupied the first three places were members of the Defense Front, and Alfredo Rengifo – who created the Neighborhood Consultation as a mechanism of citizen participation – was in fourth place (De Echave, 2002).

A few days later, the National Coordinator of Human Rights chose the people of Tambogrande as the winner of the National Prize for Human Rights “Angel Escobar Jurado” in recognition of its successful and prolonged social mobilization. Still-serving Mayor Alfredo Rengifo and



mayor-elect Francisco Ojeda traveled to Lima to receive this distinguished award on behalf of the district's residents. It is necessary to remember that Rengifo and Ojeda were the last two mayors who practiced a strategy begun in 1981: to put the District Municipality of Tambogrande in the service of social mobilization, providing the legal and democratic legitimacy that emanated from that state office.

#### **MANHATTAN'S EIA**

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002, Manhattan submitted the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). But after the burning of the mining camp, the murder of Godofredo García Baca, and the Neighborhood Consultation, the image of Manhattan was absolutely deteriorated. The company's insistence on digging an open pit in the middle of the most prosperous valley of the Peruvian coast made Tambogrande an example of human rights advocacy and an example of citizen participation in a context of global deregulation. The first state institution to note the deficiencies was the National Institute of Natural Resources (INRENA) – an office of the Ministry of Agriculture – which only three days later issued Office No. 1818-2002-INRENA-J-DGAA, raising a series of comments against the EIA presented by Manhattan.

However, the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) was still favoring the Canadian company. On December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2002, the MEM issued the new regulations for consultation and citizen participation for the approval of EIAs through the Ministerial Resolution No. 596-2002-EM/DM. This new legal modification was a direct result of the impact Tambogrande's case had at national and international level. With modest modifications the Peruvian government tried to correct the lack of an adequate mechanism to take into account the will of the affected populations. Given

the evident shortcomings, the Ministry of Energy and Mines decided to return the EIA back to Manhattan company. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the Directorate General of Environmental Affairs – office of the Ministry of Energy and Mines – issued Report No. 001-2003-DGAA/LS extending the EIA evaluation process in favor of Manhattan, allowing the submission of additional information prior to the holding of the Information Workshops and of the Public Hearings.

### **SUSPICIOUS BACKUP**

Manhattan had submitted an incomplete EIA and had obtained an extension to remedy it. Only one last legal requirement was left for final approval: to hold the Information Workshops and the Public Assemblies. According to Peruvian laws, the Information Workshops serve to present the results of the EIA and the Public Assemblies serve to listen to the opinions of the local population in the potential impact areas. In terms of citizen participation, these two mechanisms are highly deficient because nothing that can be said in these events is binding (informants # 20 & 21). It is important to add that the law does not establish a minimum number of attendees nor specifies how to determine that the attendees are actually inhabitants of the areas directly affected. In the worst case, these events could be empty – or full of strangers – and this legal requirement would be met.

The popular support needed by Manhattan would come from unexpected characters who quickly received the attention of the press and the support of the Congressmen in favor of the Canadian company. These characters would demand the dissemination of the EIA, would request the holding of the Information Workshops and the Public Assemblies, and would constantly argue

that the agriculture of the San Lorenzo Valley was bankrupted, and that mining was the only alternative to overcome poverty.

In addition, these characters would support one of Manhattan's most daring proposals: that the Peruvian state renounce to its share in the mining project to create a Community Development Fund that would benefit the population of Tambogrande with educational, agricultural, and infrastructure undertakings. According the agreement signed in 1999 the state would participate as the owner of 25% of mining operations. Now, Manhattan was requesting the transfer of that 25% for the constitution of the new fund. This proposal had previously been raised by Piuran congressmen such as José Carlos Carrasco Távara (APRA), Humberto Requena (FIM), Iván Calderón (Somos Perú) and Fabiola Morales (Unidad Nacional) but it was necessary to reinforce the request with additional new voices.

In January of 2003, a new collective, the Coordinator for the Development of Tambogrande, was presented to the press. This was a group of neighbors led by the teacher, musician, and Tambogrande's resident, Martín Silupú Panta, who demanded the dissemination of the EIA and claimed to have collected 10,000 signatures in support of the mining project. According to Martín Silupú Panta, mining was the only way to generate jobs and to overcome the alleged agricultural crisis of San Lorenzo Valley. Also, according to this dubious group of neighbors the results of the referendum did not reflect the diversity of opinions existing in Tambogrande. Carrying pennants made in mechanized presses with resistant plastic, this group initiated a series of mobilizations in the City of Piura advertising the existence of the firms and asking for the diffusion of the EIA. A few weeks later this group announced that they had collected a total of

16,400 signatures that would be presented to the Regional Government, to the Provincial Municipality of Piura, to the Ministry of Energy and Mines, to the Ombudsman's Office, and to the President Alejandro Toledo, in order to demonstrate that people of Tambogrande was in favor of mining.

Some weeks after, another collective was promoted by the press, the Consortium for Regional and Sustainable Development (CONDESOR). This new group presented itself as an organization advocating for the coexistence of different economic activities – such as mining and agriculture – as the best way to reach regional development. The representative of this group demanded that the Peruvian state transfer its participation in the Tambogrande Mining Project to constitute the Community Development Fund proposed by Manhattan.

#### **OJEDA CONTINUES TO LEAD THE MOBILIZATION**

The Defense Front President, and Tambogrande Mayor, Francisco Ojeda, continue defending the results of the referendum. Ojeda announced that the people of Tambogrande would not attend the Public Hearings and that the Defense Front will not participate in another Round Table. The Ombudsman called this decision “inflexible and irrational” (Correo, 2003a, 2003d, 2003e; El Tiempo, 2003a, 2003c).

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2003, Francisco Ojeda defended the importance of the Neighborhood Consultation in the Congress. The event was attended by Minister of Energy and Mines Jaime Quijandría, Agriculture Minister, Álvaro Quijandría, Manhattan General Manager, Américo Villafuerte, and the president of the Coordinator for the Development of Tambogrande, Martín

Silupú Panta. Three days later about 10,000 inhabitants of Tambogrande marched through the streets of the City of Piura with limes, mangoes, bananas, watermelons, papayas, and yuccas. During the rally, a recording with the promises made by the candidate Alejandro Toledo in San Lorenzo Valley was heard through loudspeakers.

In February, the Ombudsman's Office convened a new Round Table but the Defense Front ratified its refusal to attend. Francisco Ojeda advised the Ombudsman to investigate how the signatures supporting the presence of Manhattan had been obtained. It was an extremely strange claim to state that thousands of signatures were collected overnight. Far from complying with the request, the Ombudsman's Office announced that the president of the Coordinator for the Development of Tambogrande would be incorporated into the next Round Table.

#### **INRENA'S 191 OBSERVATIONS**

In April, the Ministry of Energy and Mines modified the contract in favor of Manhattan granting another year to culminate the process. A few days after this new extension, on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003, INRENA issued Technical Comment N° 019-03-INRENA-OGATEIRN-UGAT with 191 observations against the EIA presented by Manhattan. The Canadian company attempted to operate in the global epicenter of the El Niño phenomenon, to divert the Piura River, to extract the minerals through a system of open pits, and to use groundwater, but the hydrological information remained extremely scarce and deficient in the EIA.

Manhattan downplayed the observations made by INRENA, pointing out that the Ministry of Energy and Mines had the final say on EIA matters. In defense of Manhattan, the energy and

mines minister stated that EIAs usually had thousands of pages and that 191 observations “do not mean that the study is bad” (Correo, 2003c; El Tiempo, 2003b). The opposition of INRENA did not change the will of the spokesmen of the Ministry of Energy and Mines who continued announcing the soon to be celebrated Information Workshops and Public Hearings.

## **FALSE FIRMS**

At the insistence of Diakonia for Justice and Peace, the Technical Table, and the Defense Front, the staff of the Ombudsman’s Office in Piura initiated an investigation to clarify the origin and veracity of the signatures presented. Numerous inhabitants of Tambogrande claimed that their signatures had been falsified. Even the well known, respected teacher and environmental activist Liliana Alzamora – member of the Defense Front – had found her signature on the lists as if she was in favor of the mining company. On April 15<sup>th</sup>, the Ombudsman’s Office announced to the press that the signatures were false. This office reviewed 10% of the 9,500 signatures submitted by the Coordinator for the Development of Tambogrande, determining that almost all signatures in the sample were false. Although evidence of this massive counterfeiting was confirmed by a state office, neither the police authorities nor the judicial authorities initiated any kind of prosecution against the culprits (informants # 17 & 28). On the contrary, during the following months the members of the Coordinator for the Development of Tambogrande would continue to support their statements by invoking and showing exactly the same set of signatures.

In this context, the Ombudsman’s Office based in Lima continued insisting on the need to reactivate the Round Table allowing the participation of the Coordinator for the Development of Tambogrande. On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Ombudsman, Walter Albán, visited Tambogrande aiming to hold

a new Round Table. Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias, Bishop Daniel Turley, and the President of the Water Users Board, Bruno Fossa, attended the event in representation of the interests of the San Lorenzo Valley. But – as a sign of protest – Mayor Francisco Ojeda and the rest of the members of the Defense Front gathered at the door of the Ombudsman’s Office in the city of Piura. Francisco Ojeda – who had already expressed his distrust of the work of the Ombudsman’s Office – stated that the only thing that office wanted was to facilitate the execution of the Information Workshops and Public Hearings. Two months later, the Ombudsman’s Office announced that it was withdrawing from the case, arguing that the involved parties did not want to dialogue. Francisco Ojeda, responded by saying that the Ombudsman’s Office had never been impartial. Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias said he agreed with the decision because of the inability to maintain an impartial image was undermining the prestige of that institution.

#### **ROBERT MORAN’S SECOND CONFERENCE**

On June 28<sup>th</sup>, American hydrologist Robert Moran addressed another conference based on the analysis of the final version of the EIA submitted by Manhattan. Among the many deficiencies pointed out by Moran were the following. First, the water issue was still notoriously the most faulty of all. The EIA did not answer central questions such as how much water was available in the valley, where was the water, and what were the characteristics of the current water quality. The EIA did not provide satisfactory data on the chemical composition of water sources or about the different types of soil in the impact zone. Nor did it record the amount of water in the underground aquifers that would be affected by the mining project. Second, the EIA ignored long-term impacts. The EIA only considered one open pit, but Manhattan had already mentioned

the construction of several open pits during its press conferences. The chemical composition of the future waste was also absent. Third, Moran noted, the EIA was full of promises and predictions, disorganized, with missing data, and incomplete sections: some information was announced to be contained in annexes but those annexes did not exist.

Finally, Moran noted an unusual clause. The company that conducted the EIA did not accept any liability for damages that could be suffered by the public due to the use of the information and opinions contained in the document or because of decisions taken on the basis of that document. That clause stipulated that all information contained in the EIA – including maps and plans – was “confidential” and “reserved” and could not be used or published unless prior written authorization. This clause was totally contradictory to what was said by representatives of the central government who said that the EIA would have the “last word” to “decide” whether agriculture and mining could coexist in the San Lorenzo Valley. Now the consulting firm was clearly stating that it would not be responsible for the consequences of the “decisions” taken on the basis of the EIA. It is necessary to remember that two ministers subordinated their official opinions to the culmination of the EIA (Herrera Lino, 2003). The EIA delivered by Manhattan generated more indignation. What were those possible “damages” alluded to by the consulting company? If the Information Workshops and the Public Assemblies were supposed to be “public” why the EIA was being pronounced “reserved” and also “confidential”?

### **INFORMATIVE WORKSHOPS**

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Energy and Mines announced to the press the next execution of eleven Information Workshops and three Public Hearings. The ministry’s spokesmen said that



the new law on citizen participation in the EIAs approval process had been developed thanks to the input of non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam. Mayor Francisco Ojeda questioned the central government's goodwill recalling that INRENA's 191 observations against the EIA were still unanswered. According to Mayor Ojeda, if Manhattan did not respond to INRENA – a state office – much less would take into account the opinions of the population. A few days after this announcement, Manhattan formalized before the Ministry of Energy and Mines its proposal to constitute a Community Development Fund based on the Peruvian state's share in future mining operations. Manhattan insisted on the signing of a new agreement to create this fund before the execution of the Public Hearings.

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, the first Information Workshop was held in the auditorium of the National University of Piura (UNP). The public – approximately 500 people – was mostly university students, mine engineering graduates, and members of the Coordinator for the Development of Tambogrande. The following day, the second Information Workshop was held in the City of Sullana. This time around 250 people attended. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, members of the Peasant Community Santiago Apostle of Locuto prevented the celebration of the Information Workshop that was planned to be held in Ocoto Alto. Hundreds of peasants surrounded the communal premises, blocked the road with logs, and threw rocks at car transporting the representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Mines. The Informative Workshop in the city of Tambogrande was suspended by the Ministry of Energy and Mines. The representatives of this ministry could not find an appropriate venue for the event. The District Municipality of Tambogrande had denied the use of any type of infrastructure under its administration. So did all other educational, productive, or trade institutions.

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 a.m., the presence of approximately 300 young strangers gathered in the town square of Cruceta was detected. The first to arrive were the women who confronted the invaders with stones and sticks. These women had to withdraw and wait for the arrival of a larger group of peasants to continue the eviction. The young invaders were expelled at 11:00 a.m. Mayor Francisco Ojeda came to recall that the war against Manhattan had to be won with ideas and cautioned that Manhattan was looking for reasons to call for the “militarization” of the district. The newspaper La República published the testimony of one of these young guys who said that Manhattan had offered them small amounts of money to attend the workshop (Huilca, 2003).

When the population was ready to fight house by house, the representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Mines canceled the Information Workshops programmed to be held in Cruceta, Las Lomas, La Rita, and Tambogrande. But it was not a conciliatory act, it was a change of strategy. These officials decided to replace the canceled Information Workshops by two “massive” workshops, one in the City of Sullana and another in the City of Piura. This substitution was possible because it was not mandatory to hold the Information Workshops specifically inside the District of Tambogrande. The new citizen participation law simply “suggested” taking into account the town closest to the intended mining operations. On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, the first massive workshop was held at the Municipal Stadium in Sullana with the attendance of approximately 1,200 people from Querocotillo, Marcavelica, Bellavista, and Sullana. The next day, the second “massive” workshop was held at the Manuel Vegas Castillo Theater, in the City of Piura, with approximately 1,000 attendees, but none of them were from Tambogrande.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Public Hearings were still left to be done. On October 26<sup>th</sup>, the Defense Front held a popular assembly to confirm the 72-hour strike that would try to block the Public Hearings. Under the midday sun, 5,000 peasants ratified the need to block the legal process at any cost. The next day, Mayor Francisco Ojeda appeared in Congress to explain what was happening in the district.

On October 30<sup>th</sup>, the press reported that Manhattan's luck was definitely running out. First, the Ministry of Energy and Mines had suspended the scheduled Public Hearing in Tambogrande. Second, the new energy and mines minister, Hans Flury, had publicly rejected Manhattan's proposal to set up a fund based on the 25% corresponding to the Peruvian state's share on future mining operations. The new minister warned Manhattan that before considering that or any other proposal, it must first comply with the contract signed in 1999. This was the first time a minister had said "no" to Manhattan.

The Public Hearing scheduled in Lima was supposed to be held on Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2003. A day earlier, on Tuesday, hundreds of university students and members of environmental movements surrounded the College of Engineers. The idea was to protest all day and all night, giant lemons, harlequins on stilts, theater groups, and a hip hop band, attracted dozens of journalists. This vigil was organized by the NGOs that were part of the Tambogrande Collective. That same day, Tuesday night, the College of Engineers canceled the lease. In a letter addressed to Manhattan, the College of Engineers argued that they were taking this decision to avoid any kind of damage to the infrastructure. Now there was only one Public Hearing left, the one that had been scheduled to be held in the City of Piura.

The 72-hour strike called by the Defense Front began on Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 a.m. On that day, the start of the mobilization was announced using loudspeakers and the villagers began blocking access to routes. School classes were suspended and transportation companies kept their vehicles in their parking lots. The roads were empty. Throughout the day, Peruvian flags and green flags were displayed in the houses of the whole district.

The last scheduled Public Hearing would be held at the National University of Piura (UNP). At 4:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, hundreds of vehicles left from Tambogrande to the City of Piura. The goal was to build a human chain around the UNP campus. At about 7:00 a.m., the university facilities were encircled by approximately 5,000 peasants. At first, the police tried to prevent entry, but after a struggle the doors were opened. About 1,000 Tambogrande inhabitants entered with lemons, mangoes, papayas, squashes and watermelons held in their hands and over their heads. At 8:00 a.m., there were two human chains, one outside the university, surrounding the campus, another inside the university, surrounding the auditorium.

Thanks to El Tiempo newspaper journalist (Zavala, 2003) we know what happened in the university. The people from Tambogrande inside the university had a dilemma. If they entered the auditorium, their presence could be used to validate the event; if they stayed outside the auditorium others could enter and validate the hearing. This was the last scene of four decades of social mobilization. The maximum capacity of the auditorium was 800 people. At first glance, it was easy to determine that there were more than 800 peasants accompanying the Defense Front President, Mayor Francisco Ojeda, and the Water Users Board President, Bruno Fossa. Inside the

auditorium were only the representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, and the representatives of Manhattan. Around 8:20 a.m. – while Ojeda and Fossa were still analyzing the situation and trying to resolve the conundrum – the chancellor arrived. According to the chronicle published by *El Tiempo*, Mayor Ojeda approached the chancellor and said: “The hearing is public, if we all enter, we will not fit inside the auditorium. I ask you, Mr. Chancellor, to consider the possibility of suspending the public hearing. The people of Tambogrande are peaceful, but it will overflow the capacity of the auditorium”. The chancellor could not “suspend” the hearing, but he could “cancel” the lease, and did so on the grounds of lack of guarantees (Zavala, 2003). The rental agreement was canceled and the hearing was not conducted. At 8:30 a.m., thousands celebrated the victory at the entrance of the university (Correo, 2003b).

After the hugs and tears of joy, around 9:00 a.m., the people of Tambogrande began their march through the streets towards Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias’s office to thank him for all the support he had provided during so many years of struggle. In front of the crowd, Oscar Cantuarias gave a brief speech about how Tambogrande made history through this lengthy defense of the agriculture. The Archbishop blessed the demonstrators and said goodbye saying “I would like to have a thousand voices to shout, Tambogrande, My Friend, Cantuarias is With You”. The 72-hour strike called by Mayor Francisco Ojeda ended with a rally at Tambogrande’s town square on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 am. In front of a mass of 10,000 inhabitants coming from all the hamlets and villages of the district – 186 at that time – Mayor Ojeda gave a speech and warned that the Ministry of Energy and Mines could still reschedule the hearings.

On November 26<sup>th</sup>, the minister of energy and mines announced that the term for Manhattan to comply with the legal requirements stipulated in the contract signed in 1999 will be soon expiring on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Finally, on December 10<sup>th</sup>, the Mining Company of the Center of Peru S.A. (CENTROMIN) terminated the contract by claiming that the Canadian company had not met the requirements either directly or indirectly. Manhattan could not demonstrate a net worth of 100 million dollars nor did they have proof to own facilities processing 10,000 tons of ore per day. Manhattan was a “junior” company that could never attract solvent partners. Manhattan threatened with “arbitration” but a year later sold the mining rights that were in its name – the most important concessions were in the name of the Peruvian state – and withdrew completely from Peru. The land of the mining camp was finally overtaken by hundreds of homeless families and turned into a slum.

#### **ZAPATA BROTHERS' TRIAL**

In March of 2004, members of the Zapata family – three men and five women – robbed a truck with goods from Ecuador valued at US \$15,000. The members of this family were captured by gunfire. In the confrontation, one of the Zapata brothers died. After the shooting, the police entered the family's property finding drugs, armament, masks, and military uniforms. The alleged murderer of Godofredo García Baca, this time identified by the press as Diego Meléndez Zapata Atocha, managed to flee with his brother Alcízar. Three months later, the alleged murderer of Godofredo García Baca was captured – along with his brother Alcízar and a lieutenant of the Peruvian Army in retirement situation – with eight anti-tank grenades of Russian manufacture. The capture took place in Las Lomas – very close to the border with

Ecuador. The press informed that the armament was on its way to Colombia to be acquired by the FARC.

On February of 2005, the two Zapata brothers were sentenced to 8 years in prison in the case of the anti-tank grenades. Additionally, Meléndez Zapata was sentenced to 30 years in prison for homicide of Godofredo García Baca. During the process, Diakonia's lawyer and Defense Front's legal adviser, Quique Rodríguez, argued that there were enough indications to conclude that Meléndez Zapata was a commissioned murderer. But the judges closed the case by determining that it was just a not premeditated homicide that occurred as a result of an assault. The Peruvian judicial system never showed interest in clarifying the motives or finding the intellectual authors of the assassination of the one who led the social mobilization in the San Lorenzo Valley during four decades, the colonist Godofredo García Baca.

## Conclusions

The reconstruction of the long chain of protests in the Tambogrande district that began in 1961 shows that the transnational actors who arrived in 1999 were able to effectively contribute to the social mobilization by establishing partnerships with an experienced population. The analysis of the four decades of mobilization in the pre-transnational stage (1961-1999) shows that the state-citizen relations are in a constant situation of blockade in Peru. This means that the population has to continually test different strategies of protest. Peru offers many possibilities to complement the study of the transnational activity redirecting the focus, from the international sphere, towards the domestic dimension. The transnational stage (1999-2004) of Tambogrande's social mobilization constitutes a case of partial boomerang. The transnational allies arrived to act in alliance with the domestic actors, but there were no leverage points to suffocate the government from outside.

The strategy of the international non-governmental organizations was to strengthen domestic actors, to take advantage of the already tried-and-tested strategies, and to create new venues of action based on pre-existing local strengths. The popular referendum funded by Oxfam Great Britain and held in June 2002, was a model that during the next ten years was replicated 68 times in different Latin American countries (Walter & Urkidi, 2015). However, this referendum could be celebrated thanks to the fact that the Tambogrande Defense Front and the Tambogrande District Municipality worked in tandem since 1981.



In this dissertation, I have argued that the formula that explains the success of the transnational activity in Tambogrande (PSO + SMO + DNGBO) is composed of the previous existence of a porous state office (PSO), a social movement organization (SMO), and a domestic non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO). It is no accident that the first popular referendum in the world, to reject the advance of mining in territories where this model of development does not coincide with the will of the local population, has been celebrated in Tambogrande. The first two components of the formula, the Tambogrande District Municipality (PSO) and the Defense Front (SMO), began to collaborate with each other since 1981, and the church-based NGO that served as a bridge with the international NGOs was founded in 1987. The referendum of 2002 was the result of the collaborative efforts made by a municipality serving the mobilization during two decades, a defense front composed of seasoned leaders, and an international NGO that arrived thanks to the invitation of an archbishop who was the most prestigious regional public figure.

In order to continue studying the importance of the local dimension in transnational activity, it is necessary to test the formula (PSO + SMO + DNGBO) in similar cases as well as in opposite cases. It is necessary to study similar cases in which transnational activity has also been successful, observing whether these three factors have been present or not, how these factors have been related to each other, or to detect other crucial elements that could complement this formula. The study of opposing cases, those in which the contributions of the transnational allies did not obtain the expected results or those in which external agents could not even intervene, would allow us to determine if the characteristics of the base level were the cause of the shortcomings.

While doing the fieldwork that supports the ideas of this dissertation, I had the opportunity to visit and to conduct interviews in other areas of Peru, where local populations replicated Tambogrande referendum and established alliances with external allies, but achieving much more modest levels of success. The formula I propose in this document (PSO + SMO + DNGBO) was built visiting Tambogrande and also visiting other regions of Peru. The contrasts I observed allowed me to identify these three elements. Completing the reconstruction of these other cases of environmental conflict is still a pending task that I will continue in the near future.

With respect to the first key element, the porous state offices (PSO), the Tambogrande case corroborate the perspective of authors highlighting the porosity between the state and society (Migdal, 1988, 1994, 2001, 2004) and the perspective of those observing the continuum that exists between state offices, political parties, and social movements (Goldstone, 2003). Members of the Tambogrande Defense Front, and the mayors of the Tambogrande District Municipality, were sequentially “inside” and “outside” of formal politics. The mayors led the social mobilization and the leaders of the social mobilization became mayors. And that was only possible because citizens “combined” formal and informal strategies, voting and marching in the streets at the same time (Goldstone, 2003). The analysis of the Tambogrande case taking into account its forty years of pre-transnational mobilization, allows me to argue that the main contribution of the municipality was to function as a source of legal and democratic legitimacy at the service of the protest.

Regarding the second key element, the social movement organization (SMO), the Tambogrande case analysis allows me to make some contributions to the application of this important concept in the study of social movements. The Tambogrande case teaches us that the strengths and weaknesses of SMOs emanate from their extreme flexibility. SMOs can adopt formal forms and can invoke strict compliance with legal procedures, but can also maintain the lax and informal characteristics of any social movement.

**a.** SMOs are platforms of shared protagonism. SMOs are composed of multiple pre-existing grassroots organizations from which the leaders that make up the SMOs come from. Such coexistence of leaders is a potential source of conflict. It is necessary to take into account the “centrifugal forces”, the conflicting interests circulating on the cooperation networks (L. D. Brown & Fox, 2000) and the agendas of domestic agents that could push NGO efforts toward a “local trap” (J. C. Brown & Purcell, 2005; Purcell & Brown, 2005) when analyzing these organizational platforms. The moments of electoral competition in Tambogrande revealed the opposing agendas that exist at the grassroots level. During the municipal elections, the members of the SMO put their alliances in suspension in order to compete for the same state office.

However, the members of the SMO were able to reactivate their alliances after periods of electoral competition, maintaining unity with respect to the representation of the protest. After his electoral victory in 1998, the mayor-elect, Alfredo Rengifo, was visited by representatives of the district left (his main electoral rivals), and the president of the San Lorenzo Water Users Board (sympathizer of a different political option), offering him the

presidency of the Defense Front. Although Mayor Rengifo rejected this offer and he was never part of the Defense Front, a few months later he put the municipality at the service of the protest by signing the mechanisms that gave legal support to the popular referendum. For reasons of space, I have not included the analysis of moments of electoral competition among the members of the Defense Front. In order to support the ideas contained in this dissertation, it is enough to emphasize that those events of political rivalry did not divide the Tambogrande Defense Front.

**b.** Shared leadership constitutes one of the SMOs' strengths. Shared protagonism does not only imply potential conflicts between different agendas. It can also potentially mean different levels of complementarity and cooperation. Engineer Godofredo García Baca, the most famous colonist of all, who led the protests of the San Lorenzo valley since his arrival in 1964, held a formal position within the Defense Front only once. During the founding of the SMO in 1981, García Baca was appointed as coordinator of the rural area of the district. The most experienced settler was not appointed president. However, since the founding of the Defense Front, Godofredo García Baca was the most influential leader and the most heard orator at all rallies. Godofredo García Baca never needed a formal charge to share the scenario with the other members of the Defense Front. Godofredo García Baca did not need a formal position within the Defense Front to be followed by thousands of settlers.

Something similar was observed during the reactivation of the Defense Front by Professor Manuel Reyes, elected as mayor of Tambogrande in 1989. At that juncture,

Mayor Reyes held the formal position of the president of the Defense Front, but this double position did not prevent former mayor César Crisanto to be one of the main speakers in the rallies and marches of the time. The flexibility of SMOs allows the parallel presence of several leaders, representing pre-existing grassroots organizations, regardless of their formal positions within these SMOs.

**c.** Social movements crystallize SMOs, and SMOs, in turn, have the capacity to crystallize political parties. The Tambogrande case reveals that SMOs not only have the ability to create revolving doors with a PSO as the district municipality, but they can also give rise to new political parties. The Tambogrande case offers empirical evidence in favor of those who recommend the study of the continuity and the porosity existing between social movements and political parties (Goldstone, 2003). The psychologist and farmer Francisco Ojeda assumed the presidency of the Defense Front in 1999. The enormous support that Ojeda had in the rural sector crystallized in a new political party built around his figure, being elected as mayor in 2002. With their votes, the inhabitants of Tambogrande confirmed their support for a strategy that began in 1981: mayors were supposed to lead the protests.

**d.** SMOs need the support that comes from grassroots organizations. The strongest grassroots organization in the San Lorenzo Valley that transferred some of its legitimacy to the Defense Front, during its founding in 1981, was the Settlers Association created during the mid-1960s. When the Defense Front was revived in 1999, the most influential organization of the San Lorenzo Valley was the Water Users Board. This pre-existing

organization, the Water Users Board, invested its resources in the reactivation of the SMO. Subsequently, the external allies would come with more and different resources. The last scene of the long mobilization of Tambogrande narrated in chapter nine was carried out by Francisco Ojeda, then president of the Front of Defense and at the same time the district's mayor, and Bruno Fossa, then president of the Water Users Board. Until the very end, an SMO like the Front of Defense needed the support of a pre-existing local organization like the Water Users Board.

With regard to the third key element, the non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO), the study of Tambogrande's long mobilization suggests that the legitimacy of bridge individuals and organizations has its origins in previous state failures. The main bridging leader, the engineer Godofredo García Baca, led the settlers' protests since the mid-1960s until his assassination in 2001. Godofredo García Baca led the protests against the governments of the 1960s, which were constantly giving in to the pressures of the hacendados. These governments were not willing to protect or to impose the most important national irrigation project of the 1950s against their local opponents, the powerful cotton barons. After that period, the settlers confronted the military government of the 1970s that implemented a radical agrarian reform throughout the country. This military government also created an overlap of interests and rights in the Tambogrande district that would have repercussions over the next two decades. Finally, settlers confronted the national governments of the 1980s and 1990s that tried to impose mining in an area rich in agricultural terms and very fragile in ecological terms. None of the mentioned governments had an adequate management of the territory in function to long-term objectives. None of the mentioned governments were consistent with the territorial use that was assigned to the district

of Tambogrande during the 1950s. Engineer Godofredo García Baca obtained the appreciation and recognition of the local population facing an erratic and unreliable state apparatus.

The next most important bridging leader, the founder of the non-governmental bridging organization (DNGBO), Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias, also obtained his high shares of legitimacy trying to correct the failures of the Peruvian state. Monsignor Cantuarias led the protests during the El Niño phenomenon of 1983 and got Piura to receive an oil canon. He later founded Diakonia for Justice and Peace in order to stop Shining Path's penetration at the grassroots level and to defend the human rights of the poor who were violated by both terrorism and the Peruvian state.

The analysis of Tambogrande case shows how bridging organizations link both the grassroots level and the transnational level. The international NGOs were summoned by Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias. They did not arrive alone. In addition, they arrived during the last stage of a long series of protests. Tambogrande was the worst place that the Canadian company MMC could choose because it had an organized population with four decades of experience in defense of its own development model. At the same time, international NGOs could not have been invited to a better place to build a precedent that would be replicated in other parts of the world, Tambogrande's famous popular referendum.

## Informants

<b>Informants #</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
Informant 01	Engineer in chief who arrived at San Lorenzo in 1960, representing the central government, with the mission to settle and train the first colonists.	July 7, 2014
Informant 02	Specialist in education who managed the pedagogical component of the San Lorenzo Project between 1960 and 1967, member of SINAMOS staff of professionals in Piura Department, and founder and chair of CEPESER.	June 22, 2014
Informant 03	School teacher. District mayor of Tambogrande during four periods: 1983-1986, 1991-1993, 1993-1995 and 1995-1998. Founder member of the Front of Defense created in 1981.	January 8, 2012
Informant 04	School teacher. Founder member of the Front of Defense created in 1981.	August 1, 2014
Informant 05	School teacher. Founder member of the Front of Defense created in 1981. Alderman in all municipal administrations from 1983 to 2002.	January 3, 2012
Informant 06	School teacher. District mayor of Tambogrande and president of the Front of Defense during the period of 1989-1991.	January 7, 2012
Informant 07	District mayor of Tambogrande during the period of 1980-1983.	July 13, 2013
Informant 08	Daughter of the first president of the Front of Defense created in 1981, Francisco Celi Burneo.	July 20, 2013
Informant 09	Former staff member of Diakonia for Justice and Peace.	June 16, 2009
Informant 10	Former staff member of CIPCA	June 15, 2009
Informant 11	Former staff member of Diakonia for Justice and Peace.	August 15, 2014
Informant 12	Lawyer. Former staff member of Diakonia for Justice and Peace.	June 26, 2009
Informant 13	Colonist of San Lorenzo Valley. Several times president of the Settlers Association.	August 1, 2014
Informant 14	District mayor of Tambogrande during the period of 1998-2002.	January 4, 2012
Informant 15	Several times president of the Water Users Board of San Lorenzo Valley. Member of the Front of Defense since 1999.	June 29, 2009
Informant 16	District mayor of Tambogrande during the period of 2002-2006. President of the Front of Defense since 1999.	June 27, 2009



Informant 17	School teacher. Former member of the Front of Defense.	January 4, 2012
Informant 18	Founder and chair of Civil Association Labor.	December 14, 2008
Informant 19	Founder and chair of SPDA.	December 15, 2008
Informant 20	Chair of FEDEPAZ.	July 30, 2009
Informant 21	Founder member and chair of CooperAccion.	December 16, 2008
Informant 22	Representative of Oxfam America in Peru.	December 17, 2008
Informant 23	Founder and chair of CONACAMI	May 22, 2012
Informant 24	Former staff of CONACAMI	May 22, 2012
Informant 25	Colonist of San Lorenzo. Member of the Front of Defense since 1999. Alderman of Tambogrande District during the period 2002-2006.	June 27, 2009
Informant 26	Colonist of San Lorenzo. Former vice president of the Settlers Association.	June 27, 2009
Informant 27	Member of the Front of Defense since 1981. Alderman of Tambogrande District during the period 2002-2006.	January 6, 2012
Informant 28	Founder of Factor Tierra and collaborator of the Front of Defense since 1999.	June 28, 2009
Informant 29	Biologist. Staff of CEPESER and founder member of Piura Life and Agriculture.	January 2, 2012
Informant 30	Engineer. Former chair of CIPCA and founder member of Piura Life and Agriculture.	January 17, 2012
Informant 31	Psychiatrist. Founder member of CREA Pueblo.	June 15, 2009
Informant 32	Leader and several times president of the peasant community Apostol San Juan Bautista de Locuto.	January 5, 2012
Informant 33	Leader and several times president of the peasant community Jose Ignacio Tavera Pasapera.	January 5, 2012
Informant 34	Sister of Godofredo García Baca	July 5, 2014
Informant 35	Medical doctor. Brother of Godofredo García Baca	July 26, 2014
Informant 36	Colonist of San Lorenzo. Member of the Front of Defense since 1999.	July 18, 2013
Informant 37	Leader of Izquierda Unida in Piura Department. Member of the Civic Front created by the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias.	July 22, 2014
Informant 38	Lawyer and journalist. Personal friend and close political advisor of the Archbishop Oscar Cantuarias.	July 24, 2014
Informant 39	Representative of Oxfam Great Britain in Peru.	May 27, 2014

## Acronyms

AP.	Popular Action ( <i>Acción Popular</i> ).
APRA.	American Popular Revolutionary Alliance ( <i>Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana</i> ).
BRGM.	<i>Bureau of Recherches Géologiques et Minières.</i>
CEAS.	Episcopal Commission on Social Action ( <i>Comisión Episcopal de Acción Social</i> ).
CECOMBA.	Executive Committee of the Bayóyar Complex ( <i>Comité Ejecutivo del Complejo Bayóvar</i> ).
CENTROMIN.	Mining Company of the Center of Peru (Empresa Minera del Centro del Perú)
CEPESER.	Peruvian Central Services ( <i>Central Peruana de Servicios</i> ).
CIPCA.	Center for Research and Promotion of the Peasantry ( <i>Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado</i> ).
CONACAMI.	National Confederation of Communities Affected by Mining ( <i>Confederación Nacional de Comunidades Afectadas por la Minería</i> ).
CONDESOR.	Consortium for Regional and Sustainable Development ( <i>Consortio Regional para el Desarrollo Sostenible</i> ).
ENO.	Nort West Electrical Company ( <i>Electronoroeste</i> ).
FEDEPAZ.	Ecumenical Foundation for Development and Peace ( <i>Fundación Ecuémica para el Desarrollo y la Paz</i> ).
FREDEMO.	Democratic Front. ( <i>Frente Democrático</i> ).
IIAA.	Institute of Inter-American Affairs.
INRENA.	<i>National Institute of Natural Resources (Instituto Nacional de Recursos Naturales).</i>
IRAC.	Institute for Agrarian Reform and Colonization ( <i>Instituto de Reforma Agraria y Colonización</i> ).
IRPA.	Institute of Agrarian Reform and Promotion ( <i>Instituto de Reforma y Promoción Agraria</i> ).

IU.	United Left ( <i>Izquierda Unida</i> ).
JNE.	National Elections Board ( <i>Jurado Nacional de Elecciones</i> ).
MINEROPERU.	Peruvian State Mining Company ( <i>Empresa Minera del Perú</i> ).
MMC.	Manhattan Minerals Corporation.
ONDECOOP.	National Office of Cooperative Development ( <i>Oficina Nacional de Desarrollo Cooperativo</i> ).
ONPE.	National Electoral Process Office ( <i>Oficina Nacional de Procesos Electorales</i> ).
ONRPA.	National Office of Agrarian Reform and Promotion ( <i>Oficina Nacional de Reforma y Promoción Agraria</i> ).
PETROPERU.	Peruvian State Petroleum Company ( <i>Petroleos del Perú</i> ).
PPC.	Popular Christian Party ( <i>Partido Popular Cristiano</i> ).
SCIPA.	Inter-American Cooperative Food Production Service ( <i>Servicio Cooperativo Inter-Americano de Produccion de Alimentos</i> ).
SINAMOS.	National System to Support Social Mobilization ( <i>Sistema Nacional de Movilización Social</i> ).
SPDA.	Peruvian Society for Environmental Law ( <i>Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental</i> ).
UNIR.	Union of the Revolutionary Left ( <i>Unión de Izquierda Revolucionaria</i> ).
UNO.	Nacional Union for Odría ( <i>Unión Nacional Odriísta</i> ).

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