



**“We are the people of conservation”
negotiations of local officers to implement
conservation in National Park Sumapaz.**

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Contents

<i>List of Maps</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>List of Acronyms</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Abstract</i>	<i>vi</i>
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework	3
Chapter 3 Methodological approach	12
Chapter 4 Protected areas and conflict	14
Chapter 5 Construction of the territory of Sumapaz and the Late arrival of the Local Team of the National Park	17
Chapter 6 The cab and the sanction: history of a broken relation	21
Chapter 7 The sanction is the problem but is also the only solution: small scale strategies of negotiation	24
Chapter 8 Meanings and representations of local officers	28
Chapter 9 Everyday state formation in the case of Sumapaz	31
Chapter 10 Conclusions	37
<i>References</i>	<i>39</i>

List of Maps

Map 1. Localization of the National Park Sumapaz
18

List of Acronyms

PNN National Parks of Colombia

FARC Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces

Abstract

Using ethnographic methods examining the case of the Natural Park Sumapaz, the research delves into the analysis of how conservation in those restricted areas could be more a matter of a daily construction rather than a hegemonic tactic for state expansion. In the Colombian case, where protected areas management occur in the middle of territorial conflicts and warfare, coercive conservation tactics are devoid of enough power, making negotiation strategies more feasible to be applied in contested territories. Coercion and Negotiation are two elements that help to understand how state, particularly its conservation project is locally and daily made. The research uses actor oriented approaches to highlight the importance of local bureaucrats in the process of state formation. Those actors, in charge to materialize state projects in field, could use their own meanings, motives and power sources in response to the local reactions that emerge when conservation policies are tried to be implemented. Those local actions and interactions contribute to determine how state is locally configured and conservation project is territorialized.

Relevance to Development Studies

This document attempts to contribute to studies of nature conservation and conflict as well as analyse the role of bureaucrats in the implementation of projects and policies.

Keywords

local officers, state formation, protected areas, negotiation, conflict.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Protected areas is a clear example of conservation in a territorialized way (Vaccaro et al. 2013: 256). This delimited scenario, where state proclaim rights and regulation over the use of resources (Peluso and Vandergeest 2001: 763-767), is a suitable case to analyse the complex relations that arise around regulations, coercion, local responses and the effect that other actors could have over the territory. This set of relations could show that conservation in the form of protected areas are more a terrain of constant confrontation and negotiations rather than a hegemonic expansion, where the use of tactics of government ensure the raise of state power. In other words, conservation in protected areas could support the conceptual approaches of making of the state by “daily” or “mundane” practices.

In understanding protected areas, not as a perfect nor complete tactic of government, but a frame that determine types of daily state formation, it is necessary to recognize the effect that localities have in such construction, and how small practices, invisible at central cores of government shape determined ways to see, understand and contest state policies.

Moreover, in such negotiated and contested ways of construction, my dissertation aims to bring into the discussion, the importance that local actors, specially, local bureaucrats have in the local production of the state. To do so, it is my interest to bring actor oriented theoretical approaches that analyse nature, sources of power and meanings of local bureaucrats and bring those into the analysis of state. That is to say, my inquiry is to analyse mundane practices that arise inside the conservation project in protected areas, and the incidence that local bureaucrats have in their role of representing state.

To orient my research, I follow to answer the question of how local officers negotiate conservation policies in a protected area with occupation conflicts. This questioning implies to delve also in how such occupation conflict affect negotiations, what type of negotiation can arise in the specific context analysed and how those practices could be considered instrumental in the daily making of the state.

To do so, I analysed the case of National Park Sumapaz, Colombia using ethnographic methods to explore the nature of the conflict that arose after the declaration of the protected area. Also, the strategies taken by local officers to arrange some kinds of negotiated conservation in a context with strong struggles for peasant land and unfriendly relations between community and state.

Analysing conservation in Colombian protected areas, implies the recognition of the effect that the national conflict for land and resources have over territorialisation of conservation policies, affecting the possible action that environmental authorities can perform at the local level. Thus, this essay brings also into the discussion the recognition of conflict as a relevant element of conservation in protected areas in the Colombian context and how it influences local arrangements, and thus contribute in the local shaping of the state.

To orient the discussion, the document will first engage with conceptual contributions about state and conservation, state making and actor oriented approaches to understand the role of street level bureaucrats (Lipsky 2010). Then, the document will describe how the establishment of the National System of Protected Areas have been related with Colombian conflict, focusing in the case of Sumapaz, and how the implementation of coercive politics of conservation in a conflictive scenario affected the relations between community and local officers of National Parks. The following element into the analysis correspond to visualize in the park context, the small strategies of negotiation done by local officers of National Park Sumapaz in order accomplish their role of environmental authority but also, gain acceptance inside the community.

Daily actions performed by local officers in National Park Sumapaz shape the way conservation project is implemented in field. This implementation does not correspond to an obedient application of hierarchical orders and rather constitute a strategy that respond to the combined effect of their own political position, inner values as well as responses to local contestations and the search for legitimacy (Goetz 1996: 3-5)

“We are the people of conservation” is a statement commonly used in the institutional propaganda of National Parks. This expression reflects in a certain way how the institution relies on the local action of officials that are in charge to represent the environmental authority. This statement could be also useful to the present dissertation to reflect how state projects, in this case, conservation project is at the end embodied by political actors, that give an overriding dimension that determine the local way state is formed.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

The role of the state in conservation of protected areas

During my career, being part of the bureaucracy that manage protected areas in Colombia, I could see in a closer way the details that occur when conservation policies are implemented in field and how territorialisation and action of state actors are influential in conservation outputs. Seeing this relation, it is my interest to use protected areas to understand how the initial project of the state is conditioned by contexts and the action of local actors, specially bureaucrats who are fundamental in the shaping of conservation policies at the local level. This local effect help to understand conservation project as the product of a daily formation, rather than a hegemonic strategy of state expansion.

Conservation of nature as political process is a complex relation grounded in different rationalities about relation human – nature. The contributions of Guha and Martinez Alier for instance, illustrate different perceptions about nature with materialist or nonmaterialist views (1998: 36), representations that influence different tendencies of ecosystem management. However, beyond individual or collective rationalities about the suitable way to do conservation, there is a set of global relations that emerge from rationalities adopted by market actors and supranational organizations. As McDonald argues, the generation of a “global ecology” discourse, that advocate the notion of “global environmental commons” have promoted the ideological need to a top – down type of conservation, based on the dominance of transnational institutions, the exclusive production and dissemination of knowledge and the orientation of market oriented strategies (2004: 112).

Those global paradigms have, however an impact in localities, due the fact that nature become a tangible element only when it is seen in the territories that hold it. In that sense, despite a global idea of nature conservation, the ensemble of practices and relations about it will determine how nature is managed, resulting in a certain configuration of the space.

According to Vaccaro et al, when conservation is analysed in a territorialized form, protected areas constitute one of the clearest cases to see how control of nature is sought and contested (2013: 255-256). Considering its territorialized form, conservation of nature could be thus related with control and power differences over land, territories and resources, being an element suitable for appropriation.

Despite the multiple global relations and actors that condition conservation of areas, the effect of the state in the shaping of this territorialized conservation is however determinant, by the generation of institutions that exclude and condition the use of natural elements, the fostering of means of capital accumulation using nature and by their capacity to represent and determine national “interests” in international agreements, as well as assuming compromises that conduce to planning and implementation of national policies.

Is in that way, that the analysis of conservation in a territorialized form, via protected areas, need to consider the effect that the state and its institutions

have in the configuration of controlling strategies to get exclusive ways of management and exclusionary policies.

The use of “technologies” or “tactics” of government to ensure control of population and territory has been analysed by Foucault under his concept of governmentality (2006: 141-143). Focusing on the analysis of nature, McDonald explained how the reinterpretation of a type of environmental management that need a “scientifically and superior force able to respond to (...) degradation” (2004: 102) give ethical support to a “green governmentality, which arises when the environment, particularly the goals of its protection become a key theme of many political operations, economic interventions and ideological campaigns (Luke cited by MacDonald 2004: 118).

Peluso and Vandergeest introduce in an illustrated way the nature of protected areas under the discussion of “political forest”: They explain the colonial process of creation of delimited forms of land where state domain is claimed, and property is self-granted by the ruling actor, using as justification knowledge constructions of those areas as unique, natural and needed for a differentiated type of management (Peluso and Vandergeest 2001: 763-767).

The authors discuss how this type of government expansion use new “techniques of power and disciplining”: the definition of legal uses by means of zonation, mapping and the creation of laws as well as the creation of institutions and governmental offices to enact those new laws (ibidem: 764-765).

Protected areas, are conceived to hold biodiversity in a “pristine” form and to be managed by technocratic means so are incompatible with a customary management of resources. Thus, the exclusionary character of protected areas conduces to several conflicts in which the conservation project is confronted by society.

Peluso analyses how the state capacity to manage protected resources is the product of a continuous interaction between autonomy and legitimacy (1993: 200). Thus, conflictive strategies to ensure a centralized power and the local contestation that emerge, pressure governments in the search of legitimacy and discipline, promoting the use of coercive means in cases of high valuable resources or the absence or more effective alternatives (ibidem: 201).

Coercive means with correspondent resistance of local communities, conflicts due different interest over territory and social impacts of the unequal burden of power are a direct consequence of conservation project, being under my optic, a structuring component of this strategy. The most visible social impact is the eviction and displacement of communities which are already in the geographical and political margins (Baird 2009: 216, West et al. 2006: 258-259, Adams and Hutton 2007: 157).

However it is important to set other impacts that lies in the ground of protected areas: the reinvention and allocation of rights of permanence and use alter and denies livelihoods and strategies of subsistence (West et al. 2006: 260, 263) threat and modify customary and collective land tenancy forms (Adams and Hutton 2007: 157, Neumann 1997: 560) and legitimize violence and abuses from park staff (Adams and Hutton 2007: 156, Neumann 1997: 564, Neumann 2004: 829-830); besides, representations of illegality over local communities and discourses around their wrong ways to use nature, give ethical justification to violation of their rights and undermine their participation

and governance over those areas (Neumann 2004: 833, Bocarejo and Ojeda 2015: 4).

Conservation understood as project of state and strategy that allow its expansion, could be seen under its ideological form as a kind of hegemonic relation by which nature is redefined and its benefits are redirected to different powerful groups, giving the state capacity to allocate rights of use, legal activities, and categories of beneficiaries and offenders. However, the analysis of the action of the state at the level of protected areas, implies the recognition of a more complex situation by which state interacts with society in the search of controlling some resources.

To support my inquiry, I want to rely on the contributions of Abrams and his dissertations about the nature of the state. The author conceives how the abstraction of the state, as defined body separated from society, emerges as an ideological "thing" that "presents politically institutionalized power that (...) creates for our sort of society an acceptable basis for acquiescence. It gives an account of political institutions in terms of cohesion, purpose, independence, common interests and morality without necessarily telling us anything about the actual nature, meaning or functions of political institutions" (Abrams 1988: 68).

However, state need to be understood as a "system" which is the result of the interaction between "practice" and "institutional structure" coordinated by a government and extended in a society. This system goes side by side with the "idea" of state which take a "symbolic identity" (ibidem: 82).

In relation to that, the case of conservation in protected areas requires an understanding about state somehow different to the notion of a hegemonic body that simply dominates delimited places. The set of relations that emerge from the contested interests over natural sites and the odd power relations need to be explained by a concept of state more oriented towards its interactions, rather than its theoretical role in nature conservation. Under this approach the hegemonic idea of expansion need to be seen in a territorialized way, by which local conditions and the daily action of local actors determine the pace and form in which state is formed.

In that sense, it is my interest to use some theoretical arguments to deconstruct the concept of state towards its interaction and formation, specially recognizing the influence of the context and the day to day practices in the shaping of the state in localities, those areas where the effects of a controlled nature are supposed to be experienced by first hand. In such interactions, I want to stand out the incidence of local bureaucrats in the daily making of the state, using actor oriented approaches.

Beyond the idea of state: state structures, relations and actors

Working on the analysis of Abrahams, Mitchell points at the interdependence of the state system and the state idea which are considered "two aspects of the same process". The author highlights in fact how the state "arises from techniques that enable mundane material practices" that build the notion or the idea of a state as an "abstract, non-material form". consequently, the idea of state is shaped in "visible everyday forms, such as the language of legal practice, the architecture of public buildings, the wearing of military uniforms, or the making and policing of frontiers" (2006: 170, 173).

That mundane way to construct the "system of power" produces the difficulty to define boundaries between state and society; additionally, the power relations that arise inside, cannot be contained by the supposed limits of the state (Mitchell 2006: 170, 174-175). However, this set of power relations creates an image of internal structure, "agency and autonomy" needed to maintain the idea of boundaries that separate it from society and to "generate resources of power" (ibidem: 175-176).

The effect of mundane or local practices that configure state is also analysed by Li. Relating her assertions with the concept of governmentality, she analyses how the state's power of rule – by which the state attempts to "regulate" people's life – is a product of "cultural relations" framed in "discourses", "practices" and "struggles" (Li 1999: 295-296).

The enactment of those rules is thus, conditioned by "cultural framings", ways of planning, types of interactions between officials and citizens and degrees of agency in the way to apply those in specific contexts (ibidem: 315).

The different strategies of "everyday forms" of state formation, such as development projects, education, public administration, allow state to restate its own reasons and be grounded in routines. Those strategies also let it frame a "discursive framework for conceptualizing and managing the relationship between "the state" and the citizens" (Li 1999: 296-297).

It is important how the authors highlight the mundane representations of state, as product of a complex way of relations and fluxes of power that occur inside the state structure and that merge with those that occur between state and society. So, analysing the interactions of the state, there is a primer element that help focus my own analysis: bureaucracy, which is the clearest organizational structure that reflect the state and their mandates but also influence actors that belong to it.

As Mosse argues, bureaucracies are not simple instruments of policy, but a set of internal interrelations that determine the theoretical influence of hierarchical top levels. Bureaucracies are "independent generator of ideas, goals and interests" with the aim to maintain its rules, internal organizational arrangements and patron – client relations (2005: 103-104); As a consequence, implementation of programs depend more on the "system goals" rather than the official ones (ibidem: 125).

Using the arguments of Mosse (2005: 104) the nature of bureaucracies which are in charge of operationalize state projects, expose them to an internal competence of power, due the presence of "people with different responsibilities, tasks and different constructions of reality". Thus, actors and relations inside bureaucracies conform social structures built by the role and intersectionality of their members.

Brower and Abolafia (1997: 306-307) recall how bureaucratic politics conform a bargaining game, where negotiations from top level members are more visible in the process of shaping policies. However, as authors analyse, politics and power are exerted in a different way through the hierarchical structure inside a bureaucracy: "at the lower levels (...) – where singular actors lack the influence to affect significantly the policy decisions of government – individual identity, self-esteem and career become the stakes of political action. These are

political actors who, perceiving their relatively powerlessness, direct their pulling and hauling against hierarchical control”.

Therefore, when state project is materialized inside state structures, initial ideas could be translated in outcomes influenced by power relations, competing visions, and interactions that occur inside bureaucracies.

The flux of power across the hierarchical structure could reach the “diffuse borders” of the state in which bureaucrats at the local level try to impose power over society that could be seen as subordinated subjects of governmental policies (McC 1995: 264), however this relation could be more a matter of constant struggles and negotiations in the balance of domination and legitimacy. Thus, the interaction between state structures and civil society could be occurring in determined interfaces or contexts where the gap between governmental and society worlds is tried to be closed (Arce and Long 1992: 204-206). In this process the action of officials in the front line of governmental action (Hudson and Lowe 2009: 249) could be essential.

Consequently, there is an element in the bureaucratic structure that is determinant in the building of the “mundane practices” described by Mitchell. In this case I want to use Lipsky’s term “street level bureaucrats” to analyse the role that those bureaucrats with local scope of action and lower bureaucratic position, have in the shaping of state projects:

Lipsky uses the term “street level bureaucrat” to define public service workers, who are in charge to deliver functions and services of the state at the local level; common people encounter government by those actors, due the fact that their principal role has a considerable level of interaction with communities (2010: 3).

Lipsky as well as other authors recognize street – level bureaucrats as policy makers, based on two elements of their positions: “relatively high degrees of discretion and relative autonomy from organizational authority: by discretion, the author considers their possibility to “determine the nature, amount and quality of benefits and sanctions provided by their agencies; they are able to judge the convenience of each case without a complete supervision of “superiors or scrutiny by clients” (Lipsky 2010: 13-14).

The internal relations of bureaucracies - full of competing views, contested hierarchies, different professional backgrounds; the design of norms and procedures difficult to implement, as well as local conditions, give field workers certain degrees of autonomy to deal with implementation and enforcement of institutions in a selective way (Mosse 2005: 105, 109, Mathews 2008: 489, Lipsky 2010: 14-15).

Local bureaucrats can often disagree with the nature of policy that arise inside the bureaucracy, which can be considered illegitimate or opposite to their own interest. those conflicts conduce to the implementation of strategies of “noncompliance” or the emergence of “coping mechanism” to solve disparities between policies and their action in local areas (Lipsky 2010: 17-18).

Using the illustration of street level bureaucrats, it is possible to relate the “mundane material practices” and “visible everyday forms” of state described by Mitchell with those relations inside bureaucracy and, especially with the local action of street level bureaucrats. Those could be highly conditioned by local relations with society and by their capacity to exert autonomy, discretion

and oppositional stands against the hierarchical structure. Thus, materialization of the state can be seen under this human dimension, based on relations and strategies to deal with disparities between state ideal project and implementation in field.

However, the capacity to exert their actions in local areas are also the product of the meanings and representations that local officers can develop over local context and societies they interact with. That is to say, meanings are relevant by their influence in the process of structuration of routines and alternatives of action.

McC relates bureaucracies as an important “technology of power” that frame, force and conduct the thoughts that their members can reproduce in their routines of work (1995: 262-263). All of this through a learning and “pattern – following process” by which political, economic and social context drive “logical elaborations, rationales and critiques rooted in job struggles”. The construction of representations is fundamental because it drives the conception that street – level bureaucrats have of the non-bureaucrats and in this way, frame the exertion of power, relations and attempts to control its subjects (ibidem: 264).

To analyse this process of construction of meanings, the author analyses the concept of Thought – work which is defined as “the routine production of thoughts and consequent actions aimed at the control of slippery, sometimes resistant, recipients of organizational orders”. In his study, he also considers a structuring element of thought – work: the worldview defined as “the basic, organizationally shared assumptions about relationships between self and various others” (1995: 261). During the action of street – level bureaucrats, the worldview makes sense, and gives justification to the thoughts and routines of work with communities and drives the discretion applied in each case. (ibidem: 275-277).

Hence, when the idea of state projects or tactics of control pass through bureaucratic structures, suffer kind of translation by the influence of relations of power and interactions across the hierarchical chain. The bottom level of the structure, composed by street level bureaucrats, exert a relevant action by exerting their own power and implementing policies guided by bureaucratic representations but also by strategies to cope with implementation difficulties at the local level. The conjunction of their representations, routines and strategies, determine the way interactions with society are conducted and possibly, the extent they are contested.

The case analysed by Li shows how the platform of framed discourses about state comes into contradiction when are applied in the periphery – represented in this case by isolated areas. In such places the author, citing Gupta, arguments that "there is a gap between the state idea and the reality of more or less contradictory programs, initiatives and statements that people encounter directly". This localized forms of state considered "fragmentary, local personalized and (...) unsatisfactory" modify the notion of a strong state as something far from the peripheries and more related with cores of government (Li 1999: 295, 315-316).

As stated by Li, the local manifestation of state projects is contradictory and thus, subject of high level of contrasts, oppositions and struggles. The strategies that street level bureaucrats can adopt to face disparities between

policy and practice can illustrate the diverse ways in which the state takes form at the local level. The empirical evidence offered by Lund (2001) and Mathews (2008) can give insights of how strategies of street level bureaucrats influence the daily making of the state at the local areas:

Lund delve into the dynamics of local policies in Niger, Africa, in which Authority of public institutions need to be negotiated with organizations that have de facto authority due traditional systems of power or influence from the side of non-governmental organizations (Lund 2001: 846, 863).

Legality of formal authorities are not significant at the local level, so need to be negotiated by daily practices that could be considered “small-scale events” from a wider optic but are determinant in the canalization of “government policies” (ibidem: 866). Is in that sense that “public authority is being constructed in the imagination expectation, and everyday practices and conflicts of ordinary people and their organizations” (ibidem: 863)

In a similar way, Mathews engages with those official techniques to get an agreed construction of knowledge over nature (2008: 485). In this process, knowledge is not always a hegemonic project imposed but more often a result of local negotiations between street level officials and “their audiences”. In such negotiations, “officials may decide to ignore projects of legibility and deal with their own institutional weakness by seeking to entangle powerful allies in official knowledge claims, while often concealing their own activities from their superiors” (ibidem: 486). Coproduction and collaboration are also results of the continuous process of negotiation and is based on common representation that arise after mutual benefits are identified. Here, mutual translation appears from both sides, justifying their interactions (ibidem: 488)

With this common practices of renegotiation of law but also trough silencing and obscuring local situations in official reports, as well as interpretation of mandates and discretion in its applicability (including omission), local officers close the gap between official norms – difficult to enforce – and local practices (ibidem: 489).

To sum up, the concepts used attempted to visualize the relation of nature (In the form of protected areas) and state as a process that, considered a strategy of power expansion, could depend more on daily and mundane practices of state formation. In doing so, the role of those street level bureaucrats is foremost, because they personify and give a human dimension to the action of the governmental apparatuses, in the process to get compliance and application of the law in those areas. However, the tactics used at the local level to get compliance, expression of power, or simply acceptance, are product of complex negotiations with other actors that influence successful implementation procedures.

Following the authors and their analysis of the nature of the state, one could think about its strategies of conservation, not as a static imposition but a continuous process. By this, different conceptions and representations about nature, the use of different strategies and levels of coercion and the interaction with local communities are constructed and reconstructed in time. This continuous configuration of the relation state – nature is experienced differently in localities, depending on specific contexts, framed in the state interest over particular resources or landscape configurations as well as power relations with local societies.

The influence of conflict in the daily making of conservation project

Interactions between those local officers and society in the continuous making of the state, have a constructive character in the way they continually shape and reconfigures the nature of the state at the local level and the way conservation project is build. However, those relations show also a highly contentious character due opposite views and differences in power that arise in those local relations. Conservation of nature in protected areas has specially an unequal burden of power by which the state capacity to restrict uses over delimited areas produces inequalities regarding rights of use and thus, generate high levels of inconformity and struggles for revindication of power and freedoms at the local level; oppositions that could be faced in a first stance by local officials.

So, making of state in the form of conservation project need to recognize its conflictive character. Beyond the social impacts that controlling policies in protected areas can cause to local populations, the relations of resistance, conflict and opposition by communities or other actors situate protected areas as scenarios of high conflict and warfare.

Holmes (2007) analyses the nature of resistance to prohibitions inside protected areas: he analyses how conflicts could range from overt and explicit forms of opposition like “marches and petitions, sabotage and property damage, fire, destruction of protected natural resources, foot – dragging, threats and ostracism” (ibidem: 190) to subtle, everyday resistance practices with the aim to seize reactions of oppressors and to show their political stand (ibidem: 187).

In his analysis, the author reviews how in protected areas, resistance is commonly expressed in the “continuing of banned livelihood practices” (ibidem: 193). Also, people´s forms of resistance show high symbolism, where not only representative and most valued elements of protected areas (e.g. charismatic species) are preferred (through hunting, logging, burning) but how the protected area itself is considered a symbol of oppression, inequality or colonialism, being target of direct reactions, violence or military action (ibidem: 194-195).

Protected areas and warfare are also linked due tactic benefits that the remoteness and dense vegetal cover of protected sites can offer for military operations (Hanson et al. 2009: 584, 586). To sum up, the presence of protected areas makes them scenarios in which conflict can easily arise and persist.

Beyond the environmental impacts that war practices can generate, conflictive scenarios could affect the presence and action of environmental authorities, redirect funding initially focused on conservation and change patterns of natural resources uses, both for local communities and for other actors that enter the area as product of the conflict (Hanson et al. 2009: 579, 584).

Retaking our principal academic concern, it is important to set the influence that conflicts have in the daily formation of state, in this case its conservation project. Conflicts related directly with the use of land or resources, or those that indirectly target protected areas as sites of contestation or simply strategic places, condition the local action of actors, influence power relations that can arise in those local relations and add other type of effects over ecosys-

tems and resources that are absent in livelihood practices. The influence of conflict is especially important analysing the Colombian context which have suffered an internal war for more than 50 years.

Using the concepts above, this paper aims to analyse a specific situation of state formation in Colombia, using the historical situation and current strategies of local officers in National Park Sumapaz. To do so, the document will contextualize the main national policies of conservation in protected areas in Colombia and how the internal conflict has influenced the way conservation is executed in national parks. Then, specific context of colonization and conflict in the National Park and strategies of action of local officers, try to give elements to analyse how contexts determine certain types of negotiations and interactions and how those have configured the conservation project in a protected area full of historical contestations and different meanings over territory.

Chapter 3

Methodological approach

The dynamics of work and political stands of local officers of National Park are well known in the institution, due their close relation with social context in remote areas in Colombia. My experience as officer of such institution, gave me the basis to visualize the importance of their role in the conservation outcomes that we, as officers of the central levels received as data and technical reports. Thus, it made me be interested in the small-scale process that could occur in protected areas when conservation duties interact with local realities. Those small strategies and local negotiations are commonly known inside the organization and surely in the local level, however, those tactics and interactions are not well illustrated in the academic literature related with protected areas in Colombia.

This situation, gave me inspiration to delve into local officer's practices and interactions under an academic optic, relating those with my own perception of state, state functioning and how conservation policies face multiple constrains when interact with rural reality in Colombia. Knowing the need to understand conservation and state action from the side of local officers, the using of ethnographic methods seemed to be the most suitable methodological orientation.

This way to build knowledge challenged me, however in many ways. First, my background as a biologist and personal perceptions about nature, needed to be taken apart to understand conservation under the optic of social relations and thus, comprehend problematic situations that come when determined idea about relation human – nature is imposed over others. Another important element that needed to be into account were my personal relations and perceptions about live and action of local officers. So, delving into their actions implied the avoidance of preconceptions about their job.

An ethnographic orientation was also considered useful due my closeness to National Parks, which let me know the different actors and situations that can give information as well as the possibility to go inside and participate in different practices of the organization. Is in that way that the research employed analysis of documents, semi-structured interviews and informal conversations and last, participant observation.

With this orientation, the research pretends to analyse the negotiated strategies of conservation, selecting the case of Natural Park Sumapaz. The social context of the area conduced me to analyse the problem since nineteenth century. However, the analysis of local negotiations is focused on events since 2001, year of publication of the policy for social participation in conservation: first official document that recognized the conflict of occupation and use in protected areas and attempts to design strategies for its resolution.

Analysis of Documents

The analysis of documents was centred on official reports, written policies and legislative documents: Technical documents and policies focused in the resolution of occupation process, as well as management documents of Natural

Park Sumapaz. Legislative documents that describe conditions of management of protected areas were also considered.

Semi-structured interviews and informal conversations

To cover the lifespan of the analysis, Interviews with different officers of National Parks were done, including the three professionals that have been in charge of the protected area since 2004 (chiefs of the park), two current professionals of the park and one advisor at the central office who has also roles related to rural development in the Capital District. It was also developed an interview with a current professional of the mayoralty of Bogotá D.C who works in participation promotion in Sumapaz.

Informal conversations were also done with the current chief of the park and two other advisors of the central level.

Participant observation

Two sessions of participant observation were done: one visit to the park, joining a meeting between the park chief and two professionals of the national Procuratorate. The second one was the assistance to the public audience of the Peasant Reservation of Sumapaz, accompanying the official presentation of the local officers of the Protected Area.

Chapter 4

Protected areas and conflict

History of protected areas in Colombia has not been distant from the armed conflict that affect the country. The boom of creation of protected areas at the beginning of the 70's coincided with one of the most important periods in the war history: the consolidation of guerrillas, mainly FARC (Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces) (Zuluaga 2009: 53). Although this period cannot be considered the beginning of the violence in Colombia, the conditions of armed confrontation and the coincidence with the new presence of conservation areas, make this period influential in the local situation of protected areas.

Origins of the Colombian conflict has roots in the dynamic of unequal access to land, by which interests of powerful actors conduced to a critic concentration of rural land. failed attempts of agrarian reforms and centralized development models have not contributed to solve the problem but have incremented it (PNN 2015:183, Puentes 2013: 106). The problematic situation gave political basis to guerrillas especially FARC, which claimed for solution of land distribution conflicts and inequities towards peasant population (Zuluaga 2009: 52).

As a parallel process, the National System of Protected Areas reserved territory for conservation of biodiversity elements, forest products, cultural elements and ensure services as hydric regulation and scenery (Presidencia de la República de Colombia 1974). By the period of the 70's, 23 protected areas were declared, National Park Sumapaz among them (Leal 2016¹). Declaration process and guidelines for management of those areas where decided among elite scientists and politicians without public consultation, enabling a rapid expansion of the protected areas system (Ibidem). The categories assigned to protected areas, prohibited productive practices linked to peasant's livelihoods. Thus, this designation of big parcels of land for exclusive preservationist purposes worsened the complex conflict of land. The exclusionary character of protected areas involved thus, critical conflicts with communities settled before the declaration of the area or that had arrived later because displacement or other political and economic situations.

With the compromises acquired in the convention of Biological Diversity of Rio in 1992, Colombia reinforced its purposes to expand the National System of Protected Areas, gradually achieving at the end of 2015 a total of 59 national protected areas with more than 14 million of hectares (PNN 2015). With Rio agreements, national institutions were transformed and National Parks of Colombia was created as a special dependency of the Ministry of Environment in charge of the management of the national protected areas. The institution was conceived to be arranged in central and regional cores of government but also local offices directly in charge of the management of protect-

¹ Leal, L. 2016. Behind the Scenes and Out in the Open: The making of National Parks of Colombia 1960s-70s. Unpublished Article.

ed areas and implementation of policies designed at the central level. Those local teams, are composed by a chief of the park and his / her supported team.

However, neither the mandates of the convention nor its ratification at the national level seriously recognized the complexity of land conflict and thus never consider this element as relevant in the management process. Consequently, local officers resulted in a situation not acknowledged in higher levels of the state structure, that placed them between two opposite interests: from one side, those related to the environmental governance claimed by the state, which determines policies and procedures for ecosystem management and from the other, multiple needs, visions and interests over the territory and its resources in a context of war.

Historically, National Parks has been involved in two types of related conflicts that nonetheless, display different conditions: in one hand, national parks, with a marginal character, have been ideal space for warfare practices. In the other hand, the internal conflicts related with peasant exclusion due conservation purposes give specific scenarios of encounter. Those intertwined conflicts persist until the recent history.

National Parks and Warfare

Military strength and ideological base of FARC Guerrilla, made it the most influent insurgent actor in the armed conflict. however, the evolution of the conflict involved the emergence of other actors like paramilitary forces, drug traffickers and recently, a fortified army. With the increase in complexity and specially the penetration of drug trafficking as principal way of financing, internal conflict was no longer a political struggle and became a confrontation for territorial control (Zuluaga 2009:67).

Zuluaga characterizes the Colombian conflict by its profound affectation to civil society, due its marginal character (focused in peasant areas far from cores of political power), involvement of state in irregular warfare practices (support of paramilitaries) and expansion of drug trafficking since the 80s, with a consequent weaken of social links and expansion of violence. (2009: 49-51).

In such scenario protected areas became geostrategic places for warfare practices: due its isolated position and less influence of the state they became operational refuge for guerrilla and paramilitary leaders. Areas have been also used as centres for the settlement of coca crops and cocaine labs, places to hide kidnapped people, strategic corridors to move drugs, guns and people as well as places for exploitation of natural resources for financing (Semana 2014). The situation is considered critical where 23 parks face the presence of armed groups and 25 have landmines inside territory (Ibidem). Those situations greatly condition possibilities of action of chiefs and local teams in protected areas.

Land Conflict Inside Protected Areas

Aside of this national scenario, protected areas are themselves areas for conflict due the imposition of conservation proposes over territory. The type of conflicts can vary greatly due specific social and territorial contexts, but in general they rely on the impossibilities of access to land, the no recognition of property rights, sanctions to resources users due the restrictions imposed over those areas and the impossibility to access to state benefits.

Because of this situation, 34 national protected areas have been reported with occupation and use conflicts, with an annual rate of deforestation of 16.631 Hectares, due the development of productive activities inside them (PNN 2014). It is important to note, that due the constitutional rights recognized for ethnic groups (indigenous and afro descendant communities) the overlapping of those territories with protected areas is legally accepted; so, conflicts around land tenancy, occupation and use exist mainly with peasant communities.

In different moments, National Parks has tried to manage the problem, recognizing the need to move forward the enforcement of law in protected areas. The first official attempt was the “Policy for social participation in conservation” promulgated in 2001, that recognized the needed link between conservation and human welfare, identifying the traditional model of strict preservation as inefficient and insufficient, that barely promotes cultural changes and acts in contradiction with social justice. The policy is explicit in how the recognition of occupation in protected areas could give insights for new alternatives of management, calling on the need for a transitional and flexible mechanisms to move from strict conservation to co-management in specific contexts (PNN 2001).

More recently, framed in the peace agreement with FARC guerrilla, in 2012 national government ordered National Parks and other institutions to coordinate solutions to the occupation conflict in protected areas; that is how the institutions start its second policy focused on territorial conflicts resolution. For those purposes, National Parks started a process with two central strategies: concertation spaces with peasant organizations and the realization of a detailed diagnosis of the conflict in each protected area, to define solutions for each specific case.

However, both policy processes have been affected by the environmental law in force that explicitly prohibit agricultural or extractive activities of peasant communities, giving a legislative obstacle to any attempt to reconcile conservation with livelihood of rural communities. The first policy was totally affected by those restrictions, being barely implemented. In the most recent process, lack of normative support limit the possibility to engage in new alternatives of conservation involving communities, being this topic highly contentious among members of the institution due oppose positions around the allowance of peasant families in protected areas and the procedures to make this new view implementable.

Although the institutional process has recognized the importance of local teams and promote on them new roles to for a bottom – up building of strategies, local officers have no clarity about procedures for local negotiation and don't enjoy juridical support to concert conservation activities involving livelihood of peasants.

Chapter 5

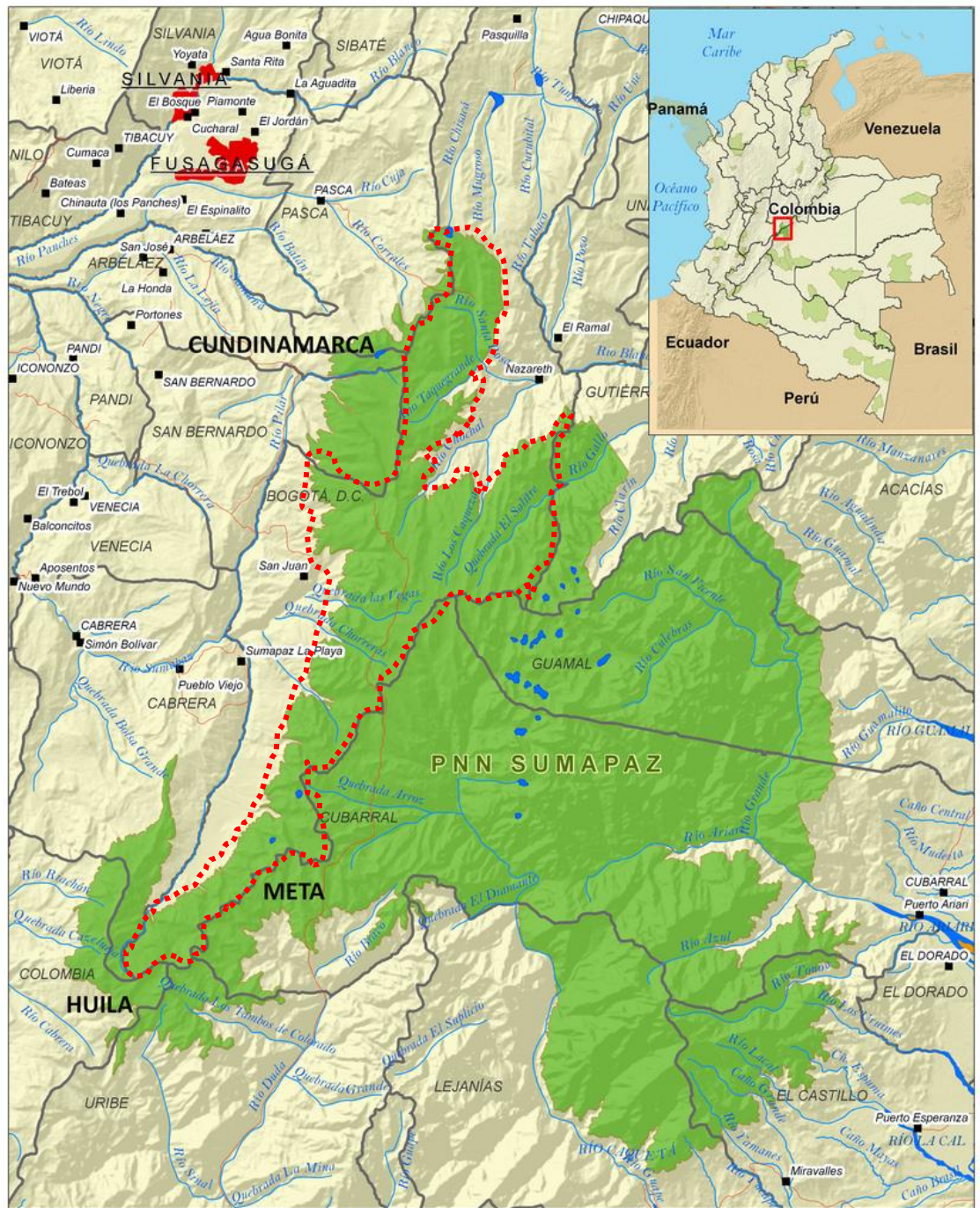
Construction of the territory of Sumapaz and the Late arrival of the Local Team of the National Park

Sumapaz is considered the biggest paramo ecosystem of the world. This type of mountain ecosystem is exclusive of the tropical Andes of Latin America, located at altitudes over 3000m. Its particular characteristic offers a singular biodiversity as well as conditions for production and regulation of water. Due its role in the supply of water for Colombian population and the fragility that this ecosystem has due climatic change, it is considered a priority for conservation Colombian policies.

National Park Sumapaz has 166.840 Hectares, compromising ecosystems of Paramo and Andean Forest. It has geographical relevance, because it connects the Andean and Amazonian ecosystems as well as a chain of paramos in the central region of the country. The reserve of water for Bogotá D.C also makes Sumapaz a strategic ecosystem (PNN 2005: 54, 113).

A big proportion of this paramo ecosystem exist in the confluence of two territorial divisions: the Protected Area and the 20th locality of Bogotá D.C² called also Sumapaz (Map 1). The locality of Sumapaz has 78.096 Hectares, being 34.556 overlapped with the protected area. This locality is divided in three territorial subdivisions called “corregimientos”: San Juan de Sumapaz, Betania and Nazareth. All of them composed by different villages, some of them inside the National Park (PNN 2005: 30).

² For management purposes, Bogotá, capital of Colombia, is divided in 20 localities, each with a local mayoralty which depend on the decisions of the central government, but manage the locality based on the particularities of the territory. The locality number 20 is denominated Sumapaz and is entirely rural.



Map 1. Localization of the National Park Sumapaz (Green). Dotted line indicates the overlapped area between the National Park and the locality of Bogotá ('Parque Nacional Natural Sumapaz. Ubicación Geográfica De Los Parques Naturales De Colombia', n.d.)

It is over the confluence of the Locality and the National Park where the political conflicts have been more critical, being worth focusing the analysis in this region. Besides its ecological importance, the Paramo of Sumapaz has been a territory of political struggles about land and peasant identity tightly linked to the historical armed conflict in the country. Hence, the establishment of the protected area were done in the middle of a complex social process of fighting for territory. This section is oriented to describe briefly the historical context of the paramo of Sumapaz and its effect over the action of local teams of protected areas.

“The peasant struggle to get rights over land property and the self-recognition of peasant as political actor occurred at the end of nineteen and during the twentieth century (...). There was a process where links with sorrow were made, links with a territory considered their hope... links with land. I mean, current peasants consider Peasant Reservation Zone as the result of many generations who have claim, have given casualties, have organized juridical strategies.... A political bet to be recognized by the state. The idea of resistance against interests of big tenants is a kind of element of identity in the region” (park officer, interview 2016).

The beginning of the struggle was in the 19th century in which the “Hacienda” model of territorial control promoted the migration of landless peasants from many parts of the region to rent small parcels of land in the Hacienda of Sumapaz, located in the highlands. The unfair labour conditions as well as their search for rights over land, fostered social cohesion of peasants and struggles against the abuse of patrons. There were continuous and violent struggles that got responses by the government in 1928, which officialises peasant recognition and a type of land assignation in the form of agricultural colonies, creating the agricultural colony of Sumapaz. Such colony was characterized by a strong social cohesion, self – organization and solid forms of auto – governance with the creation of communitarian institutions to ensure order. This initial institution evolved in the Agrarian Syndicate, labour union that inherited colony’s social organization and nowadays operates in a similar way, (Galvis 2014: 19-21) showing a strong political power in the community.

However, this partial recognition did not totally ensure peasant access to land. Different violent responses of traditional landowners produced a maintained confrontation in the region. The prosecution of political actors during different periods of violence in Colombia, made the region also an epicentre of prosecution and war. As a consequence, the organization in the community were linked to armed militancy, associated with the liberal and communist parties that in the 70’s constituted a strong force actively fighting in different armed conflicts in the region. (Galvis 2014: 21-22).

“Because historical circumstances, peasant had to set armed opposition. Juan de la Cruz Varela with all the agrarian organization that came with the agricultural colony stated a liberal guerrilla fight, establishing agrarian liberalism as political ideology and claiming respect for peasant’s land, and, specially, their political freedom. They didn’t accept conservatism and that is an element that have positioned us in front of the regime, in front of the big economic and political power of the city as the subversives of the centre of the country” (Sumapaz Peasant leader, conference presentation 2016³).

This militant-oriented social organization gave base to the FARC Guerrilla in the 90’s to set up structures of action in Sumapaz. The political and ideological affinities based on peasant struggles and claims for land recognition enhanced the interest and establishment of this guerrilla over the territory. In that way, Sumapaz became a guerrilla’s strategic area, because its possibilities of recruitment and its geographical position with difficulties to access that allow groups to hide, the closeness to the capital, giving a constant opportunity

³ International Conference: Tierras y Territorios en las Américas: acaparamientos, resistencias y alternativas (Lands and Territories in Americas: Land grabbing, resistances, and alternatives). Bogotá, August 23th to 26th 2016.

to besiege it, as well as the connection of this paramo with the guerrilla's operation zones in the eastern lowlands of the country (Galvis 2014: 24-28,38).

National Park Sumapaz was created in 1977 and, despite the technical recognition of the presence of communities in the area, the process of declaration was done without consultation (Galvis 2014: 30). After the official declaration, state couldn't set up official presence due the complex armed conflict in the region, so in 1997 the first local team composed only by one chief, one support professional and one technician came to the protected area to exert their functions as environmental authority (PNN 2005: 59).

“Due the expertise of that chief in similar cases of no previous institutional presence, this time he was assigned to Sumapaz. There he acted as “institutional settler” because he starts from scratch. His strategy was to buy a piece of land with a cab and start authority operations there” (park chief, personal communication 2016).

During 2000 and 2003 the national government focused a strong military operation to recover Sumapaz from the FARC's control, establishing a mountain battalion and starting an offensive against guerrilla. Civil population and their institutions were also stigmatized and prosecuted, being accused to be FARC insurgents. The community showed many ways of resistance of the “new local order imposed by the army” generating many official claims and demands accusing violations of human rights and environmental impacts caused by the army (Galvis 2014: 54-56).

In 2002 the local team of the National Park was requested by the army to cede the cab, because its location was considered strategic for military control of the road. After this, the local team had to leave the area, due the lack of a place for operations but also because their opposition to become army's informants in the region (due their possibility to contact communities and enter settlements targeted by militia) and the risk that the state of affairs could cause on the integrity of the team (park chief, personal communication 2016).

Between 2000 and 2003, National army displayed four big operations and reinforced the permanent mountain battalion in the area (Galvis 2014: 52-53). With the strategy, state got the recovery of the area and the official retreat of the guerrilla. however, army's presence is still in the area, due national security interests. On the other side, National Parks resumed gradual presence by 2005 and the community continued in their opposition and resistance mode against state, especially in San Juan de Sumapaz, sector that is tightly linked to the communist party and the Agrarian Syndicate. This institution continues leading the authority and regulation in a big proportion of the territory, and being an actor with high importance in terms of representation of the community in front of state representatives (Galvis 2014: 22-23).

Chapter 6

The cab and the sanction: history of a broken relation

The conflicts with the national park have existed since the time of its declaration, due the unconsented instauration and the related affectations to the families that resulted inside the borders of the area. Nowadays, 239 peasant families remain inside the national park: 140 belong to Betania, 79 to San Juan and 20 in Nazareth (Asosumapaz 2013: 50-51).

Being already a weak and controversial presence in the territory, the cession of the cab to the army determined the broken relations between community of Sumapaz and the local team of the park. This situation, that affected the functioning of the environmental authority were also interpreted by community as a murky alliance, in which national parks entered the territory with conservation excuses but it was rather instrumental for military purposes that affected rights of the peasant community. The links between national parks and army are still in the collective mind of the community, and this situation give base to the generalized lack of trust that exist in the territory:

“In the case of Natural Parks, community inconformity relies on the constitution and gradual expansion of the park’s area without consultancy; in the other side the bare physic presence in the Locality and the cab transfer to the army have been source of many critiques by the community” (Asosumapaz 2013: 178-179).

After cession of the cab and the retreat of the local team, the national park was lacking of presence of local officers during three years. This time was considered by the central offices as a period without rule and uncontrollable expansion of prohibited activities. In that way, at the end of 2004, a new team was sent to the park with the instruction to enforce the environmental law and recover the governance of the institution in the area.

The new local team came and impose a great amount of environmental sanctions mainly to the community and prohibited the realization of new activities, especially public works led by the District government:

“At the beginning my duty was to retake the authority and do the hard work to say “here is not allowed to build; here you cannot do infrastructure, here you cannot plough, here you cannot hunt”, because there was a complete absurdity! I mean, all that is prohibited in a protected area was being done there, so we can say that there were two or three years when, if you ask actors there, my period was interpreted as one of the periods with the strongest policy of surveillance and control and the unwillingness to dialogue. Other chiefs had an easier task, but for me, was a time to sanction” (Park chief interview – 2016).

However, the imposition of sanctions didn’t have a complete support from the central level, and there were not timely resolutions and penalizations, turning the coercive tool a powerless mechanism that only generated great unconformity in the community:

“It was a hard duty and sanctions were opened against people, but until now, I think they were never judged and penalty fees were never charged. This situation is difficult, because

it remains a sensation that “here nothing happened”. It was for instance, a man who broke 100 Hectares of Paramo and we opened a sanction process, we did all the process and he had to pay – in that time – seven or eight million pesos and I think until now, they have not charged him. That made me think a lot, because for all those sanctions, functionaries were menaced (...)” (Park chief interview – 2016).

The strict enforcement of the law created a great conflict between the local government, the community and the local team of the park and all possible relations were broken. The political control that the local organizations had, added to a remaining influence of the FARC guerrilla, blocked any attempt of management by the national park and at the end, in 2011 the chief of the park and his team were death threaten, so they had to be relocated and the team replaced. Since then, relations between the institution and the community have been conflictive, with a suspicious community and a strong control by the local politic organizations that slow down any diagnosis or management activity that involve populated areas.

After this first period, local teams Have had to balance their disposition to improve relations and the need to reinforce their image as authority not only with the community but also with other state actors. Local teams however, devoid of proper financialization, central level support and even a minimum number of functionaries to do presence in the area; this condition make them less powerful in front of other actors, especially the army. The power of the army and the relations with National Parks adduced by the community is another element that affect seriously the image of the local team:

The army has historically enjoyed benefits due its definitive role in the military recover of Sumapaz. Due the importance of this area as corridor of the Guerrilla, the national government justified the permanent presence of the high mountain battalion of Sumapaz, with the second highest proportion of soldiers per person in the country.

The high number of soldiers in the area and the harsh climatic and geographical conditions of the place, led to the creation of irregular camps and shelter places with high environmental impacts like garbage burning, burying of toxic material, pollution of streams with faeces, cutting of natural vegetation to make beds, etc.

However, the war period in Colombia gave the army some kind of immunity and there were not environmental sanctions for their impacts, being a source of high disconformity for the community who argues complicity with environmental authorities.

“...With the change of chief everything is altered: parks’ cab where environmental activities were done, is ceded to the army, the sanctions begin to be oriented towards the peasant and army is not sanctioned even with all their battalions, their camps occupying water supplies of community, with 200 or 300 soldiers polluting waters with stool, cutting frailejones to do their hovels (...) they left in the area, batteries, guns and never a soldier were sanctioned, but peasants were because they work the land inside the protected area” (Parks advisor interview 2016).

The incapacity to sanction the army due its power in wartimes reinforced the initial association with National parks and produce illegitimacy of the environmental discourse, which was considered another way to control and prosecute the community.

Chapter 7

The sanction is the problem but is also the only solution: small scale strategies of negotiation

The gradual change of doctrine of the institution towards a more participative management, promote in local teams the development of negotiation and concertation roles. However, the restrictive laws regarding allowed uses inside the national park condition and limit local functionaries in their possibilities to negotiate local schemes of conservation under agricultural activities.

“They ask us as chiefs of the areas “you have to concert with communities” but they tie us with a Decree of the year 77, right? It shows other realities, so it is too difficult. In a concertation process, what can one cede? If to cede is to going to the procuratorate to be investigated, or to the proper National Parks! “You didn’t accomplish with decree 622, so go with your disciplinary sanction, if the issue is big, go to the procuratorate, because your duty is to conserve the natural resources...” (Park chief interview 2016).

“... There are also very contradictory signals (...) I think negotiation with peasants is not properly oriented ... There are very interesting ideas but we don’t have legal support, Parks is moving in that way, but there is nothing concrete that give us the tranquillity to act like they are asking us...” (Park chief interview – 2016).

With this restrictive scenario, but the felt need to move to negotiation in the local area, the most suitable tool that have been used by the chiefs is the same coercive instrument: The discretion to selectively allocate sanctions and permits have been almost the only way to slowly recover relations with the community.

The mandatory duty of Chiefs in National Parks is especially focused on the identification of illegalities inside the parks and conduction of sanctions for those forbidden activities. In the case of Sumapaz, the inhabited portion of the park is full of “illegal” activities and infrastructure: rural schools, crops, cattle ranching, artisanal mining, domestic animals, and so on. The amount of practices would imply a vast amount of sanction process that needed to be executed by the chiefs. However, the last experience in which a coercive strategy only caused total breakdown of relations, have discouraged the imposition of new sanctions over community.

During their daily job, chiefs also have identified social differences regarding tenancy and use of resources inside The National Park. Their experience has shown that not only peasant community is using the area, but also big absent tenants and renters have entered the territory and started big economic activities there. This situation conduces them to identify differences in the pace and level of impacts and to consider community the subjects less likely to be sanctioned.

“One of the situations that created most inconvenient for us was precisely the application of environmental authority in field, because one began to identify families that live and depend on two hectares and four cows, and that’s all they have, but also one find former counsellors of Bogotá with huge lands inside the park to do business, to put cows or potato crops on them, but they don’t care about nothing and don’t depend economically on those either; so, identifying those cases, the treatment of the case needed to be different. With those big

landowners, the most suitable action was the entire application of the norm” (Sumapaz chief interview – 2016).

Despite the risk to act against their duties as environmental authority, the common practises at the local level seem to have certain degree of autonomy and invisibility from the central offices. So, they deliberately omit the imposition of sanctions in cases they consider unfair.

This action respond to their own ethical decisions, but also constitute a negotiation card: With this administration of sanctions, they use their power to improve their own image and soft relations with communities, by showing their disposition to concert conservation and open spaces for communication.

“Fortunately we could recover dialogue with Agrarian Syndicate and with people of the local management board. I believe, this was one of the most relevant achievements we could get in that moment, we could be closer to people in charge of local government. They obviously ask us not to apply the law, not to sanction and then, what we propose them was to check each person situation and then decide which action take” (Sumapaz chief interview – 2016).

Being still their duty, the strategy employed by the functionaries were reorient the sanctions to other actors in the territory. That is how in the period from 2011 to 2014 the sanctions were focused to the big, absent tenants and more recently, to state actors, mainly the army.

With this autonomy and agency in the selection of “offenders” the local officials can report the accomplishment of the rule, but solve the constrains that menace their permanence and possibilities of action in the territory.

Another element that eventually have been used to favour the image of the local teams, correspond to their efforts to legally allow some public works and infrastructure improvements that cannot be done because the restrictions of the protected area, affecting the community who cannot receive those services from the district.

Chiefs have tried in some cases, to strategically use some legal exemptions to get governmental approval to some works that will benefit mainly the community. That was the case of the declaration of risk situation to get approval from the central offices to do maintenance on the road system and to fix the sewage system. This action softened the relations with community and opened spaces for some participation of the local team in the community meetings.

In a similar way, due the requirements of the community to install some infrastructure for telecommunication, the current chief of the park was trying to prove the central offices, the usefulness of this antennae to the communication requirements of the park, in order to process a minor authorization instead of an environmental licence, which would be more expensive and time demanding, due the bureaucratic procedure it requires.

The possibility to consider special cases to omit sanctions and allow infrastructure have been effectively interpreted by community as a change of institutional attitude and more disposition to set dialogue to face the conflict. That situation opened small spaces to concert some activities and to receive park’s advice in environmental issues.

“the communist sector, people of Agrarian Syndicate still consider there are not real state willingness to change, but they see willingness in some park functionaries, they say that

the presence of Territorial Director, the central level, the fact that the current chief is a decent person they can talk to, is a kind of progress and for that reason they continue talking” (Parks advisor interview – 2016).

In the other hand, the local team of national parks, gradually has gained confidence to assert their authority and to demonstrate independence from the army. This situation has been fostered by the changes experienced in recent years, once the military recovery of the territory was complete in the area: Gradually, the army is becoming a symbolic presence and thus, this strategic action in the area is turning blurry. Also, it's their legal armour.

With the reduced power of the army, the last two chiefs of the park have been more opened to community demands and have initiated four sanction process against the army. In the same way, they have initiated a constant struggle to recover the cab and with this, their governance in the area, arguing that the mission of the army was done and there are new times in which the presence of the state need to be redirected towards them as environmental authority. The chiefs have started actions looking for support in National Parks, but also scaling in different levels of the military bureaucracy. There is no complete support of parks directives though, and the lobby efforts of the local teams have been mild.

Despite the difficulties of environmental action in Sumapaz, history of interactions has had certain outcomes in the environmental meanings that the inhabitants have over the territory. Recently the process of consolidation of the Peasant Reservation Zone of Sumapaz has been retaken⁴ and with this, community's projection and development visions over the territory are more visible in political scenarios. Framed in this process, community reflect an environmental discourse centred in their peasant way of life as promoter of Par-amo conservation. They use information and terminology of National Parks to describe the situation of ecosystems in the area and recall in the need to alternative ways of development diminish affectations over environment (ASO-sumapaz 2013: 43-55).

Somehow, the environmental principles of the historical action of local teams of National Parks have permeated the discursive way by which peasant reflect their relation with environment.

“when we check the history of relations between Parks and people, peasants – especially the Syndicate – remember first chief with affection; they say” they teach us to love the paramo, they teach us how to take care of it, to be proud of living in the biggest paramo of the world and we had good relations with parks” (...) Those teachings contributed to the construction of their identity of Peasants, that is reflected in their visions of development in the Peasant Reservation Zone” (Parks Advisor, interview 2016).

⁴ According to Law 160 of 1994 (Congreso de Colombia 1994), Peasant Reservation Zones is a type of territorial category that can be established in order to prioritize state land transferring to peasant communities, in order to foster peasant economy and sustainable use of natural resources; Peasant Reservation Zones have special restrictions that impede concentration of land. This legalization of common property implies though, long bureaucratic procedures and don't enjoy wide political acceptance among elites, so there are few successful cases that are officially entitled as such.

In general, relations between community and national parks have been moving to a less unfriendly relation. The pace of this changes have been however very slow, and the small achievements in terms of negotiations can easily be affected by conflicts that still arise in the enactment of environmental authority by the side of parks. The Historical moment of peace agreements between national government and FARC Guerrilla, and the consequent institutional formulation of policy for resolution of land conflicts in protected areas has forced in a certain way the dynamization of dialogues between parks and community of Sumapaz, being also a local officer's justification for not impose sanctions to the community, to diminish the risk to affect formal dialogues.

Common Elements like the need to control the unregulated tourism present in the area and the interests around the peasant reservation zone, has offered renovated windows to set new alliances.

To sum up, the reconstruction of relations between Parks members and community has been based on limited strategies that have shown little and slow results in the search of legitimacy of conservation policies. However, the constant interaction not only shows strategies of adaptation in the side of local teams but also a certain influence in representations of community. The encounter of those elements shape the conservation outcomes of Sumapaz.

Chapter 8

Meanings and representations of local officers

The scenario described previously suggest that the ensemble of norms, procedures and bureaucratic structures to enforce conservation become the frame of negotiation used by local officers to get local permanence and action in the protected area; however, local action could not be only the result of adapted strategies. Those also depend on the meanings adopted during their career as functionaries of National Parks as well as those that arise as respond to their local experience in protected areas. Those meaning and representations could determine their routines and, in this case, give support to the daily decisions they take to solve conflictual situations.

Local teams have been recognized to have a strong sense of belonging to the institution and the mission it is called to do, so in this case, we are talking about bureaucrats with clear worldviews that orient their daily job. (McC 1995: 261).

Their perceptions of their job, are closely linked with their own perception on the territory they act on. Despite their prevailing managerial vision, they show other interests and ways to understand the territory: Chiefs and professionals of local teams have close relation with environmental sciences and their representations over the territory have a strong appreciation of nature in its pristine forms, so it is also common to listen from them, recognition about values as biodiversity, beauty, ecological processes or even, ritual significances. They show a clear type of nonmaterialist environmentalism (Guha and Martínez Alier 1998: 34) more focused on the maintenance of the ecosystems rather than a conscious search of revenue via offering of environmental services and products.

Therefore, they consider protected areas legitimate, valid and needed. They value the national effort to declare those and how those are central in the country's efforts of conservation. They consider the sacredness of their borders given by National Constitution, and how ecosystems are better if they are pristine, because resilience and recovery is possible, so parks need to exist without intervention:

“Because those that were there were not wrong, National parks were not created, as people said, were the bubble gum was thrown, they decided to settle a park, no. This have been a responsible work done by many people that precede us, and that deserve all our admiration and respect, because in their moment they had to do protected areas without enough information, and for that reason they are criticised. Now, we have Geographical information systems, photographs whatever we want, that we have. Those people had to do protected areas without much information and there is a big merit on that” (Sumapaz Chief 2016, interview).

Based on their grounded representations, local teams consider their roles as something more than a payed job. They think about its job as a mission, a duty, they feel responsibility of the maintenance of those ecosystems, because they represent the institution in charge of the protection of those delimited areas, which gives many benefits to societies.

In that way, they consider themselves the environmental authority in those areas. Despite the conflicts that they can face in the establishment of their authority, this position of superior power and capacity of decision of what is best in those areas (at least in paper) is generally embedded in their representations. In that way, they struggle to be recognized as authority by external actors but also by others in higher bureaucratic positions. They claim to be recognized as leaders in their areas. To be respected, consulted, to have more autonomy:

“We tried to improve the status of the park, to impede that everyone come and do whatever they want, because it makes lots of troubles. (...) they (referring other state offices) with much money and Parks only with will and people, because we didn’t have money and they flout our authority all the time, they proposed economic alternatives for people but never contemplated allowed uses established in the management plan...” (Sumapaz chief interview – 2016).

Park chiefs and their teams are also those that know by first-hand the political implications of the conservation model of protected areas in Colombia. Interviewed chiefs have been assigned to different areas, in which they could understand and compare the social dynamics that exist in protected areas. In much cases protected areas have been epicentre of the Colombian armed conflict, so the presence, local understanding and actions of local teams are not isolated of that reality.

War has affected the institutional structure of National Parks, by affecting directly local teams of protected areas. In the institutional history, National Parks can account for chief’s murders, eviction and a constant environment of risk for many of their officers during the imposition of environmental authority. This reality generates a sense of solidarity and cohesion between chiefs and teams, and foster the notion of their roles and importance in the middle of the conflict.

Hence, the local teams are more aware about the complexities of doing conservation in field and recognize the informal institutions that rule in a determined area, that could affect their capacity to show results to the centres of government. The capacity to move amidst this local complexity is part of their managerial strategies.

Consequently, the occupation conflict is also understood and analysed by local teams, supported by their possibility to see at the finest level the social relations and to interact directly with people. In the case of Sumapaz, all functionaries interviewed recognize and respect the historical struggle of Sumapaz community and how peasant families need to be treated not as offenders but as people that need different alternatives. Asseverations like “they are not park invaders” or “they want to stay there, they have their identity and that is valid” are common and support believes that conservation without people is impossible to do in this case, so the institution need to think about solutions that involve people and their practices.

However, the conflict with communities is still understood by local officers as a situation in which “someone” is “inside” a delimited area for conservation and not as a conflict related with different visions and interests over territory. So, for them occupation conflict is mainly a problem for management.

In teams’ representation, historical fights for land in Sumapaz are visible in the territory and in that way, they constitute part of the value of the paramo;

however, their connotations that still conceive conservation apart from peasant way of life make difficult to articulate their conceptions of conservation with the coexistence of peasant activities. That incapacity conditions their own alternatives of thinking in a possible future of conservation including communities.

The officers recognize in the community conservation identity and alternative ways of development, based on agricultural production. Despite they acknowledge the community strength to stay in the park and their right to do so, they cannot consider conservation strategies with all community inside. The possible population growth and desires of development are reasons to consider that conservation schemes with people will conduce to a degradation of the ecosystems.

Agricultural activities done in the paramo are neither contemplated in their ideal schemes of conservation. There is a dominance of potato crops and cattle ranching where environmental impacts like the use of agrochemicals, replacement of natural pastures and continuous burning to promote sprouts growing, make agricultural production in paramo less likely to gain consideration as conservation alternative.

But there is also water in Sumapaz and ideal alternatives of conservation go around the importance of water regulation service and its future contribution to Bogotá growth. Thus, functionaries imagine possibilities to promote payment of environmental services, compensations to families, water harvesting and so on, and they do believe that those changes in activities could support locals' life and alternatives of development more in accordance with the conservation suitability of Sumapaz.

Their conceptions about future alternatives recognize the need to think about new options involving local people, but they are somehow restricted by their beliefs about conservation. Their conception of "right" and "wrong" uses, the support and legitimacy of the protected areas, their conceptions of environmental authority as non-negotiable are some examples of their deep connotations of conservation that coincide with the national paradigms about protected areas. So, despite their recognition of the need to do a new type conservation, their alternatives are more and less framed in the restrictions of protected areas. Moreover, their ideals of conservation with people don't recall the strong peasant identity of the community of Sumapaz and how historically the relations between national parks and the community have been based in lack of trust and opposition.

Chapter 9

Everyday state formation in the case of Sumapaz

As Zimmerer argues, conservation ideals based on the paradigm of “equilibrium” or “stability” of nature govern much of the conservation politics (2000: 356-357), and give base to types of management that “pries apart environmental and social attributes or that only rejoins them in block – like fashion” (Zimmerer 2000: 364). Thus, the globally accepted conception and regulatory nature of protected areas offer to the conservation paradigm an ideal and delimited space by which the theoretical isolation of nature from human activities orient simplified techniques of management.

Conservation project leading by the Colombian state is not remote from the globalized trends, in which international treaties conduce to a type of rationality that barely facilitate alternative ways to include the relation human – nature in the planning of protected areas. The adoption by Colombian government without including the complex inner conflict produced a type of environmental discourse incoherent with social land claims, and thus, lacking of legitimacy.

Colombian reality shows the disparities that could exist between the state as idea and the relations that emerge when state attempts to materialize the notion of a hegemonic and coherent body. This materialization is closely dependent to the space where those relations are being produced and thus, give to the notion of state idea a territorial context that have a relevant influence. This element however, could be invisible in some state projects.

As Vaccaro et al argues (2013: 256), protected areas are a clear example of conservation that is territorialized. Particularly, protected areas show that conservation need to be demonstrated through the management of the spaces. So, conservation policies require more than an action of planning and delimitation from the central level. Require a practice of territorialisation. According to MacLeod and Goodwin this adjusting of scales, in terms of comprehension and operation, does not imply a simple adjustment of national processes and abstractions: The complexity that local spaces can show in their social and political relations, make them independent scenarios with own “accumulation and state strategies” (1999: 518).

In other words, in materializing conservation project of the state, protected areas are no longer abstract areas, identified by national maps with a bunch of normative restrictions of use, and became spaces at the local level in which the presumptions and ideals of conservation are not taken for granted and face complex power relations, contested logics of natural resources use and different reactions towards any attempt to alter the local dynamics in the relation human – nature.

However, when state translates its project idea in processes without recognition of those local realities, the potential tactics or strategies of government could be reduced to theoretical instruments that cannot be applied in field. In the case of Sumapaz, the lack of effective tactics of government in

response to the specific social situations that occur in protected areas, leave local officers without sufficient power to exert the ideal coercive type of conservation enacted by central instances.

Following the arguments of Mitchell (2006: 169), in the case of Sumapaz, the way State idea and state system interact is controversial and contradictory: Despite the utmost importance that national government gives to the figure of National Parks as a superior scheme of territorial ordering, that determines a non-negotiable kind of conservation, based on governmental administration and science, the type of arrival and action of state at the local level make conservation projects less strong than how they are contemplated in the law. The history of Sumapaz show three issues that support this inquiry:

First, state represented by local officers of National Parks, showed the “late arrival” of the conservation project after a long history of community struggles for access to land and political rights. Conservation project is also decontextualized from local reality and therefore, lacks of specific governmental strategies to get management achievements in context of war.

Second, the small presence of functionaries in the area, reduces substantially a possible material relation between state and territory, turning possible management action, in just incipient works that produce the feeling that the ideal management and authority contemplated in the norm are just representations, that cannot be executed in field.

Finally, the fact that conservation in Colombia is not considered a priority in the plan of the state, neither as military objective, nor as prioritized mean for capital expansion, make conservation actions less powerful compared to other state projects or even, social structures and dynamics at the local level. In Sumapaz, conservation project, experienced unbalances of power in front of military projects that undermine its authority and confront the legitimacy of the environmental ethics that sustain conservation actions.

These situations offer a scenario in which conservation project is not taken for granted and need to be negotiated. This negotiation can show the real way in which state is interacting with territory and society and how its project is contextualized under the specificities of Sumapaz.

Accordingly, we can rely on Brenner and Elden analysis of Lefebvre’s relation between territory and state. Author considered space and territory as “social and historical product” that gives a condition of particularity, opposed to the state view of territory as a homogeneous area for state action. The differentiation of each territory is also the product of contextualized “strategic political projects” interacting with the social context present in each area (Brenner and Elden 2009: 363).

Taking the contributions of the previous authors, it is possible to conclude that state projects have a general instance, but this state logics of intervention could be altered in local scales. There, the specific contexts, the encounters with local dynamics and the strategies for implementation, can modify local state tactics or specific projects of government. So, rather than being imposed could enter into a continuous process of interaction, negotiation and reshaping, being modified and modifying local spaces:

“Territory is always being produced and reproduced by the actions of the state and through political struggles over the late; yet at the same time, in the

modern world, territory also conditions state operations and ongoing efforts to contest them. States make their own territories, not under circumstances they have chosen, but under the given and inherited circumstances with which they are confronted” (Brenner and Elden 2009: 367).

Remarking the incidence that relations have in the local configuration of the state, I want to focus on the conception of daily practices as responsible of the local making of the state, and how those could be analysed in the situation experienced in Sumapaz. Here, it is possible to see how the implementation of routines of work oriented by state ideas, produces a dynamic interaction with the social context, and perform at the end, specific forms by which state is interpreted and contested in real scenarios.

During the timeframe analysed in Sumapaz, there are insights that show two different moments of state formation; both show the importance that local officers had in the construction of “mundane practices” that configured specific outcomes:

A first moment, when the local team of national park resumed the environmental authority lost after the cession of the cab, the practices of state formation were based on the instauration of a coercive regime and the different oppositions that emerge in response to that. In this period, Sumapaz could face a type of materialization of conservation project where a military power of the state reduced possibilities of coercive power by the side of local officers as environmental authorities, giving incoherence to the environmental discourse, supposed to support authoritarian actions. This period, with clear expansion of the state power by warfare tactics, produces an interaction state – society based on reaction, mistrust and enforcing political stands of the community.

Under this context, officers’ attempts to execute a strict enforcement of the law, show insights that let me comment on the arguments of Peluso, regarding the close relation between coercion and increasing of state power (1993: 202). Under the situation described before, the ignorance of the state regarding conflict realities and how those affect conservation project, concluded to an operationalization in local areas without enough power nor strategies to make a successful top-down management. Local officers, in Sumapaz and the rest of the protected areas in Colombia, are small and unarmed groups that however, represent one of the most coercive authorities in territory. This situation, make the coercive tactic a rhetoric one that lacks of support to be executed in field and thus, actively contested by population. The threat and eviction of the local teams is the local result of a coercive project executed by weak groups.

The second moment, showed a different way to build locally the conservation project, based on negotiations. Here, Lipski’s arguments about autonomy and discretion of local officers (2010: 13-14) are essential to analyse how under a frame of action – determined by the ideal concept of conservation and the role of the environmental authority – officers determine the extent by which conservation laws could be imposed.

The restriction about uses and the limitations regarding possible modes of cohabitation, reduce significantly the emergence of possible ways of action of local officers. Those also deflate institutional thinking towards alternatives of conservation, that effectively reconcile the conflicts between conservation and livelihoods. This situation reduces their negotiated actions towards the admin-

istration of coercive restrictions, not oriented by what is established in the law, but by ethical principles or strategic actions to gain recognition and legitimacy.

By this time, Sumapaz has shown a state less intrusive and more prone to recover trust with community, more aware to make alliances with the traditional rulers of the territory than to enforce the environmental law in the paramo.

Strategies adopted showed how state could be rearranged at the local level as a response of a better understood context and the need to balance materialization of state mandates and the own survival strategies.

My element for discussion relies in the need to recognize the instrumental role of actors in such daily construction of the state. Initial state strategies and ideals descend in a hierarchical chain of scales and bureaucracies to be interpreted and strategized by local bureaucrats (Mathews 2008: 489). So, the final process of territorialisation of state, the daily state practices are embodied by people who, acting under the role of local officers, subject the idea of the state to a set of actions and reactions, to get ways to accomplish the rule in determined contexts don't contemplated in higher hierarchical levels.

A daily construction of state foster the recognition of different sources of power that arise and interrelate. It surpasses the simplistic conceptions of a unidirectional flux of power, represented by the higher representatives of the state and that come to lower groups in a hierarchical manner. The capacity to build a local type of state infers to local bureaucrats different ways to exert power. Here, it is important to recall the arguments of Brower and Abolafia about power of those low-level bureaucrats, reflected by daily actions like the use of informal channels and networks as well as improvised positions guided by "local rationalities" and informal rules. With those, they enact actions that can oppose the organization's goals but let them achieve their duties, gain influence and pursue own benefits (Brower and Abolafia 1997: 311-327).

In this case, the conservation politics give local officers positions of power over subjects of regulation. Although this small source of power is highly contested by community and cannot influence higher hierarchical visions on conservation, it determines at the local level the ways by which conservation project is territorialized. Specifically, how formal bureaucratic channels are used selectively and which kinds of negotiation strategies need to be selected and reinforced in response to contestations and local reactions.

In the other hand, protected areas, conceived as a project of the state, coincide with geographical and politically marginalized areas. Such scenarios confer local officers, certain degrees of independence, reflected in a not exhaustive control and vigilance of their activities. In the case of Sumapaz, the lack of scrutiny of the omissions in the sanctioning duties of local officers could be consider an insight of this asseveration. As Mathews analyses (2008: 489-490), this autonomy fosters the emergence of independent actions that albeit are done in the name of state, could not be totally acknowledged by higher levels in the public chain of command. Thus, the invisibility of local actions generates local specific types of government that arise from specific local realities and constitute the way by which communities experience and understand the action that state has on them.

In that way, the conceptual development of process of "Daily" or "mundane practices of state formation, conduce to an inevitable look at the "social

life” of this process, taking the concept of Mosse and Lewis (2006: 5), who highlight the importance of meanings and significances that actors can attribute to the different experiences and interactions they are involved in (Long, cited by the authors 2006: 9). That is to say, in such local practices that perform a more real perception of the state, the human dimension can resolve in a great way the incoherencies between state idea and state practices, building an interface based on strategies, improvisations and reactions to local constraints.

Here, the meanings and perceptions of local bureaucrats become important in the way those orient and condition such strategies of action. Part of the local bureaucrats’ thoughts could be analysed in line with McC and his conception of thought-work (1995: 261). Bureaucracy, along their structures can ensure through daily practices, and discourses, a type of rationality that frame values and ideals of functionaries in terms of conservation. This structural construction somehow gives a kind of discipline to their members, in Foucault’s terms (Foucault 2006: 141) and offer them, solid arguments to believe and sustain this type of conservation. Here, the strong meaning of environmental authority and the need to enforce the law to ensure the maintenance of biodiversity are also ideological frames, that make sense to their duties and support their actions. Thus, conservation officers can display common bureaucratic ethos based on sense of accountability, public interest, loyalty (Pratchett and Wingfield 1996: 641-642) and even surpass with a strong environmentalism.

But also, there are self – arisen elements that born from their local interactions and perceptions of reality and feed their own understanding about fairness and conflicts between conservation and human rights. So, an ethic dimension comes to complement the worldviews of those bureaucrats, and acts in conjunction with their role in the institution and the strategic vision to accomplish their duties. In this specific case, specific circumstances that arise in the conflictive scenarios, give also local officers different meanings and thoughts, not reflected in other instances of State.

In the Sumapaz case for instance, the perception of risk associated with their job in the middle of warfare scenarios, gives officers another system of meanings more focused in precaution and the need to strategize alliances building with opponents, in the search of their own security and a way to ensure the accomplishment of goals and the possibility to report those to central levels.

Aside to representations and worldviews of bureaucrats, is the performing of strategies to achieve results as managers and authorities of protected areas, in the middle of conflictive scenarios: In Sumapaz, people are affected by a top down system of decisions that came after their colonization process: the restrictions over parcels of land affect their livelihoods and there is no clear means to confront it from the local level. The inconformity redirects the struggling to the local representatives of the state who can’t solve the problem, but can be affected in their own performance. So, popular reactions against unfair restrictions does not conduce to changes in how state conceive protection in those areas, but condition how conservation policies are implemented in field, and in consequence, how national goals are being achieved. Thus, the management duties of local officers have an inevitable component of conflict and lack of local support that greatly condition their local action.

National Park Sumapaz is reported to have 214.351 Hectares with ecosystems in natural conditions, while 8.828 Hectares face some kinds of intervention by human activities (PNN 2013: 272-273⁵). The presence of just 2.61% of the National Park with degradation problems due human intervention, could be interpreted as the product of an acceptable action of the governmental management. However, a detailed look over the interactions that happen at the local level could show another scene in which the current condition of the ecosystems is the product of complex interactions, that produce conservation and affectation. As Mathews (2008: 487) and Li (1999: 315) argue, this shows a gap between the conservation project – part of the state idea – and the practices and relations that arise in field as a product of the state attempts to impose its view of nature management.

In a closer view, Sumapaz is the product of a constant contestation of interests and different strategies to overcome the affectations that a war conflict has caused over inhabitants and park officers. Borders and restrictions imposed over the area offer a scenario that certainly shape the way interrelations are directed. In this way, the imposition of the Natural Park does not imply an immediate and expansive control of the state, rather it imposes conditions over territory that foster direct community reactions and thus, the emergence of locally oriented strategies by the side of state representatives. By this way, state is performed in Sumapaz and the conservation of its paramos ecosystem become the result of the continuous responses that actors take in the search of their own interests.

⁵ Parques Nacionales Naturales de Colombia - PNN (National Parks of Colombia - PNN). 2013. Plan de Manejo PNN Sumapaz. Versión para revisión y ajustes (Management Plan of PNN Sumapaz. Draft Version for Revision and Adjustments) Unpublished Document.

Chapter 10

Conclusions

The case of Sumapaz is an example of how state comes to local areas as a fragmented, conflictive and incoherent body that reproduces multiple relations and conflicts for power. Under this scenario, state as relation, takes a form in the protected area that is more complex than the one, described in the regulatory documents. Thus, Sumapaz could show how in protected areas, territorialisation of state projects brings new dimensions to the model of coercive conservation. It also fosters different types of relations that determine the way conservation interact with other interests over territory, producing determined outcomes that are not the exclusive result of managerial practices.

Colombian case, shows how the formulation of a model of conservation project with unawareness of the conflict that affect localities, leave local officers with few possibilities of action nor enough power to exert a role of environmental authority.

The specific situation of Sumapaz illustrate how peasant struggles, Colombian war and a decontextualized conservation project converge in a territory and build a context that determine the way conservation project is formed. Here, state could be understood in relation to the content and the daily practices done in the name of conservation project, that interact and respond to internal conflicts and contestations among actors.

Local officers embody the idea of the state, being the first target for social contestations and thus, reshaping conservation abstraction into strategic actions to achieve outcomes: they give to the state projects human dimensions, related with their ethics, representations, improvised actions or strategies to solve implementation problems. The case of Sumapaz show how under a restrictive scenario, local teams administrate their coercive power and use it as negotiation card to persist as an actor in the territory. In that case, negotiation around the imposition or exemption of coercive instruments is the way local officers of the protected area balance the practice of environmental authority and the search for legitimation in the area, where the local opposition could be stronger than the possibilities to exert a coercive conservation.

Coinciding with the arguments of Mathews (2008: 489), the action of local officials is salient in bringing the gap between state as idea and the making of the state in field. Local officers of National Parks bring conservation ideas of the state and materialize those in local actions, that are conditioned by the multiple interactions that emerge in the relation with communities. The action of those bureaucrats can enlighten the detailed conditions by which conservation is imposed (or is attempted to). Also, how the multiple relations turn this process in a daily construction of relations, alliances, contestations and acceptations, especially in conditions in which conservation is not privileged over other territorial interest and thus their representative offices are not endowed by clear means to exert power.

The local interrelations that occur in Sumapaz have shaped the state in many ways: in the form the environmental discourse have been perceived and contested, the way coercion exerted without power produced a deep retrogression

of environmental institution, the struggling of governance between different state projects and the negotiations between state representatives and community are the ways state is manifested in the region, where the peasant territory and the strategic ecosystem overlap and enrich the static vision of a homogeneous space controlled by an ideal state.

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