

Accumulation by dispossession: The case of large mining industry in Cajamarca¹

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Working paper

Abstract

This paper proposes to understand the performance mining industries in the rural Andean communities, as a catalyst for accumulation by dispossession processes. In practice, accumulation by dispossession includes mechanisms such as: privatization of land and water resources, land expropriation of indigenous and peasant communities from their communal lands, transformation of property rights from a common into a private regime, etc. The paper illustrates the intervention process of one of the largest gold mining companies in Latin America, Yanacocha mining company, into the rural areas of Cajamarca, at the northern Peruvian Andes, as well as its strategies to secure land and water for mining exploitation. The paper highlights the past and the current struggles that peasant communities have to face because of that mining intervention. It presents a specific case of socio-environmental conflict, that shows the strategies developed by the communities, to secure their water rights and access to this resource in response to the interventions.

Keywords: Mining, accumulation by dispossession, land expropriation, water rights, conflicts, peasant communities, Cajamarca, Peru.

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