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« Qui ne risque rien, n'a rien »

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Propositions

Sarah Katz-Lavigne

- 1) While LSM-ASM relations are often represented as a state of open and continuous conflict, the conflict phenomenon is characterised by significant variation, including large-scale outbreaks of conflict as well as periods of relative calm.
- 2) Conflict incidence is linked to the interaction of multiple facets of a plural property rights (PR) regime characterised by overlapping claims. This regime includes not only corporate enforcement but also different manifestations of clandestine extraction, both “authorised” by a range of authorities and engaged in, even if “unauthorised”, by artisanal miners.
- 3) Corporate property rights are negotiated and contested. Government authorities and other actors, including members of the public and private security forces, define and enforce other PR – not just companies’ property rights – in a context of rhizomatic statehood and “illegality.”
- 4) While clandestine mining at LSM sites is frequently only semi-covert – an “open secret” – conflict becomes likely when the level of “overtness” renders the cost of providing informal property rights to miners, for authorities and even companies, prohibitively high.
- 5) The security forces use coercion and even force, if necessary, to “close” authorised clandestine mining to those who are unwilling to pay into the system and try to enter through unauthorised means. “Authorised” artisanal miners, too, may benefit from such coercion as “unauthorised” activities drain significant resources away from those artisanal miners who pay for authorisation.
- 6) The interactions between the different facets of the property rights regime are a key explanatory factor of the distribution of resources and resource access. Some of the “winners” include LSM companies; mineral buyers of different nationalities; government actors and some members of the public and private security forces, especially at higher levels; some customary chiefs; high-level traders; and some “authorised” artisanal miners. “Losers”, or those who benefit proportionately less, include lower-level traders, including women; the majority of artisanal miners, who take the most risks but benefit the least; ordinary security guards and police officers; some members of “autochthonous” groups; and women who play other roles in the ASM supply chain.