



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Stefan Nentwig

Title: The Influence of Ownership Structures on Socio-Ecological Conflicts
in the Peruvian Mining Sector

Programme/year: MISS, 4th year

Author of Evaluation: Tomáš Karásek (supervisor)

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	9
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	27
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	38
<i>Total</i>		80	74
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	9
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	3
<i>Total</i>		20	17
TOTAL		100	91



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis presents an expertly extension of a larger debate concerning the role of natural resources in (armed) conflicts. The field has been getting more and more crowded since Collier and Hoeffler's original conceptualization, with a growing body of research and resulting literature on different aspects and/or opposing perspectives on the issue. However, the author managed to find a relevant under-researched niche, thus establishing a legitimate case for the analysis.

His take on the influence of ownership structures in mining operations on social conflicts, presented on the Peruvian case, leads to interesting and largely persuasive results. The author handles very well the theoretical introduction into the field (for a critical comment on this see below) and manages to vividly introduce the specific environment of mining operations and related aspects thereto in Peru. The dissection of existing research leads him to present a clarifying thesis concerning the influence of foreign vs. domestic, resp. national vs. regional ownership of mining companies as a relevant factor responsible for the outbreak of social conflicts of a distributional and environmental nature, or a lack of it.

The author's handling of the topic at the theoretical, methodological and empirical level is sure and convincing. I have but two general and one specific comments: Firstly, while the literature review (which, in essence, spans over several chapters of the thesis) is competent, I believe its initial part defining the broad spectrum of resource-related theories could have been presented in a more systematic and definitive way.

Secondly, while the results of the regression analysis are solid and persuasive, I wonder – and this is rather an impulse for a debate during the defence of the thesis – what are possible implications of the 'foreignness liability' from the constructivist (as opposed to objectivist) perspective. To put the question simply, is it possible that foreign companies are more likely to become entangled in conflictual relationships with local communities because of who they *are* rather than what they *do*, i.e. what matters more is the *identity* of the mine owner than its *actions*?

Finally, I find the initial remarks concerning the definition of resource-related conflicts in the 1st paragraph on p. 12 slightly confusing, as it mixes resource-



oriented approaches (first sentence) with a more 'classical', Marxist-inspired understanding of a social conflict (second sentence). While conceptual cross-fertilization is generally laudable, I believe in this particular spot of the thesis clarity should have outweighed an attempt at a theoretical 'fusion'.

Minor criteria:

There is not much to comment from this perspective: The thesis was evidently prepared well and is written in a satisfactory manner. This being said, the text might have used additional editing as it contains more than a few errors of writing and typos.

On the other hand, the author must be unambiguously lauded for the extent of sources that he used in his research.

Overall evaluation:

Stafan Nentwig managed to write an analytically strong and theoretically inspiring thesis with a logical structure, persuasive argumentation and convincing conclusions. The aforementioned flaws are minor and do not undercut the thesis's value.

Suggested grade: 1

Signature: 