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Community and Company Development Discourses in Mining: The Case of Gender in Mongolia

Isabel Cane

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<u>Abstract</u>

This thesis examines ontological commitments and accompanying discursive power relations that frame the negotiation of Mining and Development in the minerals industry in the South Gobi of Mongolia. The aims of the analysis are to explore the culture of companies and communities in the region, critically examine the discourse of the shared relationship, and assess implications for community development initiatives in the minerals industry more broadly.

By premising and privileging the culturally situated subject, Women and Development feminist theory assists in unpacking the power relations between communities and mining companies situated within or governed by cross-cultural contexts. An analysis of the discourse on Mining and Development, gender issues and patriarchy in the context of Social Impact Assessment processes, reveals asymmetrical power relations operating both within and between companies and communities that have an effect on community development. In applying a feminist theoretical perspective, the thesis argues that the companies' ontological commitments differ markedly from those of the South Gobi communities with which they are engaged, resulting in different conceptualisations of 'development', social impacts, and decision-making processes.

The thesis demonstrates that commitments to particular ontological frames lead companies to implicitly prioritise their own notions of power, change, and impacts over those of the community. The thesis contends that the lack of understanding of Mongolian ontology generates conflict, tensions, and/or unsustainable practices for both communities and companies in the South Gobi. Research in this thesis indicates that the recognition of difference between these ontological commitments needs to be central to the discourse of Mining and Development in Mongolia if the benefits of mining are to be enhanced for the community.

Limited research has been conducted into the impacts and development associated with the rapidly emerging mining industry in Mongolia. This thesis identifies and explores key themes

around the negotiation of change in Mongolia, which provides insight into the broader field of Central Asian Studies. Similarly, the thesis contributes to the emerging fields of Mining and Development, and Gender and Development by providing an original critique to enable an understanding of minerals development in a developing world context.

Declaration by author

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

I have clearly stated the contribution of others to my thesis as a whole, including statistical assistance, survey design, data analysis, significant technical procedures, professional editorial advice, and any other original research work used or reported in my thesis. The content of my thesis is the result of work I have carried out since the commencement of my research higher degree candidature and does not include a substantial part of work that has been submitted to qualify for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. I have clearly stated which parts of my thesis, if any, have been submitted to qualify for another award.

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No publications.

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No publications included.

Contributions by others to the thesis

No contributions by others.

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None.

<u>Dedication</u>

This thesis is in memory of Gereltuya Baldansukh and Judy Turnbull. Two exceptional women that stood and inspired me at the beginning of the journey but whom are not here to see the end. Your integrity still inspires.

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Abbreviations

ADB   Asia Development Bank

BHPB   BHP Billiton

CSR   Corporate Social responsibility

EBRD   European Bank of Reconstruction and Development

EI   Extractives Industry

EIA   Environmental Impact Assessment

ESIA   Environmental Social Impact Assessment

GAD   Gender and Development

IFC   International Finance Corporation

IMMI   Ivanhoe Mines Mongolia Inc

OT   Oyu Tolgoi (mine project)

SIA   Social Impacts Assessment

TT   Tawan Tolgoi (mine site)

UHG   Uhaa Hadaag (mine project)

WID   Women in Development

WAD   Women and Development

Chapter 1- Mining in Mongolia

1.1   The Global Culture of Mining and Development

When a mine is developed, changes occur in nearby communities due to the environmental, economic and social impacts that are wrought by and co-exist with mining (Vanclay 2002; Gilberthorpe & Banks 2011). These changes can be positive, for example, contributing to economic empowerment that creates a strong foundation for the community, or negative, generating economic disempowerment that displaces traditional social values and economic livelihoods, which in turn can lead to conflict and insecurity (Macdonald & Rowland 2002; Ballard & Banks 2003). Whereas in the past there was little accountability incurred for the negative impacts of mining by companies, the current geopolitical, business and legislative climate, coupled with social and political movements, has focused attention on a company's duty to minimise harm towards the communities within which they operate (Zadek 2001; Hamann 2003; Bebbington, Humphreys Bebbington et al. 2008).

It is standard practice for many multi-national mining companies to employ development and community relations strategies that fall under the mandate of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in order to negotiate positive outcomes and build mutual development goals with the community (Brereton 2002; Hamann 2003). CSR programs administer the environmental, social and economic obligations that a company (voluntarily or mandatorily) discharges in the course of its operations for the life of the mine (Gupta 2008). Historically, the extractives industry and its attempts at community development are weighed down with alarming stories of environmental, social, and governance failures that have immeasurably changed the fabric of societies and communities - often for the worse (Kirsch 2002; Rifai-Hasan 2009; Mines and Communities 2012). Therefore, a growing focus of mining companies to engage in community development has involved addressing 'poverty reduction and human development goals and infers value-based commitments to social justice, equity and inclusion…' (Kemp 2010a, p. 199). Consequently, many companies are more willing to engage in Mining and Development programs and activities.

The debate as to whether CSR has the ability to contribute positively to Mining and Development, or if it is merely corporate 'greenwash', is extensive (Hamann 2003; Coumans

2011). Likewise, the mineral industry's increasing role as an actor in the development sphere has been the subject of criticism from civil society. Although I acknowledge the relevancy of this debate, I also recognize the growth of CSR and company designed development programs towards mine affected communities and groups.[1] As Harcourt notes, CSR is now a significant actor in the development field and therefore requires attention, as it plays an important role in directing the stakeholders in a mining project in a developing context. Indeed, Harcourt observes that CSR has arisen as a formative actor in development and asks, 'Why and how has business moved into the development arena so effectively?… How does the vision of CSR feed into notions of sustainable development…? In short, how is CSR rewriting development?' (Harcourt 2004, p 2). Therefore, I acknowledge the literature that questions the motives and role of companies as development actors; however this thesis engages with the current situation of the field sites under research, which observes the companies as playing (rightfully or wrongfully) the biggest role in development in the area.

As more debates have focused on the validity and legitimacy of mining companies' role in development, a lack of examination is observed regarding the very nature of 'development' itself. That is, what type of 'development' is desired by the nations and affected communities? How is the dialogue of mining and development constructed? And, finally, how are traditional power relations impacted upon by the arrival of mining and the consequent development initiatives? Historically these types of questions have been taken up by theorists in the Development field (See; Escobar 1992; Sen 1999; Inglehart 2005; Batjargal et al. 2006; Graulau 2008).

Notably the field of International Development is concerned with theorising the social, environmental and economic relationships that exist between 'developed/developing'[2],

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[1] For example, the Australian and Canadian governments have both recently initiated international mining for development institutes funded from their foreign affairs departments (ESCR-Net 2012)

[2] I have chosen to use the term 'developing' countries and 'developing world feminists' throughout this thesis, although this concept is not without problems. Including the modernist expectations of 'development' which tends to infer a notion of linear 'progress' - the expectation that 'development' is an advancement towards Westernization. Also, when employing this term it is important not to homogenise the diversity of people, culture and places. Finally, I use the term 'development' for consistency, since it aligns with the terminology used in much of the cited material, in International Development Theory, CSR and Feminist literature.

international institutions and multi-national corporations, and local communities within developing nations (Reeves & Baden 2000). Broadly speaking, the aims of Development theories are focused on understanding how *desirable change* (as opposed to forced change) is best achieved in developing world societies (Peet & Hartwick 2012). Although, mainstream development discourse continues to be informed by liberal and neo-liberal philosophies, a number of critical tendencies have developed within International Development Theory, notably feminist, Marxist, post-colonial, and post-development approaches (Escobar 1992; Said 1993; Spivak 1999; Barlett 2007; Boserup, et al. 2007; Conwall & Whitehead 2007).

During the 1970s, feminist perspectives entered into the International Development debate. Feminist research clearly demonstrated that development initiatives had not reached women and, in some places, undermined their existing position (Boserup 1970; Vivanathan et al. 1997; Beneria 2003). Feminists argued that the often deteriorating living standards of women, stimulated by development, resulted from overlooking women as an independent variable of economic analysis (Boserup 1970). Feminist work during that time contributed to expanding the focus areas of Development practices to include women and deconstructed power relations in development discourse that have shaped the current discourse of International Development (Boserup 1970; Harcourt 1994).[3]

Akin to feminist critiques of international development, 'Gender and Mining' specialists[4] argue that the burden of negative impacts is often experienced disproportionality by women in the community (Eftimie et al. 2009). Indeed mining companies have been criticized by Gender and Mining specialists for understanding communities as homogeneous entities in their community development policies and programs (Lahiri-Dutt & Macintyre 2006). Specifically they charge that such policies and programs of mining companies and regulators, do not

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[3] The focus of this thesis is not to examine if feminism has a place in international development - as the argument as to whether women as a valid category and area of analysis is now largely uncontested.

[4] 'Gender and mining Specialists' and 'Gender and Mining' are terms I have coined for, feminist theorists/activists interested in the field of, or gender issues related to, mining and notions of patriarchy that govern mining discourses. This can be seen in many areas including: employment; livelihood use; agreement making; impacts and benefits for communities; CSR; natural resource use; and development agendas.

consider the gendered relations at work in communities themselves. Recently, Kemp's research highlighted that gender issues were:

> …barely represented in the mining industry's corporate responsibility, sustainable development or community relations policy or practice frameworks (Kemp, Keenan & Gronow 2010, p. 585).

Gender and Mining specialists have begun to influentially engage with the extractives industry.[5] It has also been observed that there has been far less research concerning the theoretical contributions feminism can make to Mining and Development more broadly (Gibson & Kemp 2008, Lahiri-Dutt & Ahmad 2011).

Although feminists involved in the field of International Development have a long history of working with similar development issues faced by those in mine-affected communities, there has been little cross fertilisation of ideas between the two fields (Ward 2006). For example, specific analysis on how social discourses, of 'gender', 'ethnicity' and 'class' position men and women in power relations and affect access to the benefits of mining, has not been the subject of a great deal of research, compared to the rigorous discussions which have shaped International Development agendas (Mohanty, et al. 1991). Therefore, this thesis draws upon feminist theorists engaged with International Development (specifically post-colonial and developing world feminisms) to analyse how these theories can contribute to both the literature on Gender and Mining and the Mining and Development discourse in the South Gobi region of Mongolia.

Specifically, this thesis is interested in the arguments formed by Developing World feminists who argue that development agendas do not always reflect the issues, realities, views or knowledge systems of the affected or intended audience of the development program (Mohanty 2003; Cornwall & Harrison. 2007; Kapoor 2008). In such cases, development programs are ineffective or, at worst, impinge upon and further destabilise a community's

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[5] This is illustrated by the first-ever publication of a gender guide, *Why Gender Matters A resource guide for integrating gender considerations into Communities work at Rio Tinto*, by a mining company and the World Bank's toolkit specifically aimed at an engagement with gender issues in small-scale mining (Kemp, Keenan et al. 2009, Eftimie, Heller et al. 2012)

development pathway. For example, I question whether the mining industry's community development frameworks and guidelines that are designed in corporate head offices, usually located in Western nations, can promote sustainable development outcomes in Mongolian mining communities. For example, the recent growth of international standards observed in the *UN Global Compact, Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights* and the *Global Reporting Initiative*, standardize responsible business practices with the aim of providing ethical standards for company conduct and are intended to protect a community impacted by mining operations from the negative effects of those operations (Freeman et al. 2000; Global Reporting Initiative 2006; Pitts 2011). However, little research has been conducted on the sociocultural relevancy of these global standards, guidelines and initiatives on socially distinct mine-affected communities (Ip 1990). Therefore, this thesis will apply a 'developing world' feminist analysis to Mining and Development discourses in the South Gobi of Mongolia, to further understand the social discourses which direct the losses and benefits of mining in the region.

1.2   Analytical Framework

The operation of a large industrial enterprise run by a transnational company in a developing world context and impacting upon the local communities is in no way new. Such situations have been observed and researched throughout the world in indigenous and non-indigenous rural Australia, the high and low lands of Papua New Guinea, Africa and throughout South America (Nash 1979; Reichard & Moshoeshoe 2003; Hamann & Kapelus 2004; Filer & Macintyre 2006; Bebbington, 2008; Doohan 2008). However, I argue that for Mining and Development to be sustainable in a developing word context, attention has to shift from the direct impacts of trucks and shovels, workers and herders, or sex workers and international bankers, to the negotiation of similar and different values, traditions, beliefs, and moralities across different axes of power.

My thesis argues that a disconnection between the company and community exists in Mining and Development discourse and that this disconnect emerges from a fundamental lack of recognition of their respective ontological differences.[6] The thesis will explain and

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[6] For a feminist analysis of ontology and its ability to examine discourse and promote change in current feminist divides, see (Code, 2003)

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demonstrate the ontological differences between these two entities and the basis of their ontological divide. Specifically, I will examine the site within which the divide manifests itself, in the respective discourses in the contexts of: 1) mining and landscape; 2) gender and patriarchy; 3) the hierarchy of development; and 4) the global discourse of SIA. Drawing on Mario Blaser's notion of multiple ontologies, the thesis will then demonstrate how in these areas the community ontologies are less influential in informing the Mining and Development process. I conclude that a lack of recognition of the Mongolian ontology by company actors results in the company directing the decisions, which affect the development agenda (Blaser, 2009).

The theoretical approach taken is to analyse the respective discourses of the community and company with a view to revealing the fundamental conceptual categories on the basis of which each discourse articulates itself. In this thesis, the set of fundamental categories upon which a discourse is articulated is termed 'ontology'. As Charles Taylor states, 'ontological questions concern what you recognize as the factors you will invoke to account for social life' (Taylor 1993 p 185). In this way I propose to understand the discourse of each set of actors considered – in general terms, the company and the community – as grounded in and premised on an ontology particular to each set of actors. Once these categories are identified and their nature understood, then the differences and misunderstandings that inhabit each actor's discourse are more clearly visible. This greater visibility provides an opportunity for each actor to recognise these differences and address them within a new dialogue that takes into account this basic conceptual divide between each party (Taylor 1995: Vivieros De Castro 2004).

An ontological analysis of discourse is applied in this thesis to lay bare the ways in which different stakeholders in the community-company engagement condition their perceptions of change and prioritise social impacts which are then carried into their decision-making processes (Lewis et al. 2003). For example, a multi-national mining company may be seen to be broadly prevailing within economic rationalist and neo-liberal frameworks which guide CSR and development policies/programs. This company is governed by international best practice standards and guidelines that apply across all projects globally, but also consists of individuals and group dynamics of diverse sociocultural ontologies (BHPB 2008; Rio Tinto

2009; Rio Tinto 2010). Conversely, the people of the South Gobi identify as Mongolian, a nation contextualised by its nomadic heritage and, in immediate historical terms, its socialist and post-socialist legacy (Sneath 2003; Tumursukh 2001; Upton 2005). Individuals and families may be seen as governed by the livelihoods accorded to them by their herds, and the interaction of the herd with the environment and the broader social networks (Humphrey 1997; Fijn 2011).

In such a context, both the community and the company have their own cultures,[7] uniquely forged by their separate ways of being (ontology) and historical legacies, which provides a lens to understand[8] their own 'form' and relation – with themselves and between others (Vivieros De Castro, 2004, p. 484). In this sense, one's ontology is the theoretical foundation and is made manifest in the discourses that a subject constitutes, articulates, navigates, constructs, reacts and represents in and between others (Taylor 1995, Vivieros De Castro, 2004). For example, the local community and the mining company, the primary actors engaged in the day-to-day operations and impacts of mining, can be regarded as each employing different ontological realities to conceptualise, explain, and articulate the effects of the mine and the path that an appropriate development trajectory should employ. Where Lewis et al, use culture to argue, that;

> …explicit focus on the cultures of different organizations involved in such interventions
> leads us to reflect on issues of power and agency in ways that may help better explain

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[7] As there are many doctrines, ideologies and discourses concerning the definition of 'culture' (Grillo 2003), I want to clarify, that in this thesis I use the term culture as a fluid 'dynamic, anti-essentialist conception that … [is] seen as constructed dialectically from above and below, and in constant flux' (Baumann 1999; Grillo 2003 p 160). In this sense culture is not static but made up of many identities and cultural agents that are in constant interaction with and against one another. Therefore I recognise that the culture of the Mongolian communities and mining companies under research are didactic in nature. However, because the historical, social and political differences between the two are distinct, I will use the term culture to distinguish between the actors for ease for the reader.

[8] I acknowledge that it is impossible to 'understand' another's ontology, as we are all guided by our own ontological lens, constructed by historical, relational and cultural precursors. However, 'understanding' is an important concept of this thesis and is defined as 'the extent that hermeneutical, consciousness concretises understanding in history, it is an event; to the extent that this event transforms one's horizon of experience in such a way that one discovers new possibilities for action, the event is performative'. (Pappas 2003, p. 216)

the final effects that projects have, and the extent to which they remain congruent with or veer away from their stated objectives (Lewis et al. 2003, p. 542).

This thesis will demonstrate that a focus on ontology as a means to interpret the discourse of Mining and Development, will lead to discharging social and power relations between the various actors. I argue for the relationship between these two parties to be sustainable and constructive, so it is imperative to develop a narrative which is able to fuse the discourses employed by each actor, in such a way that their engagement can constitute a meaningful dialogue.

In summary, a primary aim of this thesis is to contribute to the Gender and Mining literature by analyzing and extending the theoretical and practical understandings of the Mining and Development field. I aim to apply feminist theory to explore the discourse of mining in Mongolia and demonstrate the effectiveness of feminist theory in unpacking the power relations that direct Mining and Development through the discourse in which both of these notions are articulated. In this sense, feminism is not construed as merely providing a useful sub-category or as an 'added consideration' to community development work. Instead this thesis will demonstrate how the appropriate use of feminist theory can reformulate our understanding of Mining and Development in Mongolia.

1.3 The Mongolian Context: A Nation in Change

Over the last fifteen years, Mongolia has undergone major political and social transformations from a socialist State to a democratic nation. The post-socialist period, often referred to as the 'transition period', was initially devastating for the population as the country grappled with a rapidly changing political landscape and an emerging capitalist market economy (Bruun, et al. 1999; Bruun & Odgaard 2001; Burn & Oidov 2001; Rossabi 2005). Mongolia experienced widespread economic upheaval through the loss of Soviet economic subsidies and guaranteed markets (Rossabi 2005). The withdrawal of this economic support caused widespread unemployment, extensive urban/rural migration and the collapse of major State infrastructure, all of which resulted in a substantial rise in social and economic scarcity across the country (Robinson & Solongo 2000; Bruun and Odgaard 2001; Burn & Oidov 2001; Rossabi 2005). Largely due to a 'minerals boom', Mongolia's Gross Domestic Product has doubled since 1990, however a third of the population is still currently categorised as living

below the poverty line (United Nations Development Programme 2011). This discrepancy, between the expectations of prosperity and 'development' arising from large-scale foreign investment in the minerals extraction industry and the expectations and the actual outcomes for Mongolian citizens, is a central focus of this thesis.

In response to the post-socialist economic collapse and consequent Structural Adjustment Programs, the Mongolian government contracted large foreign loans and increased its dependence on aid and technical advice provided by various international development/financial agencies. Indeed, the nation was drawn more tightly into the complicated web of international relations and exchanges that comprise the field of International Development. International Development exists in many forms, but is distinguished from 'Development' in that it involves international actors participating in each other's' affairs. A paradigmatic example is the case in which one nation's government contracts financial loans from International Lenders (for example, the World Bank) to assist in economically building the nation (Brohman 1995; Beneria 2003).

During the transition period, international agencies were highly active in Mongolia and their programs had a substantial impact on the country. Whether this was to the benefit or detriment of the Mongolian people is not the focus of this thesis. However it is noteworthy that many Mongolian commentators, such as leading historian Morris Rossabi (2005), have argued that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank did not take into consideration Mongolian cultural specificities, particularly the highly specific relationships to regions, tribes and families, when formulating programs aimed at re-structuring the economy. According to Rossabi and other Mongolian commentators this led to gross social and economic inequality during the transitional period and is still evident today. Indeed, Mongolian critics stated that during this time 'foreigner's ideas revealed a victory of ideology over reality and an attempt to impose an economic system that was not applicable to Mongolia' (Rossabi 2005, p. 64).

1.3.1 A Minerals Solution
In the last fifteen years, the foreign exploration and extraction of vast amounts of coal, uranium, gold and copper continue to have a massive impact on the economic, political and

social spheres of Mongolia as a nation, and on specific communities within it.[9] Since the early 2000's and the advent of the Mongolian minerals boom, the Mongolian government, international financial lenders, corporations, and many ordinary Mongolians, have come to believe that the heightened economic activity can provide a means to assist the country's development through the unrest of the post-socialist transition period (World Bank 2009a; World Bank 2009c). Likewise, a rising opinion towards resource nationalism by the population and a civil society backlash towards mining and its effect on economic inflation, environmental degradation and social upheavals have been observed. Nevertheless, the World Bank has estimated that revenue and jobs from mining will generate a quadrupling of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the next five years (World Bank 2009a), and in 2011 Mongolia had emerged as the second fastest growing economy in the world, a fact attributable largely to increased mining activity.

As a result, Mongolia can be considered a country on the precipice of positive or negative change, where the only certainty has become the doubt for the future. As Collier and Venables (2011) explain:

> The discovery and extraction of natural resources has the potential to finance rapid, sustained and broad based development. However… the opportunity is often missed, and sometimes turns into a nightmare of corruption and violence (Collier & Venables 2011).

The nightmare of conflict, 'corruption and violence', is a possibility in Mongolia and 'many worry about the economic, environmental, social and strategic costs of becoming "Minegolia"' (Economist 2012). Undeniably economists, politicians and investors agonise about a 'resource curse', or 'Dutch disease' situation (Langton & Mazel 2008; Parameswaran 2010). While the focus of the thesis is not an examination of the possibility of such a scenario, the

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[9] Russian and Mongolian experts began exploration and activities much earlier, in the late 1920's, 'aided at times by Eastern Europeans, they began the first intensive and systematic mineral exploration in Mongolia. These efforts resulted in early exploitation of coal at Nalaikh near Ulaanbaatar, an increasing production of placer (alluvial) gold in the north, and a modest output of petroleum. By 1980, a diversified mineral inventory had been defined, with significant production of copper and molybdenum from Erdenet, world-class fluorspar production, and lesser yields of uranium, tin, tungsten, lead, and silver, as well as construction materials' (BHP Billiton Confidential Report 2008).

warnings of such an outcome highlight the delicate balance of the current situation in which Mongolia finds itself, and the importance of giving careful attention to the impact large scale mining will have on Mongolia's development trajectory.

Alongside the changing economic and political landscapes, the social spheres of Mongolia have undergone rapid transformation. The emergence of capitalist markets, coupled with the nascent minerals boom, has witnessed the arrival of foreign values, businesses and, along with them, unfamiliar cultures. As a United Nations report has noted, 'Mongolia is experiencing a cultural transformation as globalization and urbanization impact cultural practices, ideas and the Mongolian way of life' (United Nations Development Programme 2012). The minerals boom has escalated growth in the local minerals sector, resulting in the emergence of Mongolian private companies, the most significant being *Energy Resources Pty Ltd* and the State-owned company *Erdenes Tawan Tolgoi LLC*. Likewise, large multi-national mining companies such as *Rio Tinto Pty Ltd, BHP Billiton, Ivanhoe Mines Mongolia Inc, Vale, Peabody Energy,* and *Anglo American* have presences in the country.

In light of the earlier oversights of the IMF and the World Bank in misunderstanding the significance of cultural specificities in development and economic programs, it is imperative to understand the culture of mining companies and how this shapes its engagements within community development. It is at this juncture, between the company and community, that this thesis positions itself. It applies a gendered lens to better understand the relationship between corporate discourses in the South Gobi and the Mongolian mine-affected communities to better understand Mining and Development in Mongolia.

1.3.2 Distinct voices: Mongolian Rural Lifestyles amidst a Minerals Boom

Two of the largest mining operations in Mongolia are located in relatively small townships of Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii soums[10] in the South Gobi region. As discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, the size of the mining deposits, the scale of the extractives operations and the associated infrastructure needed to support the mines (power plants, roads, and towns) are huge by global standards. For instance, just one of the four strategic deposits in the South Gobi area has been described as the size of 'something like Manhattan Island, this deposit is

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[10] A Soum is a political jurisdiction much like a province and will be described in more detail in Chapter Three.

among the top three in the entire world' (Bowler 2013). Surrounding these mines are small Mongolian rural communities that host sedentary townspeople and significant populations of nomadic herders.

Khanbogd soum centre is typical of many small urban centres in the South Gobi: In the middle of the town centre is the main square, where the regional government house, a culture centre, a small monastery, a cement ger,[11] and a museum are located. In the middle of this square stand three monuments: a family of camels; statues of two Soviet-era war heroes; and a Buddhist stupa. In the neighbouring town of Tsogttsetsii, seventy kilometres away stands a lone statue, the figure of a young woman freedom fighter, 'Bor'. These four monuments depict the importance of nomadic herding, socialist-era heritage, gender and spiritualism in the region (Erdenebaatar 1996; Upton 2005; Kucera 2009; Benwell 2009). They stand symbolically as historical precursors which demonstrate the social fabric of the society and illuminate the livelihood, values and customs that underpin the ontology of the Gobi and the Mongolian people more broadly.

The long flat plains of the South Gobi are vast and separated only occasionally by mounds and jagged rocky mountain outcrops. Dotted sparsely across the horizon are traditional gers and herds of livestock (see Image 1). Camels look large on the flat landscapes and the herds of sheep and goats are almost camouflaged by the natural colours of the countryside. By contrast, the recently erected tin sheds of the mine site glimmer in the distance and machines continuously move, like alien creatures on the horizon. During summer in the South Gobi there are now many old and new sounds, languages and conversations in the air.

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[11] A ger is the traditional dwelling of the Mongolian people. It is a round felt structure that is easily demountable and movable, complementing the historical herder heritage and lifestyle.

Image 1: A traditional Mongolian Ger with livestock, South Gobi, Mongolia

Source: Author

Around the home ger of the customary herders, the baby camels call to their mothers grazing in the paddock, while children 'shoo' goats and sheep away from the door. Inside the ger the wife makes tea and speaks with her husband about the day's chores; he speaks of pasture and expected rainfalls. The murmur of the mineral haulage trucks is heard in the background, a relatively recent hum that the family seem accustomed to. The day unfolds, centred on this nucleus within the cyclic elements of landscape, livestock, weather conditions and human activity. All of these factors together are balanced to connect and contribute to the living reality of this family, within a broader national Mongolian identity.

Over the hill, the sun is rising as the haulage truck arrives at the gate of the mine operation after the overnight drive from the Chinese border. The driver walks to the dining room, a long building that seats approximately 1500 people (See Image 2). It is bright and noisy as he looks around the tables for his colleagues. The day shift is starting; fresh faced office workers are showered and lining up for breakfast; the night crew are sitting quietly eating dinner. He looks for Bolormaa hoping to meet her at the gym for a chat before bed. Next to him a group of foreign managers discuss the fall in the price of gold and discuss which shaft to re-focus

efforts on. The mine site and all the workers gravitate around this 1.3 kilometre deep shaft and the precious mineral it extracts from the landscape. They are socially connected by expertise, international markets, shared languages and building livelihoods in a cycle directed and intersected by the haulage of rocks from the earth to the surface.

Image 2: The Mess (Dining) hall at Oyu Tolgoi mine site, South Gobi

Source: Author

In the South Gobi these two distinct life cycles, that of the herder family and that of the mine company and its workers, exist in very close proximity divided by a thin fence line but continually intersecting with each other. Their mutual dependency on the same natural resources, coupled with the establishment of new infrastructure, has created reciprocal social, environmental and economic change. The sheer size of the operations and the scale of these changes, has increasingly engaged the neighbouring town centres, national governments and international businesses in the development process, a fact that adds more actors and more dialogue to the unfolding changes and development of the community.

As the mines in the region develop, so do the impacts on the herder families and bordering communities: an uncle obtains employment for example, and the additional money he now

earns pays for dental care in the company sponsored dental clinic - the first ever dental service in the region. The mine's satellite opens communications for formerly isolated locals, allowing them to speak with family and children away at the regional school. The local hospital obtains its first ambulance, which it can use to visit herders and for the herders themselves, there is a sense of pride that a mine on their land assists the economic development of their nation as a whole. However discontent also brews as the size of the mine grows and the herders experience the negative consequences of this development: loss of their summer pastoral land; perceived depletion in water sources for their herds and families; increased dust and its effects on the health of animals and children; forced and unforced re-settlement from land creates increased hardship; and a disregard for herders' customs and heritage is experienced. Over time they watch their livelihoods and lifestyles diminish.

This is the nature of change in the South Gobi, where economic and social benefits must be weighed against environmental, economic and socio-cultural losses. General observations suggest that the mining companies are having a significant impact on their neighbouring communities and that the benefits are not outweighing the losses. Often the views and needs of the company and community are misinterpreted and misunderstood. There is thus a disconnect between the company and the community and it is at this juncture that the thesis positions itself.

An important and distinctive aspect of this research is that the fields of enquiry can be understood in terms of the relationship between two distinct actors, the company and the community, operating in a delicate but increasingly interconnected relationship in the South Gobi. As is pointed out by Gupta and Ferguson, the traditional 'regional' or 'culturally' defined field site is less relevant today due to neoliberalism, colonialism and transnationalism (Gupta & Ferguson 1997). Indeed, field sites can have multiple actors with different cultural contexts that extend beyond a traditional 'region' (Coleman & Von Hellermann 2012). For example, my field sites comprised mine affected communities in the South Gobi and the adjoining mining companies (Coleman & Von Hellermann 2012). More so, the region within which companies interact and within which their activities impact extends beyond the South Gobi to the capital of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar (as Chapter Eight demonstrates). Likewise, the transnational and global context in which the mining industry operates, influences local activities in the South

Gobi and geopolitically affect the nation of Mongolia. Therefore, I define my field work and site using a term suggested by Rosita Henry as positioned in a 'field of sociality', which she describes as follows:

> ... are ones which do not accept place and/or the local, and this the field site, as givens but focus on the process of place-making and on the practice of the local…. I see place making as identity making, or subject making, 'games of truth' played out in terms of relationships of power. The ethnographic task then as I see it, is to expose these games of truth/relationships of power by exploring the fields of sociality which give expression to them.' (Henry R 1999, p. 19)

In this sense the field site can be understood as multiple relational actors (mining company and community) that continue to change and interact with and against each other in a dynamic relationship. Importantly, this field of sociality is also a relationship of power that within the mining industry, this thesis argues, determines loss and benefit from change.

1.4   Thesis Rationale

In 2009, at the time that I began my research on the impacts of mining on the South Gobi communities, there were only a handful of journalists, company and company-employed consultants who were documenting the impacts of mining within Mongolia (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009; Kucera 2009; Energy Resources LLC 2010). Since then, more work has been done to document the impacts of mining, both by companies and across a range of groups in civil society – particularly international donor agencies and a sample of locally run NGO's (Asian Development Bank 2010; Parameswaran 2010; United Nations Development Programme 2011; McGrath et al. 2012; Ombudsman 2012; Oyu Tolgoi 2012; Khasg-Erdene 2013). With the exception of High's (2008a) ethnography of artisanal miners, an examination of the geopolitics of mining by Narangoa (2012) and some unpublished thesis work directed at legal and regulatory processes of mining in Mongolia, there has been no academic account (at least in English) of the social impacts, company-community relations, or the changes resulting from large-scale mining on the South Gobi people of Mongolia. Likewise, there are few anthropological

accounts of the opinions, power relations, and discourses that are beginning to govern the affected communities or minerals development in Mongolia more broadly. As such, this thesis is one of the first research projects to describe and analyse the effect of large-scale mining on Mongolian culture and specifically in the South Gobi. This thesis seeks to address this gap in academic literature pertaining to minerals development, by providing insights into local perceptions of mining and macro analysis of the impact of mining on the South Gobi people.

Although being one of the first researchers to examine this issue in the South Gobi provided a unique opportunity, it was also subject to limitations, as very little policy and/or academic data (at the time of research) was available to inform the research. Secondly, as there was a narrow benchmark on which to compare or build my data set, it meant that many of the issues presented in the field had to be exhaustively researched to ensure a pattern of impacts/issues and/or a consistency in the themes. This resulted in an excess of data and at times the thesis risks generalising concepts at the expense of a more detailed analysis. In reality much detailed data were collected, but a conscious choice was made to engage and explain certain primary themes (discourse, ontology, environment, patriarchy and power) associated with the emerging field of Mining and Development and Gender and Mining in Mongolia, over the close examination of one particular theme in detail. The aim was to provide a summation of the landscape, emerging issues and problematic zones in the field of research, as 1) there is no other English account of this area, and 2) to provide a basis for future research.

1.5 Thesis Outline

1.5.1 Chapter Two: Feminisms in Development and Minerals Extraction

This chapter begins by describing the basic theoretical tool of ontology for analysing the theoretical nexus of the thesis. The nexus includes crossovers between: International Development Theory; Feminist critiques of International Development Theory; and finally, the emerging field of Gender and Mining. Following this, the chapter identifies three feminist positions, each critical of the underlying ontological commitments of International Development Theory, and each of which is identifiable by its own specific ontological commitments. Feminist engagements with International Development Theory are in no way homogeneous, consisting, instead, of many complementary as well as conflicting positions (Cornwall et al. 2007). For the purposes of this thesis, Chapter Two identifies and

characterises three broad schools of feminist thought: Women in Development (WID); Gender and Development (GAD); and Women and Development (WAD), and contrasts both WID and GAD with WAD in terms of a fundamental ontological difference between their respective discourses (Boserup 1970; Moffat 1992; Reeves & Baden 2000).

Alongside this analysis, the Chapter examines feminist critiques of CSR in Gender and Mining literature. Much like feminisms in development, in the context of mining, feminist analysis of the extractives industry challenges the traditional and dominant power relations by pointing to the gendered nature of mining itself (Robinson 1996; Sinha 2006; Lahiri-Dutt 2011b). In particular, the extractives industry is critiqued for perceiving the communities in which it operates as homogeneous entities in which important differences internal to the community, such as gender, class, age, or ethnic diversity are ignored. The result is that the needs and characteristics of all the members of the community are not understood, and it is particularly women in that community who are overlooked (Khan, et al. 2013). Feminists propose, instead, the recognition and emphasis of other social categories and although feminists differ as to which precise categories are in fact most pertinent to a feminist analysis, they generally agree that 'gender' is a necessary inclusion. In the light of these newly highlighted categories, Gender and mining specialists attempt to analyse a community in terms of the intersecting relations of power that shape it and its constituent members' needs and the distribution of benefits.[12] According to feminists, if such an analysis is not undertaken, development initiatives and community relations teams of mining companies become ineffective, and the process of mining itself is thus, ultimately, socially unsustainable.

1.5.2 Chapter Three: Methodology

Initially I approached the South Gobi communities with the aim of conducting ethnographic research to understand the identity, social relations and culture of the people in these

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[12] WID theorists, for example, argue that men and women have different roles in many societies and that therefore members of each group are subject to different impacts. These theorists consider that determining these different roles is central to the process of properly identifying impacts upon the community as a whole.

communities. I then observed and documented the changes and the effect mining was having on the social fabric of the region. Coupled with this community ethnography I also undertook a parallel ethnographic study of several mining companies with which the communities were engaged. The motivation for this investigation is noted by Ballard and Banks, who observe that there has been very little ethnographic study of the internal organisation of mining companies (Ballard & Banks 2003). They note that '[a]nthropologists have preferred to maintain their focus on the more familiar "exotic", addressing the position of local communities in the vicinity of mines in preference over the less familiar multinational mining corporations' (Ballard & Banks 2003). In addition they note that one consequence of this is that the mining company 'lurks monolithically and at times menacingly in the backgrounds of anthropologists accounts of communities affected by mining' (Ballard & Banks 2003 p290). Dinah Rajak also emphasises the need to conduct ethnographic research into mining companies to better understand the discourse of CSR as it traffics from the boardroom to the mineshaft, to understand the nature of the global-local dynamics and the subsequent outcome of CSR implementation in the community (Dolan and Rajak 2011). Therefore, in-conjunction with an analysis of South Gobi communities, I have conducted research into the lifestyles and processes of the neighbouring mines themselves. Specifically, an examination of the discourse and policies of the two primary mining companies operating in each area at the time the research was undertaken.

The field research was conducted in 2009, when I spent eleven months in Mongolia between the community and the mining company sites. In particular, I spent five and a half months shared between the company's corporate office and their on-site operations and six months with each neighbouring community. I gained access to two large mine sites and observed both their internal and external operations, all of which is explained in detail in Chapter Three. The ethnographic methods I utilised at both sites included the following; semi-structured interviews; observational techniques;, participation in the setting; and the collection of soum level quantitative data. Chapter Three discusses the details of the methodology and the considerations applied to the conduct of research work in both of these sites.

Importantly, as my focus was on gendered cross-cultural issues, I was particularly sensitive to scope a broad range of community and company members, including identified vulnerable

groups. The cross-cultural context of the research is multi-layered and comprised: 1) myself as a Western researcher in Mongolia; and 2) the relationship between the multi-national company, the community and me. Considering these complexities, I was very careful to observe the way in which all subjects (both myself and company or community members) imported their own perspectives and understandings into the setting. Post-colonial feminist theorists argue for the necessity of researchers to be constantly self-reflexive in their observations and representation of others in any social setting (Spivak 1999; Mohanty 2003). Chapter Three explains both the reason and rationale behind these considerations and describes the ways in which they were applied as a starting point for the collection of data.

1.5.3 Chapter Four: Field Description

Chapter Four outlines the historical events that have shaped the formation of the Mongolian nation and people (introduced in section 1.3 and 1.3.2). Following this, the chapter introduces the specifics of the 'field of sociality', with the aim of familiarising the reader with some of the demographics and emerging problems attributed to mining in the South Gobi.

1.5.4 Chapter Five: Landscape and Culture

In Chapter Five, the thesis turns to the discourse of Mining and Development in Mongolia. The chapter explores the underlining ontological commitments and their relationship to herder livelihoods. To elucidate and unpack the discourse, the chapter begins with a discussion of the community cosmology, understood through its relationship to nature. In the communities that were the subject of the fieldwork, herders have lived for many generations in co-existent relationships with both the animals they maintain and the landscape in which they live (Humphrey 1995; Fijn 2011). The chapter supports the notion that the historical characteristics and interactions of the nomadic lifestyle strongly influence current beliefs, attitudes and social values towards the extraction of resources and consequent environmental and social sustainability (Fernández-Giménez 1993). By way of contrast to the culture of mining companies, I draw on Cronon and Merchant's observation that Western industries historically commodify nature, thereby positioning themselves against it in a relationship of struggle and domination. This is used to explain the mining companies relationship to animals and the land (Cronon 1983). With an understanding of the tension between the two perceptions to nature,

the chapter illustrates the arrival of large scale mining to the community and describes the losses and changes experienced by herders in the area.

Similarly to Cronon, I find this type of 'two-point analysis' risks occluding the actual process of change in the community, which the notion of a shared 'field of sociality' between the research actors is intended to foreground (Cronon 1983, p. 161). However, through unpacking the distinct ontological significance of land and the environment which emerges from herder discourse, and contrasting it with the ontological commitments that manifest in company discourse, I provide evidence of the difference between these two actors and can begin to explain important aspects of the tensions that arise in company-community negotiations and community development. Against this background, a specific Gender and Mining theoretical perspective, informed by GAD, is used to explain the process.

1.5.5 Chapter Six: The Gendered Nature of the Community and Company

Chapter Six argues that notions of gender in Mongolia are culturally situated, by interrogating the definition of gender in greater detail and examining the gender relations and patriarchal power structures at work in the context of herder communities in Mongolia (Humphrey 1974; Humphrey 1987; Humphrey 1997; High 2008a; Benwell 2009). As Gender and Mining literature has not previously interrogated gender in the Mongolian cultural context before, I draw upon the work of previous anthropologists and social theorists who have examined the gender and power relations at work in these particular contexts (Humphrey 1974; Humphrey 1987; Humphrey 1997; High 2008b; Benwell 2009). Specifically, I analyse this construction of gender from the ontological perspectives of WID-GAD and WAD (discussed in Chapter Two) to determine which theory (WID-GAD or WAD) would be more applicable to the Mongolian context (Moore 1994). Through conducting such an analysis, the chapter finds that a WAD ontological position (a culturally situated ontology) is more conducive to an interpretation of the Mongolian context. More so, it also provides new information on the regional specificities of the South Gobi women that contributes to the previous work of anthropologists in the Mongolian studies field.

Following the analysis of the gendered herder community, the chapter begins to unpack the ontology of the company. This section demonstrates that similarly to the community, the company is not a homogeneous entity but is a 'quasi-community' itself, made up of individuals

and groups that work with and against each other. Additionally, company operations and discourse unfold themselves within power relations based on gender, ethnicity, regionality, and expertise. The aim of this section is to build knowledge to later compare it with the definition of 'Gender' employed by mining companies (through SIA, CSR policies). In particular, the section will observe if gender as a concept is derived from the specific cultural context (in this case the South Gobi of Mongolia), the values of the mining company, or whether they import abstract notions of gender and their associated power relations from western historical traditions, premised on perceived universal norms. The chapter finds that 'Gender', as used in company policies, is neither reflective of the companies' nor the communities' social constructions and is indeed motivated by atomistic notions of gender that displace the development trajectory.

1.5.6 Chapter Seven: Expectations and the Discourse of Development

Chapter Seven engages with a significant finding that emerges from the fieldwork conducted for this thesis, namely, that the community engages socially and relationally with mining earlier than the impact stage of mining, in what I term the 'expectations' stage. The 'expectations' are experienced early in the mine-life cycle – literally when 'expectations' by both the mine and the community are being initially formed. This chapter argues that it is at this stage that the community and mine begin to define and articulate the power relationship between the mine and the community which will later come to dominate their dialogue.

Using the insights of WAD theorists, I argue that engaging with community attitudes at the 'expectations' stage of the company-community relationship, provides a baseline by which the community can define the terms in which to measure the loss and benefits from mining. Moreover, if community attitudes are carefully noted at the 'expectations' stage, then the nature of the power relations between the company and the community can be more accurately mapped and, at least discursively, the community can be more readily positioned as an active agent in the development process.

1.5.7 Chapter Eight: The Gendered Impacts of Mining

Chapter Eight explores the concept of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) as a means of capturing the changes caused by mining activities, with a specific emphasis upon gendered impacts (Vanclay 2002; Howitt 2012). The chapter contributes to the critiques of SIA in a

broader context, by applying a feminist critique to the meaning of the 'social' and the inferred definition of the 'subject' in the SIA discourse, a critique which draws on the analysis of ontological commitments given in Chapter Two (O'Faircheallaigh 2012a). Specifically, the chapter outlines the difference between the Western ontological commitments embedded in the SIA as used by the company, and the ontological commitments inherent in the community. The chapter identifies the impacts of mining as articulated by community informants during fieldwork and compares them with the SIAs and discussions with mining company representatives. The chapter demonstrates both the patriarchal nature of mining and the inherent Western biases that misconstrue the actual impacts of mining on men and women in the community.

The chapter observes that mining companies and international financial lenders operating in developing countries, such as Mongolia, import SIA categories and processes that are already embedded within specific ontological values and commitments. This begs the question of whether these international standards are applicable to countries where specific cultural and social values inform the category of 'gender'. Do the SIA standards risk masking in-country social values and categories of concern? The SIA process is currently developed at the corporate level, but it is implemented and carried out by reporting researchers locally. In engaging in an analysis of SIAs and the process by which they are produced, I consider both company and researchers wanting – in particular this chapter demonstrates that both exhibit a particular ontological commitment to a certain conception of the social field drawn from a western cultural perspective. As argued in Chapter Six, this conception occludes different understandings of the social and of the nature of the individual subject within a particular social context. That is, the chapter demonstrates that in the Mongolian case, the impacts of mining are felt beyond the gendered lens, and indeed the initial focus on gender leads to the recognition that this lens must be widened to take in class, ethnicity, age, and other relevant factors in order to properly understand those impacts.

1.5.8   Chapter Nine: Decision-Making and privileged ontologies
Chapter Nine examines the discourse of mining companies and the power relations which condition company decision-making processes. Initially the chapter draws on two company employees' perceptions of the relevance of internal global CSR guidelines to the Mongolian

context – a Mongolian and an expatriate. It becomes evident that each of them has a different opinionof their suitability for the Mongolian context. More so, an analysis of their positions demonstrates not only two distinct understandings of the corporate guidelines, but also two separate comprehensions of the research question. This supports two important findings of this thesis: 1) that distinct ontologies are at play within the company and between the company and the community and these are not always beneficial to understanding and designing community development strategies; and 2) although the company can adapt to some cultural context, it exhibits a distinct lack of self-reflexivity concerning the broader liberal discourse that governs the decision-making and overall direction of community-company engagement.

The chapter continues to examine and explain the dominance of company discourse through a discussion of the impact of dust on herder lifestyles. In an important sense the issue of dust encapsulates many of the central issues facing herders and constituting herder ontology: landscape; kinship/family; pasture and animal health. Likewise, the discussions and decisions relating to the impact typify the tension that this thesis argues is central to the divide in company and community discourse in mining in Mongolia.

The chapter provides a sequential analysis of the trail of the impact, from the herders to the company decision-makers, pertaining to this impact. It uses interviews with community members, a Mongolian field site officer, and finally the corporate decision-making manager. In part, the chapter seeks to demonstrate the following: 1) the significance of the impact for herders and the lack of understanding of the decision maker; 2) the distinctly different interpretations of the impact by corporate and community members; 3) the dismissal of the cultural significance by the decision-maker; and 4) the ontological privilege given to Western concepts of knowledge at the expense of those of the community within this process.

1.5.9 Chapter Ten: Conclusion

The combination of observing and analysing company and community engagements with regard to the changes resulting from mining in the South Gobi provides significant insight into the broader discourse of Mining and Development in Mongolia. Importantly, the feminist theoretical perspective developed in this thesis demonstrates that there are two distinct ontological realities operating within a 'field of sociality' in the South Gobi. What becomes

apparent throughout the examination of the company and communities interpretation of gender, landscape, social impacts, and change, is that both of these cultures are governed by an overarching ontological commitment grounded in their specific cultures. More importantly this thesis demonstrates that each of these entities do not weigh equally in their engagements concerning the nature and direction of future development in the region. Indeed the thesis finds that Western ontologies and the power relations they reinforce are given primacy at almost all stages of the mining process, creating a Mining and Development agenda governed by Western discourse and ways of being.

Chapter 2 - Gender across Cultures: The Minerals Case

2.1   Introduction

Feminist theorists engage in complex ways with IDT at both the theoretical and practical levels. In the first part of this chapter, I address these engagements at the level of International Development Theory and mainstream development discourse: that is, with those feminist approaches that critically assess the assumptions and principles upon which International Development Theory is based. Three main feminist positions are identified and discussed: Women in Development (WID), Gender and Development (GAD), and Women and Development (WAD). Each position groups together a number of theorists, holding certain common critical perspectives of mainstream development discourse, as well as shared practical proposals for international development practice. The discussion provides a broad understanding of the differing feminist engagements with mainstream development discourse and allows us to understand how they position and prioritise certain ontological assumptions with respect to each other.

Gender and Mining is concerned with the analysis of the impacts of large and small-scale minerals extraction projects on communities in developed and developing contexts via a gendered lens. There is a body of work in Gender and Mining concerned with theorising, conceptualizing and analysing the changes resulting from mining from a feminist perspective (Dragadze 1992; Byford 2002; Macintyre 2002; Macdonald 2003; McGuire 2003; Ahmad and Lahiri-Dutt 2006; Burke 2006; Macintyre 2006; O'Faircheallaigh 2011). Such theorists generally agree on the impacts on women and the uneven distribution of the benefits of mining for women. However, the different ways in which impacts are understood and translated into recommended outcomes suggests different ontological positions within Gender and Mining. As noted by Kemp and Gibson, these theoretical and ontological perspectives are rarely explicit in the Gender and Mining field (Gibson & Kemp 2008). Likewise, Bebbington points to the ontological when he notes:

> Up until now, discussions centred on women rather than on how individuals' gendered subjectivities lead to highly differentiated responses. Given this, there is fertile ground

for more work to be done on the ways in which gender affects community desires and how gender informs specific livelihood responses… (Bebbington 2013, p. 6)

As such, a significant contribution of this chapter is directed at uncovering and unpacking the ontology in theories and approaches to Gender and Mining and reflecting on the consequences for development programs of mining companies. The first two sections of this chapter explore the notion of ontology as it will be employed in this thesis. Following this, the chapter will introduce the process of Social Impact Assessments and their relationships to ontology and mining and development in the Mongolian context. Finally, the second half of the chapter traces the influence of WID, WAD and GAD in Gender and Mining. The chapter argues that currently Gender and Mining is dominated by 'impact based theorists' that rely on WID/GAD approaches, though the emergence of WAD inspired analyses is noted.

2.2   Theoretical Nexus: The Importance of Ontology

According to Code (2003), ontology as a tool of analysis has been largely left-out of Western feminist debates, which has a traditional preference towards method and epistemology. As a form of inquiry, ontology has been associated with 'all the masculinist baggage of modernism that feminism has repudiated' (Heckman 2003). However, ontology is theoretically employed in this thesis for three reasons. Firstly, to distinguish between contested feminist positions within mainstream development theory, based on the theoretical categories they privilege. A basic ontological division is observed between those feminisms committed to the relatively autonomous and universal notion of 'woman' or 'gender' (WID and GAD) and those for whom such concepts are situated in the particular socio-cultural practices of a community (WAD) (Cornwal et al. 2007). Moreover, ontology provides the lens through which this thesis will analyse and critique the basic assumptions of these feminist positions, as well as other positions within Gender and Mining. From this vantage point it is possible to ask, who is the subject being impacted on in Mongolian mining communities? Are they a 'sexed' subject, universal individual, or a 'situated' individual within a given social context? From this understanding I begin to analyse the power relations and changes from mining in the community, in terms of how these relations are interpreted and articulated by those actors themselves.

Secondly, ontology makes it possible to address the question of whether the definitions and understandings of the subject (grounded in a particular ontology) and their relationship to society differ across social and cultural boundaries. According to Taylor, all theories employ particular notions of the individual and therefore different understandings of the relationship between the individual and its society (Blaser 2009; Taylor 1995). As a consequence, a specific ontological position generates particular methods for identifying and solving social issues, and this applies to issues arising in the context of international development. For example, Chapter Seven reveals the ontological commitments which direct pro/anti-development discourses in Mining and Development and uses these commitments to analyse their respective notions of power and discourse towards community development. By analysing these discourses, the chapter argues that current Mining and Development approaches mollify the community's agency in the development process.

Thirdly, the use of ontology allows this thesis to explore whether a feminist focus on ontology can in fact provide solutions to the tensions and misunderstandings that are explained throughout the thesis. Particularly can a broader recognition and engagement with the ontological differences of actors in Mining and Development re-position historic power relations that have disempowered individuals and communities? In this regard, the thesis will draw attention to the different ontological commitments of the actors, which then creates space for further dialogue.

2.2.1 The ontological divide

The theoretical nexus of this thesis is concerned with the understanding of how ontologies – or 'ontological commitments' - influence and direct the development agendas of mining companies, mine-affected communities and other significant development actors. As Charles Taylor and Georgia Warnke argue, all social actors have particular notions of 'the subject'. The understanding of the subject or individual form the basis of the explanations and theories through which actors formulate their understandings of what is needed for the individual to survive, flourish and articulate themselves in society (Taylor, 1995; Warnke, 2003). In this thesis, I argue that a focus on the ontological commitments of various actors in Mining and Development highlights potential differences between agents, which can contribute to the success or failure of development agendas. For instance, socio-cultural influences of herding,

socialism and the transition to democracy contribute to the values, meanings and beliefs that construct modern Mongolian ontologies[13] (Blaser, 2009). Indeed these may differ from the underlying values that construct and influence the ontological commitments of mining companies' development programs, which I argue in following chapter are derived on liberalism, free-trade and social values of equity.

The ontological debate as to what constitutes the individual and therefore what values, morals, power relations a society upholds, is an ancient one but continues to vex theorists and their attempts to develop solutions that address the sustaining of human life and its development (Taylor 1993; Heckman 2003). The historical tension regarding the ontological divide in contemporary political philosophy is between what Taylor terms 'atomists' and 'holists' (Taylor, 1995). According to Taylor, the difference between atomism (a) and holists (b) can be understood as follows;

> a), the order of explanation, you can and ought to account for social actions, structures and conditions, in terms of properties of the constituent individuals: and b), the order of deliberation, you can and ought to account for social goods in terms of concatenations of individual goods (Taylor 1993, p. 195).

That is, according to Taylor, an atomist is theoretically committed to privileging the individual and its inherent capacities to act rationally outside of any commitment to the community or collective (Taylor 1995; Rawls 1993). On the other hand, b) holists privilege the collective group or community (as opposed to the individual) as that which defines the construction of the individual (MacIntyre 1985). Or, as Matravers summarises, 'in short, can social life be accounted for in terms of the psychology of the individual' (what Taylor calls 'atomism') or does it need to invoke the social context (what Taylor calls 'holism')?' (Matravers & Pike 2003 p. 138).

Liberal ontology, premised on the notion of individual freedom attempts to circumvent the ontological commitments that may impinge on individual liberty (MacIntyre 1988). Therefore, Liberalism constructs the 'atomist' 'ahistorical', 'universal' or the 'unencumbered' self as the

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[13] Like Blaser, I use the word 'ontologies' as I recognize that there is no singular ontology but that ontological realities are diverse, multifaceted and fluid to each individual and community.

basis of its ontology (Rawls 1993). That is, the individual has to be considered a rational being, containing inherent capacities that are not dependant on any particular cultural or social construction – capacities must be inherited with humanness itself to make reasoned choices in society (Dworkin 1977; Rawls 1993; Taylor 1995). The individual is therefore essentially and morally 'unencumbered' by society – what makes him or her, a person, a moral subject, are pre-social features innate to human beings (Frazer & Lacey 1993; Rawls 1993). From the gamut of ontological positions within the Atomist-Holist spectrum, liberalist and communitarians respectively argue that liberalism 'is [now] dominant in the English-Speaking world' (Taylor 1993, p 197; Brohman 1995). This thesis argues that within the development discourse of mining companies, liberal ontological commitments are dominant in the development discourse, Social Impact Assessments and their treatment of 'Gender'.

In opposition to the liberal ontology, communitarian theorists view the subject as existing within a community and that the subject/individual comes to understand themselves only within the network of connections between themselves, and the individuals and groups that make up that community (Taylor 1993; Code 2003; Heckman 2003; Warnke 2003).[14] The idea that the individual does not pre-exist society is currently articulated by communitarians, cultural relativists, certain anthropologists, and WAD theorists (MacIntyre 1985; Taylor 1995; Cranny-Francis, Waring et al. 2003; Warnke 2003). These theorists argue that the individual is neither 'unencumbered' – that is, they do not have the radical ability to freely choose their circumstances (as liberals hold) - nor are they able to enjoy a meaningful pre-social existence (Taylor 1995). Thus, unlike the liberal ontology, there is no rigid separation between the individual and their community. Instead the individual finds themselves solely defined and existing within the context of a particular socio-cultural tradition (Taylor 1994; Baum 2004).

Due to the individual finding itself 'situated' in society, emphasis is placed upon the social, cultural, historical fabric of society as a means to understand and interpret the meanings and language in which that society is constituted. For example, the Mongolian studies literature and my own field work indicate that Mongolian identity is constituted from a complex interplay of factors which include, among other factors, the region's unique geo-political past (Rossabi

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[14] The major theorists that originally shaped these debates in the West, have been Hegel, Rousseau, Heidegger and Gadamer (Rousseau 1968; Hegel 1977; Code 2003)

2005), a long history as both conqueror and conquered/colonized (Baabar 2005), and herder pastoralism (Fernandez-Gimenez & Batbuyan 2004). Alongside these broad socio-historical factors, which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters, the daily conditions of life in Mongolia, including animal husbandry, kinship patterns, extreme weather conditions, gender roles, increasing gaps between the rich and poor, and pronounced urban/rural differences, all contribute to shaping a unique and varied Mongolian identity   (Bruun & Odgaard 2001; Baabar 2005).

The theorist Bernard William coined the term 'thick vocabulary', which is used by communitarian theorists to describe the tradition, history, culture and customs inherent in a society that shape the individuals within it (MacIntyre 1985; Walzer 1985; Warnke 1992; Walzer 1994; Warnke 2003). According to feminist Georgia Warnke, the term 'thick vocabulary' is intended to capture the notion that individuals act on norms or principles that are justified 'because they issue from our culturally specific needs…from our particular shared understandings and traditions' (Warnke 1993, p. 51). From this perspective Mongolians and Western mine employees articulate and produce themselves through an engagement with the thick vocabulary of their respective communities, since they are each integrally immersed in a historically developed moral and intellectual culture.

In opposition to the 'thick' moral vocabulary, Liberal philosophers assume a thin set of principles and normative concepts which transcend local, culturally-specific vocabularies (Dworkin 1977; Steiner and Alston 2000). Such a standpoint adheres to a minimal moral language, that is 'it requires an ethical discourse in which terms have 'thin' or minimal meanings, that employ general abstract terms of rights and goods that are universal, transcending the specific ethical understandings of local culture' (O'Neill 2005, p. 481). Examples of attempts to employ such a thin vocabulary are the respective global practice guides of multi-national companies like Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton (BHPB 2004; Rio Tinto 2009), as well as documents issued by international organizations such as the International Finance Corporation, and the World Bank (International Finance Corporation 2012). These standards are held to apply universally and as such can be used to critique, assess and address injustices associated with mineral projects (Taylor 1989; Walzer 1994; IWTC 1998).

Despite the fact that such actors structure the articulation of their discourses in terms of a 'thin vocabulary', it is the contention of this thesis that this is only possible if such a vocabulary is already embedded within a pre-existing 'thick vocabulary' on which it is dependent (Taylor 1995). That is, the 'thin' universalism of official company and international institutional discourse coheres and signifies only because its grounded in the liberal ontology and thus situated within a culturally and historically specific 'thick vocabulary'. As Warnke argues, at times the 'thick vocabulary' of a culture is so burdened with its own interrelations that it cannot be discarded or simply fitted into the universal or abstract concepts and meanings such as those articulated in GAD theory or company guidelines (Warnke 1993).

For example, in recent years this ontological divide between atomist or holist, has been a strong focus of theorists engaged in the human rights debate, which has not only strongly influenced mainstream international discourse, but is also beginning to emerge in the minerals industry (Vivieros De Castro 1998; Kemp et al 2010; Pastore 2010). Acknowledgement of the historical tension is made by Graetz and Franks who conclude that the use of human rights is:

> … now ubiquitous among domestic and international government and civil society organizations, such that failure to protect and respect rights, and remedy rights violations, can have deleterious consequences for actors and operations that are perceived to violate and/or impede the exercise of an individual's or group's rights (Graetz & Franks 2014, p. 98)

By contrast, research conducted across a range of countries in Asia suggests that Asian countries are not freely or ubiquitously adopting human rights in practice. Instead they rely on pre-colonial and the post-colonial traditions to interpret and define justice. Indeed, Kymlicka notes:

> Appeals to international human rights instruments and Western policies of multiculturalism are interspersed with appeals to local traditions, national mythologies, regional practices, and religious doctrines (Kymlicka & He 2012, p. 3).

In this example I observe the broader replication of the ontological divide under discussion, the former which supports an atomist universal position based on the perceived 'universal'

acceptance of rights, while the later indicates a holist perspective that acknowledges the multiplicity of social factors at work in shaping a theory of justice in Asia. What the paper by Graetz and Franks does not address are the historical precedents and consequent international power relations that may have pushed countries to sign human rights charters or indeed, as they acknowledge, that countries may be adhering to rights charters to mitigate risks or reputational damage. Both of these factors point to a broader ontological commitment or thick vocabulary that underpins a 'thin' moral justice.

An understanding of these ontological distinctions of the atomist with their thin vocabulary and the holist with their thick vocabulary is important, since throughout the thesis I unpack the ontologies of the Mongolian mine-affected communities and the mining companies, to uncover the ontological commitments which direct the development agenda. Indeed the aim of this research is to begin to interpret the language and meanings that are observed and discussed in the field by the individuals and organisations under study, to begin to construct the meaning and discourse of Mining and Development in Mongolia. In such a case it becomes the task of the researcher to attempt to understand the 'meanings that are already embedded in the moral, political, and intellectual traditions we share and consider what these meanings indicate with regard to suitable principles for us' (Warnke 1993, p. 86).

2.3   Social impact Assessments (SIA)

Large infrastructure projects are more frequently applying SIAs in developing country contexts - including Mongolia. However, an examination of the SIA literature demonstrates that research on the cross-cultural relevancy of SIA outside of its Western origins has been given little attention (Ip 1990; Howitt 2012). This section introduces the concept of SIA and the few theoretical critiques and a broader analysis is made in Chapter Seven.

SIAs emerged in the United States under the form of Environmental Impact Assessments and are now used as an internationally recognized method for evaluating the social aspects of industrial developments, including mining. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) emerged in North America in the year 1970; it was originally a small, five page law but has had massive ramifications for sustainable monitoring within the mining industry (Freudenburg 1986). Out of this law, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and later SIAs evolved to become policy documents used for predicting, mitigating and managing the environmental

and social areas affected by major development projects (Freudenburg 1986). As O'Faircheallaigh notes;

> SIA is generally seen as a subset of EIA that specifically seeks to predict the effects on people – as opposed to the bio-physical environment – of planned activities, and in particular of large industrial or infrastructure projects, it also involves finding ways of intervening to avoid or mitigate the negative impacts and maximize the positive impacts that projects are expected to create (O'Faircheallaigh 2009b, p. 9).

That is, SIAs aim to account for and predict the negative and positive social effects of large-scale mining projects and encourage management of programs that promote positive social outcomes for communities.[15] As Vanclay, a leading professional engaged in the field of SIA succinctly proposes, 'social impact assessment (SIA) is about the processes of managing the social issues associated with planned interventions' (Vanclay 2003, p. 34). At the working level, the SIA document is produced to guide the community relations team to predict, identify and mitigate risks associated with changes caused by mining (Vanclay, 2003).[16]

The *International Association for Impact Assessment* (IAIA) have produced a set of "Principles for Social Impact Assessment" and have acknowledged that it is a difficult concept due to the varied social values and economic contexts and priorities around the world In this sense the principles are intended as a guide,

> to practitioners around the world. It can provide them with the basis for developing national guidelines in consultation with a range of stakeholders and users in their own countries (Vanclay 2003, p1).

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[15] There is considerable controversy over the role of SIAs in minerals extraction, specifically concerning its efficacy in registering and mitigating the impacts of large-scale minerals extraction. There are ongoing theoretical and methodological debates surrounding the technocratic nature of SIA, the ability of SIA to predict, measure and monitor change, and finally SIA's viability as a 'tool to facilitate negotiation among stakeholders' (Lockie 2001).

[16] SIAs are the predicted impacts from a mine. Following this document, mining companies will often draft Social Management Plans, Environmental Management and Monitoring Programs based on the SIA. As these processes are structured on the findings of the SIA, I have focused my thesis on the underpinning ontological commitments surrounding the discourse of SIA, because if these are initially misrepresented, then the following processes become somewhat misguided or irrelevant.

Importantly, SIAs are considered a field of research and practice that consists of a body of knowledge, techniques and values that manage impacts from mining. Of particular interest to the aims of this thesis are the ontological commitments embedded in the very principles and values that inform the SIA (Vanclay 2003). Are these principles and values steeped in Western values, or are they able to transcend cultural contexts?

A small number of academics have recognised the 'strong western orientation' in categories used to register social impacts (Vanclay 2002, p. 189) and suggests that SIA categories need to be more comprehensive. Furthermore they argue that 'the list of social impacts … [is] perhaps still affected by a western cultural bias' (Vanclay 2002, p. 298). Indeed this is supported by Howitt, who argues:

> …SIA outside state and corporate frameworks is not only diverse and complex but also highly context-dependent. A more sophisticated engagement with theoretical discourses on the idea of community and the implications of culture, sustainability and scale is necessary to allow the context-specific circumstances of various SIA research activities to develop a more sophisticated consideration of local sociocultural and political-economic systems and their interaction with state and corporate systems in domains relevant to SIA (Howitt 2012, p. 81).

Much like the earlier observations of Kymlicka in regard to 'thick' and 'thin' moral vocabularies in Human Rights, Howitt has argued that a thick moral vocabulary is needed to construct and capture social impacts in affected communities. However in Mongolia, government legislation towards SIA is almost non-existent and appears infrequently in minerals policy. Instead it is international monetary lenders such as the World Bank and multinational mining companies like Rio Tinto that direct the SIA processes (Rio Tinto 2011; International Finance Corporation 2012). These universal standards are premised on a perceived 'thin vocabulary' that govern the SIA process across global operations, and apply to any operations that the World Bank or Rio Tinto operate regardless of cultural, economic or political context.

My thesis unpacks this tension and examines whether current SIA processes can capture the gendered impacts of mining on communities. By applying a feminist analysis to SIA, I examine the ontological commitments and subsequent outcomes of any Western or

masculine bias in the process that affects the positive development of the South Gobi communities.

2.4   A Feminist Critique of Development Practices

International Development Theory (IDT) is a multifaceted discipline that contains many complementary and contesting theories of society, its responsibilities and their social contracts (Peet & Hartwick 2009). Generally, IDT is concerned with the articulation and analysis of the principles underpinning the network of political and economic relations between developed and developing nations. The primary actors involved in shaping this theory include governments, international institutions, transnational corporations, local communities, and civil society groups (Sachs 1992). These actors engage in development programs whose goal is to understand desirable change and provide tangible positive outcomes with the recipient.

IDT's basic principles are derived from the enlightenment era, focusing strongly on reason, individualism and scientific/technological progress (Peet & Hartwick 2009). Indeed, the internationalisation of the liberal economic order carried with it not only an economic strategy for development, but also an entire cultural tradition of being – that of enlightened/modernised liberal 'Man' (Hogan 1987; Brohman 1995). A primary example of this can be found in Amartya Sen's work, which is concerned with:

> …how society grants to individuals the capacity for taking part in creating their own livelihoods, governing their own affairs and participating in self-government (Peet and Hartwick 2009, p. 3).

That is, technological processes and industrialization activities in development attempt to empower the individual to have more control over their physical environment, making room for change in culture and customary norms (Schultz 1961). This approach is ontologically premised on the principle that individuals exist as ahistorical beings unaffected by culture and therefore can notionally 'modernize' or 'develop' themselves. If, however, a society does not privilege the individual and alternatively considers themselves products of their history and situated within a community that determines change, can this form of development become sustainable? Although these types of question have been examined in IDT by post-

structuralists, post-colonial and feminist positions, which I will examine presently, these inquiries remain largely outside of the field of Mining and Development, and Gender and Mining.

2.4.1 Women in Development (WID)

The origins of the feminist engagement with international development practice can be traced to the 1970s when, out of the civil rights movement, an international women's movement developed (Boserup 1970, Vivanathan et al. 1997). Ester Boserup's seminal work was essentially an attempt to 'correct' modernisation theory[17], to make it take account of the interests of women in international development. That is, it took the approach of augmenting modernisation theory with the category of 'woman', so as to include women as a group within development theory and practice - hence the designation 'Women in Development' (WID). This essentially had the effect of 'adding women' into mainstream development discourse (Boserup 1970; Cornwall et al. 2007; Jhonson-Odim 1991). Boserup's focus was on 'women' as a social category, and effectively enlarged the notion of community – instead of conceiving of the community as a group of indifferent, gender-neutral individuals, the basic conception of the mainstream development discourse of the time, Boserup substituted the notion of those individuals as sexually differentiated. This was done in order to capture the differing economic conditions confronting men and women in the context of a developing nation (Boserup 1970).

This ontological reconstruction of the subject of development theory (at that time) underwrites Boserup's consideration of women as a distinctive social group to which specific economic and social realities apply purely due to their status as 'women'. Based upon this, her research was able to show that in various development contexts women were subject to a marked

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[17] Generally, modernization theory views society as a living organism, one that starts at a 'simplistic' or 'primitive' stage and evolves into a more 'modern' and 'complex' society (Inglehart 2005). The former was considered a more backward or 'underdeveloped' way of living and the latter as a more enlightened/civilized or 'developed' way of living (Boserup 1970, Apffel-Marglin & Marglin 1996, Inglehart 2005). Given that modernization theory is derived from liberalism, it principally focuses on the individual's ability rather than the government's ability to develop and change society. Therefore the most common policy recommendation for modernization theory is a 'human capital' approach with an emphasis on primary infrastructure development. Primarily the 'human capital' approach invested heavily in 'educating' the individual in the form of strong cores of workers and managers. Economic changes and technological advancements were directed at the individual with the aim of economically empowering and thus enabling the individual to change their cultural values and needs (Boserup 1970, Calleo & Rowland 1973, Rathgeber 1991).

position of disadvantage relative to men (Boserup et al. 2007; Beneria & Sen 1981). Development programs which were formulated in gender-neutral ways, in effect took men and their concerns as the norm, thereby overlooking the specific needs and capacities of women hence subjecting them to additional disadvantage (Boserup 1970).

In particular, Boserup identified a number of areas where women had roles in the formal or informal economy, which were overlooked by the mainstream development analysis focused only on male roles. She argued that development initiatives, blind to women's actual participation in the social/economic fabric of their societies, meant that development programs did not reach women and that in some contexts they actually undermined their existing social position (Boserup 1970; Visvanathan et al 1997; Beneria 2003). She argued instead that women had a specific economic/social role in their societies, and that if this was properly recognised, then development programs could be specifically tailored to aid women in a way that would better enable them and hence their communities (Boserup 1970). I argue that this view remains the dominant template for conceiving and implementing gender-targeted programs in international development practice today.

Significantly, Boserup's analysis was based upon a conception of the sexual division of labour - i.e. ultimately the differing social roles of men and women within a community were grounded in different kinds of labouring activity:

> even at the most primitive stages of family autarky there is some division of labour within the family, the main criteria for this division being those of age and sex. … Both in primitive and more developed communities, the traditional division of labour within the family is considered 'natural' in the sense of being obviously and originally imposed by the sex difference itself (Boserup 1970, p. 15)

In this passage there are three things to note. Firstly, there is a commitment to a distinction between primitive/developed societies, which is shared with modernisation theory. In either case, however, 'women' as a category remain distinguished from men. Secondly, although this distinction has (unstipulated) biological origins ('the sex difference itself'), what is significant is the way in which this distinction is expressed socially in a division of labour, an

economic difference. Finally, this difference, though economic, is internal to the family but is 'explained' by the society as a 'natural' rather than a socially imposed role.

For Boserup, the category of 'woman' attains significance insofar as it has discernible economic consequences. That is, the ontological category 'woman' leads to a reconsideration of the economic activity in which a community as a whole engages, and thus to a possible reorientation of development programs and funding. Boserup did not, however, identify a one-dimensional cross-cultural relationship between sexual difference and economic activity. Thus, for example, her research into the different labouring activities performed by men and women in farming in Africa and Asia found that in less populated areas women tended to perform farm work for the household, but that in highly populated areas, where men could be employed as labourers, or where small ploughs and other technical machines could be used, men predominated in such roles (Boserup 1970; Visvanathan et al 1997). As a result, women in developing contexts could be employed in roles thought to be reserved for males. Development projects should therefore respond to this by focusing on supporting women's entry to the labour force and ensuring equal protection of their rights in that sphere.

Boserup's research was a forerunner of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) development outcomes commonly found in mining corporate documents today. Following Boserup's analysis, WID theorists tended to argue for development programs that facilitated the economic empowerment of women in developing countries through the extension of their participation in the public labour market. This approach was shared by mainstream western liberal feminisms in the context of developed countries and is currently a proposal found in the Gender and Mining literature (Geir 2006). For example, women in Mongolia are currently prohibited by law to drive trucks over a certain haulage size on mines (Khan 2013). A 'gendered' development program developed by both mine sites under research was to advocate that the government to ratify the law so women could have equal access to employment. Discussions with mine site managers demonstrated a belief that both men and women should have access to the benefits of mine employment. These views were always supported by rational economic arguments and research evidence that demonstrated women were more 'careful' drivers than men, caused less crashes and therefore saved the mine

money.[18] This example, of 'adding' women to socially pre-constructed norms or behaviours is a classic WID approach.

2.4.2 Universal subject to Global Patriarchy

I propose that the challenge being made by WID theorists to mainstream international development practice was essentially premised on the ontological commitment to sexual difference as a social category. WID theorists argued that this social difference must be considered in order to properly grasp the nature of any society. WID argued against the (liberal) ontological assumptions of mainstream development discourse, that sexual difference was not a 'natural', 'biological' difference, internal to the category of the 'individual', and hence irrelevant to the considerations of the fundamental ontological categories of 'individual'/'social'. Instead WID considered the perceived 'irrelevance' as a result of the fact that the notion of the 'individual' employed by mainstream development discourse embodied cultural stereotypes imbued with traditional masculine characteristics (competitive, rational, antagonistic, public); traditionally feminine attributes (nurture, domesticity, caution, private) were simply excluded from consideration as aspects of the 'social' or the 'political' and consigned to the realm of the private or the family – the non-political arena of the individual (Gavison 1992). Echoing general feminist critiques of liberalism, they noted that this exclusion of 'female characteristics' from the political was the result of an asymmetry whereby such qualities were given a lower status than their masculine counterpart (Flax 1990; Gavison 1992). This analysis allowed WID theorists to diagnose a pervasive cultural-political privilege accorded to masculinity. Furthermore, WID theorists extended this analysis to non-Western developing societies, arguing that the privilege according to masculinity was a 'universal', cross-cultural phenomenon, with women always being at the bottom of gendered power relations (Flax 1990).

As a result of this analysis, WID theorists targeted development programs which universally excluded women from the public political-economic sphere. In essence, these programs were rooted in women's labouring activity and the WID analysis of women's lack of participation in

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[18] Although the literature suggests that this is about both maintenance considerations and efficiency, my interviews with company employees contained only references to safety considerations.

public political institutions, specifically the labour market. By contrast, WID argued that such conditions were neither 'natural' nor 'inevitable', but social outcomes were reinforced by a social construction of a 'natural' role for women within the domestic sphere, one which rendered them 'most suitable' for such roles. As a result, WID theorists argued for social programs and funding to be directed towards enabling women to 'break out' of the private sphere, and enable them to participate alongside men in the public labour market in programs of 'gender inclusion'. Further, they argued that such economic changes would bring about social change of sex roles, 'empowering' women by promoting their individual freedom, and independence of the family unit – thus the promotion of equal rights, education, and civil liberties for women were cornerstones for WID praxis (Boserup 1970; Jaquette 1982; Rathgeber 1991; Beneria 2003).

Crucially, however, there is an important ontological commitment which WID theorists share with the liberalism of mainstream development discourse, and that is the commitment to 'empower' women by facilitating their social inclusion. In particular the WID position is premised on the notion of a gender-differentiated individual actor who could, and should, be enabled through the provision of economic opportunity (educational programs, job-creation programs) to participate in the public sphere of the existing social order. It is through this participation that social transformation towards a more 'equal' society would come about (Weedon 1987). Hence WID theorists remain committed to two ontological positions shared with mainstream development discourse. The 'individual' (in WID, gender-differentiated) as an actor, empowered to transform the social, and hence ontologically *prior* to the social. Secondly, the *extension* of the public sphere to include other (formerly private) social roles, without disturbing the ontological priority of the public/private distinction itself (Baum 2004).

Further, in extending their analysis cross-culturally, WID theorists apply these ontological commitments 'universally'. That is, WID remains committed to an analysis which would treat a woman herder in the South Gobi in the same manner as a business woman in a Western nation. In particular, the WID paradigm assumes that the same social programs which would empower a woman in a developed context could apply to a woman in a developing context. As such, all the factors embedded in each of those social contexts that might determine questions of the specific nature of individuation and the notion of empowerment in those

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contexts – e.g. the actual social boundaries between the domestic and the social, the nature of family/community relations, let alone questions of class or ethnicity – were left out of consideration in the original WID reformulation of mainstream development discourse programs.

Indeed, it is because WID is ontologically committed to the notion of 'woman' as a sexually-differentiated individual that the cultural frame in which such a specific notion of 'woman' arises and makes sense is not part of WID analysis. That is, this occludes the consideration of the specific cultural factors that contribute to the sense of 'being a woman' in a particular context. In other words, this cultural frame is not interrogated because it is not ontologically available to WID as a theory and, as a result, WID imports the basic ontological commitments to the priority of 'individual' over the 'social', and the commitment to a distinction between 'public'/'private' spheres to cultural contexts in which they might not apply. Thus, while the work of WID theorists provided insights into women's exclusion from both development theory and programs, it was left to other theorists to consider the socio-cultural frame in which 'being a woman' was articulated. This move enables a more nuanced understanding of the way in which 'women' are constructed and determined by a social process of gendering, and for a wider critical view on International Development and the sub-field of Mining and Development.

2.4.3 The influence of WID in Gender and Mining

Historically, the initial hurdle facing Gender and Mining specialists was the same as that facing feminists in International Development Theory, namely to get women on the agenda on the extractives industry (Bice 2011). As a result, early Gender and Mining specialists dealt with similar problems and issues as the first WID theorists, and there is a clear line of influence between WID literature in mainstream development discourse and early Gender and Mining work (Macdonald 2003; McGuire 2003; Burke 2006). Understandably this commitment stems from the desire to include and highlight women and the roles of women in the Mining and Development agenda. Irrespective of this, I argue that WID was originally, and remains, a central theoretical influence within the Gender and Mining literature. As the thesis argues, this portrays a particular ontological position committed to the elements of the liberal public/private spheres of power and the liberal subject, which becomes problematic in cross-cultural environments.

Likewise, Ward suggests that there should be more dialogue between the broader field of International Development and Gender and Mining (Ward 2006). Ward states that 'the sector needs to deepen its own analysis and research into the impact of extractives industries on women … link with women's organisations – and gender experts in NGOs and use their tools and approaches for cultural appropriateness' (Ward 2006). This was more recently echoed by Lahiri-Dutt who states:

> It appears that the policy literature on women and mining has fallen into the pit of a theory vacuum. I would therefore like to bring feminist politics back into the debate on mining (Lahiri-Dutt 2011b, p. 3).

Although feminist political discussions are to be welcomed, they have to be carefully qualified, since consigning existing 'policy literature' in this field to a 'vacuum' runs the risk of occluding an analysis of the ways in which such policy is in fact already strongly informed by particular ontological commitments that carry particular political agendas. Chapter Eight argues that SIAs are such an instance, where policies that are enshrined in liberal ontological commitments carry with them political agendas of 'equality' and 'individualism'. Instead, I would argue that it is only by unpacking the ontological and theoretical commitments in established policies that the field of Gender and Mining can understand how feminism has and can contribute to the improvement of policy development and, as Lahiri-Dutt states, re-politicising Mining and Development. This form of analysis makes it possible to deepen feminist engagement in this field, without simply reproducing the ethnocentric mistakes of WID within Gender and Mining.

Lahiri-Dutt also alerts us to the risks of the (WID) 'add women and stir' approach, the limitations of which I have discussed in the previous section. I term this the 'impact-based' approach, as it closely focuses and draws on the negative impacts of mining on women.[19] There is little dispute within Gender and Mining over the nature and kinds of impacts experienced by women in mine-affected communities, with most participants pointing to numerous direct and indirect gender-specific impacts connected to the arrival of mining.

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[19] Similar to what Lahiri-Dutt (2011) terms "a shift away from the uncritical 'impacts of mining on women' approach".

Commonly identified major impacts experienced directly by women include: increase in domestic violence; decreased health standards; restricted access to land and shrinking opportunities from land-based livelihoods; a lack of direct employment in the mine; and a resulting dependency on male relatives (Dragadze 1992; Ranchod 2001; Macdonald & Rowland 2002; Macintyre 2002). A great deal of important work in the Gender and Mining field has been devoted to listing such impacts and this research demonstrates that women are negatively affected in different and more significant ways than men, by social, environmental and economic impacts that are a direct result of mining.

'Impact-based' approaches rely on the evidence of primarily negative impacts to demonstrate that women remain disadvantaged and unrecognised by mining company processes.[20] In turn they hold that the negative impacts need be identified and acted upon appropriately, in order for to the impact to be addressed and 'solved'. Byford, for example, considers that it is the very exposing of gendered impacts that produces more sustainable outcomes for the communities. She asserts that the purpose of focusing on the impacts of mining on women is to 'highlight the importance of undertaking a gender analysis within a community to determine the roles, knowledge, expectations and responsibilities of the men and women' (Byford 2002). Furthermore, Byford claims that:

> by undertaking this process, a project team can ensure a more equitable response to the changing social environment by removing barriers to equal participation in the planning and implementation of projects (Byford 2002).

Such an underlying commitment to gender-based inclusion, premised on achieving equality between members of a community, represents a commitment parallel to that of WID.

Although Byford avoids reducing 'women's roles' to merely those roles taken on by individuals of a particular gender, she ties the definition of this notion to the social roles and knowledge as articulated in/by the community of which the women are a part (Byford 2002; McGuire

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[20] Of note, it is not only mining companies but also government policies that affect the status and position of women in relation to mining. However, as this thesis is particularly concerned with and researched the company-community relations, I will focus on the affects of companies.

2003). McGuire outlines some of the key environmental impacts that mining can have more broadly on women's ability to discharge their role within a community across the lifespan of a mine, including destruction of traditional lands and forests, the use of chemicals, pollution of water and local food sources such as fish, and the use of dangerous chemicals such as mercury which can lead to birth deformities (McGuire 2003). Both Byford and McGuire extend the notion of the role which an individual performs to include social, cultural, and environmental dimensions. Under this view the recognition of different gendered roles provides a more complete and complex understanding of the problems a community faces, one in which the 'dominant' male perspective no longer exhausts the interests of the community (McGuire 2003). For example, the clearing of vegetation and forests impacts a whole community; however it is solely the women's social and economic role and knowledge to collect and understand traditional medicines, foods, and cultural materials, leaving them particularly affected and, in turn, damaging the community of which they are a part (Byford 2002; McGuire 2003).

Despite a focus on 'situating' women's roles within a social context, what fundamentally underpins the analysis of both Byford and McGuire is the notion that if women are not consulted then women's knowledge and social and economic role is not acknowledged, understood or subsequently considered and planned for by mining companies. It is because women's 'invisibility' operates to the detriment of women and their community, a focus on women can enable a more detailed recognition of the diverse interests of the community to be considered. As a result, the widened notion of 'role' still retains a WID focus insofar as it is grounded in making women appear as visible actors in a community, so that specific impacts on them *as women* can be registered and remedied – cultural considerations are employed merely as the foil to make women *as* women (in that community) visible.

This focus makes it possible to demonstrate clearly both that women's unique social and economic roles and responsibilities in society are altered by mining (which, in turn, affects the entire community), and that women are rarely directly consulted at any stage of the mining process. It accomplishes this by grounding itself in a category of woman that is conceptualised as relatively autonomous of the socio-cultural field. That is, WID theorists ground their theory in a notion of 'woman' as a 'sexually-differentiated individual' engaged in a

particular economic role; 'impact-based' gender and mining specialists ground their notion of 'gendered-impact' in the existence of a social actor discharging a 'sexually-differentiated social role'.

Additionally, in the WID case, sexual-differentiation of the individual is determined by the economic significance of the role in question, while in the 'impact-based' approach it is determined by the socio-cultural significance of the role. Thus, just like WID theorists, impact-based literature grounds theories in an individual performing a role, and they differ only around how this role is to be identified – neither group of theorists question the possibility of assigning such a role a definitive gender, and hence they implicitly rely on a privilege of the category of 'woman'/'gender' above other social-cultural factors. Neither WID nor 'impact-based' theorists seek to explain the process of sexual-differentiation itself, with both treating it as a given that can be read off economic or social-cultural roles/knowledge. This privilege of 'woman'/'gender' above other social-cultural factors risks employing a theoretical framework that is inattentive to the ways in which social and cultural factors determine the articulation of gender, a situation which becomes acute in the case of non-western contexts, such as in the South Gobi of Mongolia.

Further, the programs proposed by 'impact-based' theorists to remedy gendered-impacts demonstrate a shared commitment with WID to individual empowerment through the extension of public opportunity and participation. Thus McGuire proposes 'to include women's cultural and environmental knowledge as early as possible in mine development' (McGuire 2003). Dragadze suggests that companies and fieldworkers should be educated so as to sensitise 'mining professionals to gender impacts, needs and potentials in community development' (Dragadze 1992). These recommendations are sound, but in many ways resemble the 'add women and stir' approach to development of the 1970s (Lahiri-Dutt 2011b). There are, however, several problematic issues that arise from such an approach. Firstly, although these theorists avoid the charge of essentialism which afflicts WID theorists by highlighting the importance of embedding the cultural knowledge of the individual into a community framework, they are still susceptible to the critique that, like the WID approach, it does not question why women were originally left out of the process of consultation between the community and mining company – why women need to be 'added in' as an extraneous

consideration. This raises the question of the social nature of the process of sexual-differentiation, in particular, the inherent patriarchal values in these processes which reside in the discourse of both the community and mining representatives. Simply adding women as another consideration does not address deficiencies in the broader discourse in which negotiations between the community and a mining company occur, and thus risks dealing only superficially with the issue of women's 'invisibility'.

Secondly, in WID and impact-based approaches, an assumption is made that if women are not directly engaged in negotiations, or are not visible as 'publicly' active agents in the community, then they are without power, voice or influence in their own cultural processes. This assumption betrays a particularly Western liberal notion of the 'public' sphere as the central arbiter of political discourse, whereas other cultural contexts might provide both a different conception of the 'public' and of 'political activity' (O'Faircheallaigh 2008). The danger here is that the company representative, theorist or consultant does not, or cannot, recognise the nature of the relation of power or the exercise of power within the society or community affected by a mine, or the particular social and economic roles of women and the ways in which they choose to wield the power they do have.

Interestingly, many 'impact-focused' theorists do not recognise the significance of non-Western forms of power negotiation, considering that most are working to persuade the reader that the private domain is as important as the public domain. That so-called 'private' impacts (domestic violence, identity, alcohol consumption and family health) are as important to the community as 'public' impacts (work safety, royalties, infrastructure development) but remain unrecognised because of the traditional association of the public domain as masculine are seen as more important than the putatively 'traditionally feminine' private domain. So the question arises: are 'impact based' theorists recognising the role of the private domain but implicitly valuing the power of the public domain and therefore reinforcing power relations, they are trying to challenge? That is, are these theorists really recognising the specific social construction, as articulated by the women in specific social contexts, or are they positioning them as victims of a perceived traditional patriarchy and then importing a global form based on the assumption that women do not have a voice? Chapter Five will address this very issue when it observes constructs of power in Mongolian society and the way in which Mongolian

men and women negotiate these relations. I argue that caution must be exercised against importing Western understandings of power into such contexts, in ways that might misinterpret women's experiences, needs, and roles in constructing and utilising power in society.

The issue that arises with 'impact-focused' theorists in Gender and Mining, and what needs to be more thoroughly explored, is the relationship between women and their culture, and particularly about the nature of the discourse which attempts to articulate this relationship, and in which the language of impacts and that of the negotiation of a mining agreement is framed. It is not by chance that impact-focused theorists appear to be close to WID theorists, and that it is GAD theory that provides a critical perspective on them, since GAD is concerned with attempting to understand the process by which discourse determines 'women' – that is, with the process of gendering.

2.5   GAD Ontology: The Nature of the Individual

The WID commitment to having mainstream development discourse better register the situation of women in developing communities is taken-up in the GAD approach, which extends the consideration of the social articulation of sexual difference beyond economic and social roles into the realm of culturally specific articulations of gender (Cornwall & Whitehead 2007). In particular, GAD focuses on gendered power relations – that is, the social discourses within which gender is articulated - and the need to apply a gender analysis to both development practices and international political structures as a whole (Moffat 1992; Kabeer 2005; Momsen 2009). Due to gender being defined as a social construction encompassing both men and women, the GAD approach encouraged the contributions of men. For example, Beneria observes that GAD addresses issues affecting both men and women, therefore 'gender' is not a substitute for 'women', but instead is a way of underlining the notion that 'information about women is necessarily information about men' (Beneria 2003, p. 40). In other words, gender as a social process is taken to be the fundamental category from which to analyse any particular social situation. GAD extends the WID analysis by emphasising gender as a process of social construction, and subjecting all social processes to the category of 'gender'. So, whereas WID extends the concept of the individual by repositioning that

individual as sexually differentiated, GAD recasts the individual as the outcome of a socially-constructed process of gendering (Young 1987; Flax 1990).

The basis for this approach is the traditional feminist challenge to the notion of sexual difference as a 'natural', biological fact, and to instead regard sexual difference as a social construction. Gender is not simply the biological sex of an individual (male/female) but rather a set of meanings that differing sexualities assume in particular societies, and which cluster about, but are not limited to, the categories 'masculine' and 'feminine'. The process of gendering in a social context takes up the sets of meanings and codes comprising sexuality and organises them in terms of 'masculinity' and 'femininity', associating each respectively with male or female bodies (Cranny-Francis, Waring et al. 2003). What it is to be 'male' or 'female' is thus (re)articulated based upon socially-constructed norms assigned to a sex, and this process of social differentiation is referred to as 'gendering', with the resultant ontological category being termed 'gender' (Scott 1998). Finally, GAD theorists argue that the socially-constructed male/female identities and the social structures that reinforce and replicate them, are determined by the power relations at work in a particular society, relations which privilege men and the masculine, and can thus be describes as 'patriarchal'. As Flax observes, 'gender relations … have been relations of domination … and … have been (more) defined and (imperfectly) controlled by one of the interrelated aspects – the man' (Flax 1990, p. 45).

In summary, GAD goes further in its analysis of the relations between the sexes within a community than WID. It moves from an individual-based gender-related inequality to an understanding of gender as existing across the entire social field, inhabiting institutions, individuals, traditions and politics. Instead of a view in which sexual difference inheres in individuals, GAD offers a view in which individuals are gendered by a social process, their individuality being the outcome of this process rather than a building-block for it. In this sense GAD's definition of gender is not concerned with women in isolation, but with the social construction of sexual difference and the roles and responsibilities through which men and women live out the social meaning of this difference (Young 1987).

2.5.1 Power, Discourse and Global Patriarchy
As noted above, GAD theorists hold that contemporary Western nations as well as developing nations and communities, exhibit a structured power relation termed 'patriarchy', which rests

on the social meanings in terms of which biological sexual difference is articulated.[21] The term 'patriarchy' refers to a set of power relations that position man's interests, values and characteristics above those of women (Wheedon 1987). Flax suggests that masculine and feminine traits are interdependent, so that neither has meaning without the other. For example, a traditionally masculine trait such as competitive self-interest, and its binary opposite the feminine trait of cooperative nurturing, are only meaningful through the significance they acquire from one another – that is, what it means to be competitive only makes sense if one understands what it means to be cooperative (Flax 1990). In this case, the emphasis on the masculine trait represents a devalorisation of the feminine trait (Wheedon 1987). In the context of mainstream International Development Theory, masculine traits like reason, competition, and the individual are seen to be privileged over traditional feminine traits such as nurturing, cooperation, and the community.

One outcome of this analysis is that GAD theorists reject dichotomous power relations, of the kinds WID theorists articulate – particularly the public/private opposition. GAD theorists draw on Foucault to critique the definition of power as described in early WID and International Development Theory. Foucault finds the binary conceptualization of power un-useful on two grounds (Cousins 1984 pp. 232, 236). Firstly, he believes it rests on the idea that power is a binary phenomenon, conceived in terms of a 'sovereign-subject' relationship - those who possess power against those who do not have it (Foucault 1980, p. 104). For Foucault this is an oversimplification of power, which ignores its effects on 'the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology' (Foucault 1980). While a sovereign-subject description may have been sufficient to understand power in a feudal society, it cannot account for the more complex situation in the present social formation - indeed Foucault argues that an analysis of power in such terms has actually served 'to conceal its actual procedures, the element of domination inherent in its techniques' (Foucault 1980).

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[21] 'Patriarchy' was not coined by GAD theorists but was a term used in WID and earlier feminisms. However, I would argue that this term, as defined below and by GAD represents its current use in International Development Theory.

Secondly, Foucault does not accept that power is primarily repressive in character, indeed he poses the question: 'would power be accepted if it were entirely cynical?' (Foucault 1990, p. 86) In other words, what possible inducement could there be for us to endure a regime of power that was merely prohibitive? Is it not more plausible to accept that power has, in some sense, a beneficial or creative aspect? As a result of these doubts about the traditional model of power and its applicability to contemporary social formations, Foucault and many feminist theories attempt to develop an alternative view of power, by reconstructing it in terms of multiple sources and relationships and as a fluid 'discourse' that defines a complicated relationship within its own cultural and discursive specificity (Braidotti 1990, Ramazanoglu 1993). Consequently, social discourse and practices are framed as central to the constitution and reproduction of individual identity, with the public/private distinction being but one form the articulation of these discourses and practices may take.

An example of this is observed in the development proposal of 'women's empowerment'. As noted above, WID theorists approach the issue of empowerment of women by arguing for programs which enable individual women via education, training, and the creation of other opportunities, to enter the workforce alongside men. By contrast, GAD approaches have a different view of women's empowerment, arguing that women should not merely seek to take control of positions previously held by men, within existing relations of power, but rather they should seek to transform the very nature of those power relations which marginalized them in the first place (Beneria 2003). What distinguishes the GAD approach to empowerment is often described as facilitating the ability to make choices, while also providing the ability to shape what choices are on offer.[22] This means that development agencies [or mining companies] cannot claim to 'empower women' by enabling them to slot in to current roles and relationships, nor can empowerment be defined in terms of specific activities or end results

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[22] Nussbaum disagrees with the ability to choose as an expression of power and suggests, 'peoples' desires maybe shaped by their situation that their satisfaction is a poor guide to justice. Long established deprivation may lead to a 'realistically' low level of desires. People with a truncated psychology of this kind may have nearly all their desires satisfied in a way that masks their fundamental deprivation.' (Nussbaum and Glover 1995, p. 123). Nussbaum and economist Amayta Sen follow the capabilities approach and measure economic poverty and power through a person's capability. As such, they stress the need for equality in communities and at the grassroots level so that people can act on their capabilities.

(Beneria 2003). Instead, GAD theorists argue that empowerment involves a process whereby women, individually and collectively, freely analyze, develop and voice their own needs and interests, without them being pre-defined, or imposed from above.

From an ontological perspective, GAD considers the individual to be socially-constructed, made up of and continually affected by class, ethnicity, gender and historical precursors. Beneria observes that 'the notion of gender as a social construct, constantly shaped and reinstituted, implied a rejection of essentialism in feminist work …' (Beneria 2003, p. 40). Importantly, the GAD focus on social discourse as the site of the articulation of gender means that categories such as class and ethnicity are sites in which the ideology of patriarchy can be seen to be articulated. However, the feature that distinguishes GAD perspectives from other positions which employ discourse as a tool of analysis is that the GAD position maintains that of all the categories which construct an individual in social discourse, gender is the most fundamental. Tickner for example states, that:

> While the forms gender relations take across different cultures or classes may vary, they are almost always unequal; therefore, gender, in the structural sense, is a primary way of signifying relationships of power (Tickner 1997, p. 23).

That is, the fundamental ontological commitment of GAD – to the category of gender as basic to any social formation, privileges it as the basic social category in which to analyse oppression. For GAD theorists, gender is emphasised in analysis over other social relations (class, ethnicity and race), and in this sense both gender and the power relation of patriarchy, become universally applicable theoretical categories.

2.6 Women and Development (WAD)

2.6.1 The Situated Ontology

By comparison, Developing World Feminists, or Woman and Development (WAD) theorists, argue that a narrowly defined feminism, 'taking the eradication of gender discrimination as the route for ending women's oppression, is insufficient to redress the oppression of third world women' (Johnson-Odim 1991, p. 320). Johnson-Odim notes that for third world women, 'neither the arrival of the independence in the former colonies nor the legislation passed as a result of the civil rights movement was immediately successful in improving the quality of life

for the majority of women' (Jhonson-Odim 1991, p. 316). During the time when women in the West were achieving equal rights to men, women and men in the developing world were gaining independence, often after hundreds of years of colonial foreign domination. Consequently, the standard of living of both women and men in the developing world is lower in both economic and political terms, and consequently the concerns of and conditions faced by developing world women are very different to those which Western liberal feminists must confront. As such, the issue to address with regard to women's subordination or oppression in the Developing World is, 'not just equal opportunity between women and men, but the creation of opportunity itself' (Jhonson-Odim 1991, p. 320).

For this reason, WAD theorists are committed to the notion of the individual as determined by multiple social factors – the individual is thus not merely sexually-differentiated (as in WID), nor gendered as the outcome of a social process from the articulation of sexual difference (as in GAD). Instead WAD theorists view individuals as existing primarily within a community and as beings who come to understand themselves within and through the network of connections between themselves, and the individuals and groups that make up that community (Mohanty 1991; Apffel-Marglin & Marglin 1996). Therefore, like communitarian theorists, the being of the individual is considered to be *situated*, in that a multiplicity of social elements that constitute the 'giveness' of an individual's life and one's moral starting point (Mohanty 1991; Frazer & Lacey 1993; Eisenberg 2003). In this sense gender, ethnicity, class and/or culture are all factors intrinsic to a person and constitute how they identify within their society and exist within a tradition. Therefore, a person is a social, dialogical being that understands itself through its relations with others; the person is, in essence, situated within its society (Taylor 1995).

Consequently, WAD feminists criticize mainstream International Development Theory, which takes abstract individuals as its fundamental unit of analysis and which discounts the social institutions and relations of class, race and gender. Frazer points out that because of the liberal tradition inherent in modernization theory and WID, 'individuals cannot be seen as members of groups whose destinies and fortunes are determined by their group membership' as the individual cannot be defined by class, race or gender due to its ahistorical nature (Frazer & Lacey 1993). This is problematic for WAD theorists who align themselves with a

culturally situated ontology and consider the individual as an expression of its society. Zinn provides the example that one is not just a woman fighting oppression, but an African women fighting oppression, as such, one cannot understand the particular woman unless one understand the sense in which she is 'African', and further, one cannot understand the problem unless one understands the significance of 'Africa' itself (Zinn 1996).

Similarly, Mongolian feminists and ethnographers argue that many social roles in contemporary Mongolia, particularly gendered ones, have sprung from the differing tasks and practices that men and women traditionally perform under the conditions of herding (Bulag 1998; Baabar 2005; Terbish & Oidov 2005). For example, Jagchid and Hyer observed:

> Although the status of women is not equal to that of men within the clan-lineage system, it is comparatively high and free considering the situation of women in most other parts of Asia. A nomadic lifestyle is not conducive to the subordination of women in a tight network of social relationships (Jagchid & Hyer 1979, p. 251).

More so, it is commonly held by the Mongolian population that women, specifically South Gobi women (as will be discussed in Chapter Five), are empowered and enjoy considerably more parity with men, in comparison to women in neighbouring Kazakhstan and China.

As such, WAD theorists consider and this thesis questions, whether an international development agenda based on a political theory which does not provide an entry point for this ontological interpretation provides no basis for 'developing world' people to be recognized appropriately as a subject, voice or knowledge base, in the discourse concerning them, such that their understandings of what constitutes gender roles, representation, and forms of oppression can be appropriately registered by that discourse (Zinn 1996). Chapter Five engages with this hypothesis and examines the situated nature of gender relations in the South Gobi and the Mongolian context. The Chapter seeks to unpack elements of the ontological commitments located in the social discourse of hospitality and herder cosmological relations to ascertain if the Mongolian subject is situated or socially defined and how they operate and define power.

2.6.2 Power and Oppression

A primary concern of both WAD and GAD feminists is a focus on what constitutes 'oppression'. Although oppression has many meanings, its importance for this thesis is how it is utilised and defined in Mining and Development discourse. In particular, a form of 'oppression' is implied in the actions identified in SIAs, such as sexual discrimination and barriers to employment opportunities, in the sense that these are identified 'wrongs' that need to be addressed. The way in which WAD and GAD each treat the notion of oppression is important since it points to how and what facts are identified as instances of oppression – that is, as specific 'wrongs' that need to be ameliorated by development programs. The frame in which oppression is articulated determines to a large extent how these identifications are made and the remedies proposed for them. For example, in Chapter Eight I will explore SIAs to examine why lifting barriers to equal employment opportunity in mining companies (a traditionally Western and GAD solution found in development discourse) is privileged over Mongolian women's identification of racial and regional discrimination as issues requiring attention. In fact, in Chapter Nine I examine how the implicit liberal ontology underlining the SIA structure does not even recognise or provide an avenue for Mongolian women's issues to influence or direct the SIA process.

A significant contribution of WAD theorists, and an argument heavily supported by this research data, is the critique of the decontextualised, universal notions of the nature of 'oppression' which is based upon an autonomous notion of 'woman'. Mohanty for instance argues that the GAD representation of an individual woman as a:

> constituted, coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic or racial location, or contradictions implies a notion of gender or sexual difference or even patriarchy that can be applied universally and cross culturally (Mohanty 2003, p. 21).

In this quote, Mohanty argues that GAD articulates a universal notion of 'woman' and a universal type of oppression, 'inequality', which is grounded in a global patriarchy that is defined without respect to the specific cultural contexts within which these power relations are constituted.

That is, the idea of a universal gendered oppression can only rest upon a universal subject. Although the GAD ontology recognises that individuals are the product of various discourses, it identifies gender as the fundamental and determining category. So although it appears to take those other factors into account, it effectively 'assumes men and women are already constituted as sexual-political subjects prior to their entry into the arena of social relations' (Mohanty 2003, p. 26). By contrast, WAD theorists argue that many women in the 'developing world' perceive oppression as stemming from class and ethnicity before or alongside gender oppression. WAD theorists claim that while a theory of International Development based on a narrow platform of equality and patriarchal oppression – GAD concerns – may provide insight into the gendered nature of mainstream development theory and praxis, it is not rich enough to theorise many issues facing Developing World women (Harcourt 1994; Mohanty 2003).

Furthermore, Mohanty considers that the notion of a 'universal', global patriarchal order eventually renders women powerless because it essentially victimizes all women (Mohanty 2003). She states that for GAD theorists the:

> focus is not on uncovering the material and ideological specificities that constitute a particular group of women as 'powerless' in a particular context. It is, rather, on finding a variety of cases of powerless groups of women to prove the general point that women as a group are powerless (Mohanty 2003, p. 23).

According to Mohanty, GAD's universal definition of patriarchy creates a universal victim (women) and a universal oppressor (men) as a 'naturalized' sociological categorization and norm (Mohanty 2003). Drawing on data collected in the field, Chapter Five tests Mohanty's argument by introducing academic perceptions of gender and patriarchy in Mongolia and critically analysing them from the position of Mongolian feminist NGO actors. The chapter demonstrates that: i) the gendered ontology of GAD misrepresents the nature of the actual power relations in the field; and ii) demonstrates alternative insights into gendered power relations in Mongolia, as articulated by Mongolian women within their own cultural framework.

2.6.3   An alternative to universal patriarchy: Intersectional power relations

WAD theorists do not perceive power relations as binary opposites, oppressor and oppressed, as WID theorists assume (Flax 1990; Spivak 1999). By contrast to WID, but in a

manner similar to GAD, power relations are multiple and fluid structures that take into account a society of more complex social formations. This concept of power does not originate from unitary binary definitions such as man/woman, black/white, competition/cooperation, and individual/community but from multiple historical precursors that constitute a person's environment. Intersectional feminist theorists in particular hold that power is a fluid discourse constituted in the interaction between individuals and their social environment (Yuval-Davies 2006). Yuval-Davies in a statement against the 'essentialism' of power argues:

> … that each social division has a different ontological basis, which is irreducible to other social divisions … However, this does not make it less important to acknowledge that, in concrete experiences of oppression, being oppressed, for example, as 'a Black person' is always constructed and intermeshed in other social divisions (for example, gender, social class, disability status, sexuality, age, nationality, immigration status, geography, etc.) (Yuval-Davies 2006, p. 195).

As such, WAD theorists consider the social environment as contributing to forms of oppression. Gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality and class are all social constructs formed in specific societies which intersect with each other to locate women differently in particular power relations (Mohanty 1991; Yuval-Davies 2006).

While both GAD and WAD share a commitment to analyse 'the social' in terms of the discourses which construct individuals, the difference between them lies in the specific way in which GAD and WAD organise the basic ontological categories they use to structure their analysis of discourse. As we have seen above, while GAD theorists acknowledge the contribution of various social categories to the constitution of an individual, they ontologically privilege gender as the category which determines that individual in the last instance. WAD theorists, on the other hand, accord no such privilege to gender. They hold, instead, that the ontological categories employed in a discursive analysis must be dictated by the socio-cultural context under consideration. This means that, depending on the nature of the situation being analysed, categories such as ethnicity, class, and regionality can be as important as or even more important than gender in understanding the situation at hand. So whereas for GAD theorists the category gender *always* fundamentally determine the nature of

any discourse being analysed, for WAD theorists the significant categories for analysis are determined by the nature of the discourse(s) itself.

WAD acknowledges, therefore, the need for understanding the historicity behind the notions of race, gender and class, and in a given context these have to be taken into consideration when talking about power and domination in SIA or development initiatives. WAD's definition of power not only allocates women as active contributing participants in society but also eliminates any idea of a singular universal oppression or universal subject of woman (Yuval-Davies 2006). Johnson-Odim describes this approach to development in the 'third world' as a 'social justice that is inclusive of their entire communities, in which they are equal participants, and which addresses the racist, economic and imperialist exploitation, against which they struggle' (Jhonson-Odim 1991, p. 309). WAD's observations on power offered a very important contribution to feminism in development. The idea that women are active agents of power in society changes the perception of women as victims or powerless subjects to active participants/actors. This has the capacity to transform the development approaches from considering all women and 'developing world' people as powerless, to perceiving them as active participants who affect and disperse power relations within society (Young 1987). This central critical position of WAD concerning the cultural embeddedness of gender is one which has yet to be fully applied within the field of Gender and Mining, though some work in this direction has already appeared (Mahy 2011; O'Faircheallaigh 2011; Parmenter 2011). The aim of this thesis is to further contribute to these theories in the context of Mining and Development in Mongolia.

2.7   Conclusion

The chapter began by structuring a feminist theoretical lens to the ontological quandary I will argue, exists in Mining and Development. As an emerging field, Mining and Development draws upon the traditions of International Development Theory and Corporate Social Responsibility, and engages seriously with the discourse of Social Impact Assessment. These theoretical fields contain their own language, morals, meanings and values founded on an ontological supposition. This thesis will seek to unpack the meanings in these traditions and highlight their impacts on the broader discourse of Mining and Development in Mongolia.

Principally, both this chapter and the thesis draw on the feminist engagements with mainstream development discourse and Gender and Mining. Following the lack of theoretical debate in Gender and Mining, this chapter explored how development theory has influenced Gender and Mining. I explained that WID theorists are committed to a notion of 'gender' which allows members of a community to be identified as sexually-differentiated subjects, while GAD theorists are interested in understanding the social nature of sexual-differentiation, and so construe 'gender' as the discursive articulation of sexual difference (Boserup 1970; Beneria & Sen 1981). The chapter argues that both these sets of theorists are thus committed to some notion of 'woman' or 'gender' as a category which can be isolated from the complexity of the socio-cultural field in such a way that it does not interfere with the applicability of that theory itself. In other words, both WID and GAD theories are ontologically committed to a notion of 'gender' that can be universally prioritised over other theoretical categories in the construction of social theory. As a result, this chapter labelled such theories as 'gender-grounded' theories. WAD, on the other hand, holds that 'gender' cannot be separated in this way from other social categories when theorising a social situation. Instead WAD theorists insist that 'gender' must be taken alongside other social categories ('class' or 'ethnicity' for example) in such a way that each category overlaps or intersects with the other. Thus for WAD theorists no single category has ontological precedence over any other, with all being co-situated in the social-cultural field, and in this sense this thesis characterises WAD as a 'situated' theory.[23]

As a result, I argue that the complex field of feminist engagements with mainstream International Development discourse theory is divided into two broad approaches. Firstly, those feminisms committed to privileging the category of woman/gender in the analysis of developing contexts, feminisms we position under the title 'gender-based' approaches, and which I locate in WID and GAD approaches. Secondly, there are those committed to the situated ontology in the social-cultural context of the community in question, which we label

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[23] This difference in approach is readily observable in the programs which each group recommends. So, for example, gender-grounded theorists focus on programs that aim at ensuring 'equality', that is, public sphere formal parity between men and women ('gendered subjects'). Embedded theorists on the other hand hold that programs must address not only formal political equality, but also the gender, class and ethnicity at work in the formation of the subject, and which thus determine their capacity to act.

the 'situated-approaches', an example of which is the WAD approach. This thesis will explore the influence of these two approaches to understanding the development trajectory of mine-affected communities. Moreover it will argue that a stronger engagement in WAD theoretical approaches can improve understanding of social relations, and Mining and Development outcomes in Mongolia.

Chapter 3 – Methodology and Field Sites

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Two outlined the general division between two different types of feminist engagements with International Development Theory. These are described in terms of those feminist positions that recognise the ontological commitments of their own position and subsequent ways in which those commitments frame their engagements with development theory, and those feminisms which are not methodologically committed to such a recognition. It was shown in the last chapter that Western liberal feminisms and their outgrowths, WID and GAD, belong to the latter category. By contrast, post-colonial theorists and feminists incorporated under the WAD umbrella were seen to argue for the incorporation of self-reflexivity within both theory and praxis, on the grounds that such an attention to the underlying premises which frame development episteme allows ethnocentric or patriarchal elements within it to be confronted and addressed (Spivak 1999; Warnke 2003; Kapoor 2004).

Chapter Three now turns to incorporating the insights of WAD into the methodology used to conduct field work for this thesis. The discussion of methodology will also outline the interpretative strategies that frame the analyses employed in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. In essence, the methodology employed for this thesis is grounded in the use of self-reflexivity and the role of interpretation as an essential component in any attempt at representing and researching individuals and groups of people. As such, consideration is first given to my own background and experiences, since these form the interpretive horizon within which my interpretations of the words of my informants and conditions in the various field sites are articulated. It is also important to note that this background has led me to include amongst the groups included in the field work ethnography, the national and multi-national mining companies who are engaged with the communities at the field sites I studied. In general, ethnographies do not include companies in this way, so an explanation of their inclusion in the methodology is explained. Finally, the particular ethnographic methods that were employed to collect data from the various actors will be described.

Following this, the chapter turns to a description of the primary areas under research, namely, the field sites or the 'field of sociality' under examination. These sites are located in two regions. Firstly, the capital of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar - the central business and governing hub of the country at which the higher-levels of corporate activity take place - is therefore an important context of the company ethnographic component. Secondly, I traverse to the South Gobi region, an area being transformed by the rapid growth of mining and which locates the communities and companies examined in this thesis. Specifically, I describe two communities affected by large scale mining and the adjoining companies operating on these lands. These three sites - the capital Ulaanbaatar and the South Gobi communities of Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii and their accompanying mining operations - were the sites in which data were collected and which are the central points of reference throughout the remainder of this thesis.

3.2   Mongolian Cultural Maxims

The republic of Mongolia is landlocked between Russia in the north and China in the south; it is populated by just over 2.9 million people living within the state borders (Division 2009). Renowned Mongolian historian Baabar argues that the strength and the commitment of Mongolians to their Mongolian culture sustains the nation in the face of these two strong neighbours (Baabar 2005). As discussed below, the primary social characteristics and socio-political events that have determined this situation are the traditional Mongolian livelihood of animal husbandry (herding), the socialist period (1924-1992), and the transition to democracy period, which is ongoing.

Historically, social conditions in Mongolia were determined by the economic relationships arising from animal husbandry or herding.[24] Contemporary Mongolia is strongly influenced by this long and rich herding heritage and ethnographers recognise the important role of herding lifestyles in shaping present-day cultural identities (Nalini & Oidov 2001; Tumursukh 2001).

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[24] There has been a recent argument made by Caroline Upton concerning the use of the term 'Nomad', particularly its association with a 'pre-modern' existence which has connotations of an 'uncivilised' or 'backward' cultural state. Instead of 'nomad' I will use the terms 'herder' and 'trans-humanance' to describe the form of lifestyle associated with traditional animal husbandry in Mongolia.

One third of the country still lives nomadically and Baabar suggests that regardless of their actual participation in animal husbandry and/or transhumance, or their employment in the relatively few urban centres, an overwhelming majority of the Mongolian people identify deeply with the nomadic heritage that is historically associated with the nation to which they belong (Baabar 2005).

The general elements of herding culture are closely associated with the economic tasks of herding, hunting, and self-sufficient agricultural production which produce both food and wealth for the basic family unit. A nomadic family usually moves with the fodder and weather, travelling within a 5-250 kilometre radius (Fernandez-Gimenez 1999; Addison, Friedel et al. 2012). Neighbouring [herder] families live approximately 3-10 km apart from each other depending on the region and availability of pasture.

Accompanying the cultural heritage of herding is the influence and legacy of socialism within Mongolia. Mongolia's seventy-year relationship with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) encompassed both positive and negative economic and social developments, coupled with cultural and political repression (Rossabi 2005). An ambivalence towards, but recognition of the continuing importance of the Soviet legacy on contemporary Mongolian society is both acknowledged by academics and commonly held by Mongolians (Petrov 1970; Perdue 1998; Fernandez-Gimenez 2001; Rossabi 2005).

The legacies of the Soviet Era and the ongoing influence of Russian culture are still strongly evident in Mongolian society (Kaplonski 2004). Russian is the second most spoken language, many of the public services structures and legislative procedures replicate Russian systems, the Cyrillic alphabet has replaced the Mongolian Script, and much state infrastructure and many large industries are jointly owned by Russian companies (Rossabi 2005). For example, laws passed during Soviet times still govern what jobs women and men can legally do within the mining industry – under these laws, women are forbidden to drive haulage trucks over a certain tonnage and are not allowed to work underground (Khan, Brink et al. 2013). Russia also owns large parts of Mongolian national infrastructure. For example, 51% of Mongolia's entire railway infrastructure is owned by Russia and the country is dependent on both Russia and China for its fuel and energy sources. It should be noted that although Russia maintains heavy levels of investment in the Mongolian economy, the political influence it enjoyed during

the bi-polar relations of the Cold War have been greatly lessened by the emergence of China and the growth of foreign interests in Mongolia, a fact which is attributable to foreign investment in mining (Narangoa 2011). Nevertheless, the Soviet era in Mongolia retains some influence over the current cultural, political and economic climate, and informs decisions made by the Mongolian governing class that affect both the internal social, political and economic positions of its people.

Mongolia's transition to democracy was accompanied by both economic upheaval and the emergence of individual and social freedoms. Although there have been many positive outcomes from Mongolia's transition to democracy, it has been coupled with a decay in public services, a rise in unemployment and increased poverty. Currently one third of the country still live below the poverty line, public infrastructure remains sub-standard and corruption is endemic across most sectors of society (United Nations 2006; Mendsaikhan, Gerelt-Od et al. 2010).

In 2001, when I first went to Mongolia, there was very little apparent material wealth or Western cultural presence. In 2008, the situation had changed significantly. For example, in 2001 in the capital Ulaanbaatar, the central Sukhbaatar Square was made from black tar with a clay figure of the independence hero Sukhbaatar in front of a largely unimposing parliament house. By 2006 the square had been re-tiled with marble; the parliament building had been shrouded in glass and topped with steeples in the shape of gers, while in front of it three copper statues of Chinggis Khan and his two sons had been erected. Other signs of material wealth could also be seen, such as the presence of numerous Hummers on the roads, the opening of the Louis Vuitton store and the newly built five star luxury hotels within the CBD. All were symptoms of increased wealth and large scale investment in the capital, largely attributable to the mining boom.

In contrast, the ger districts, both in Ulaanbaatar and other rural centres, are recognized both by ger-district residents and professionals as being lower socio-economic areas that lack access to basic human services (Center for Human Rights and Development 2006; Lawrence 2009; United Nations Development Programme 2011). These districts are made up of wooden

fences mainly containing Mongolian gers and often contain a basic small hut or *Bashing* [25] (Chinbat 2004)'. Approximately 60% of Ulaanbaatar's population lives in such ger districts, and in rural centres they house the majority of the population. Such districts can be observed in any of the major towns throughout Mongolia, including those in the South Gobi. In all cases, such ger districts lack basic infrastructure including access to centralized heating, running water, sewerage systems and garbage collection, and have minimal access to electricity (Centre for Human Rights and Development 2006). Most of the accesses to these areas are along unplanned and unpaved roads.

The poverty of such urban areas is in contrast to the wealth generated by the rapidly increasing mining sector, a fact which is reflected in economic figures which identify Mongolia as the second fastest growing economy in the world. However, poverty indicators in urban centers have only marginally decreased and have in fact increased in rural settings since the onset of the minerals boom (United Nations Development Programme 2011; McGrath, et al. 2012). Poverty indicators, marking the percentage of the population living below the poverty line, vary between development organisations, fluctuating from approximately 25% to 36% in urban Ulaanbaatar, to between 43% and 52% of the rural population (United Nations Development Programme 2011). What is more, international development experts constantly comment on the widening gap between the rich and the poor:

> While some parts of the country are being transformed, poverty remains very high and is becoming entrenched not only in rural areas but also in urban centres as the income gap widens and inequality increases (United Nations Development Programme 2012).

There are clear questions as to whether the economic growth associated with mining is reaching the majority of the population or merely benefits the small political elite. This brief background provides a basic understanding of the social, economic and political aspects that

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[25] Buildings are relatively new structure of Chinese style architecture The word Bashing came either from Chinese 'Pai-hsing' meaning commoner, or from Mongolian where the term 'Baishing has a connotation of condescension, which indicates the early Mongolian attitude toward the alien innovation' (Chinbat 2004)

have influenced Mongolian thick vocabulary, which contributes to their ontological commitments observed in following chapters.

Image 3: Ulaanbaatar CBD and surrounding ger Districts.

Source: http://so.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ulanbator-Panorama.jpg

3.3   Ontology and Method

My previous experience living and working in Mongolia has contributed to the formation of my knowledge and has influenced and directed the methodology of this research. My first engagement with Mongolia was in the summer of 2001, when I worked for three months alongside a development organization called *The Christina Noble Children's Foundation*. My first arrival in Mongolia occurred just over ten years after the collapse of socialism, and the structures and culture of that period were still apparent. The majority of my work was conducted in the countryside among herders and in small provincial towns between Lake Khovsgol in the north and the capital Ulaanbaatar in the centre of Mongolia. During this time I was exposed to many of the northern rural areas, which provided insight into the particularities of those regions, and helped me to later understand their comparative differences from the South Gobi arid regions (explored in Chapter Six). These insights

became useful as 'regionality' began to emerge as a determining factor with regard to social roles and relations in the two mine-affected communities which are the subject of this thesis.

In 2006 I returned to Mongolia for a year as an AusAID funded volunteer, working with the *Gender Centre for Sustainable Development* (a locally founded and operated NGO) as a project development officer. I worked alongside the Gender Centre for Sustainable Development (GCSD) managing gender and community development projects, specifically in the areas of education, political reform, family health, and designing poverty-alleviation programs. My appointment with GCSD was invaluable in building my knowledge of the development needs of Mongolian people in both urban and rural settings across different socio-economic levels. Likewise, I developed a basic understanding of the Mongolian language and Mongolian history, and commonly practised rituals and customs. Finally, and very importantly for the rationale behind this research, I observed the different Mongolian and Western (in the form of Western development agencies) interpretations of gendered relations and the different approaches to development solutions which issued from each of these perspectives.

During this year in Mongolia, it became apparent to me that the development industry exhibited elements of Western hegemonic discourses, as described and critiqued by post-development and feminist post-colonial theorists (Escobar 1995; Kapoor 2008). While working for GCSD, I observed the conditions and pre-prescribed criteria that many INGOs and government aid agencies required GSCD and other local bodies to fulfil in order to obtain funding approval for their development programs. In many cases it was necessary to alter the project from the direct requirements of the designed development proposal, as researched by employees with expertise and many years working alongside the community, to fit the funding bodies' objectives – in essence the international funding body determined the direction and/or outcome of the development project instead of the local NGOs who were ostensibly better positioned to do so. This, as Arturo Escobar observes, was a case of the international development industry having 'a profound effect on the Third World: social relations, ways of thinking, visions of the future are all indelibly marked and shaped by this ubiquitous operator' (Escobar 1992, p. 25). That is, in this instance external international agencies determine the

allocation of 'development money' and therefore direct the development trajectory of Mongolians.

While working in Mongolia, I witnessed the rapid and emerging mining boom and I became particularly curious as to how the mining industry would also affect the nation's development path. As such, I became particularly interested in the constructions of knowledge and the way in which power was exercised, particularly within organizations and corporations (mining companies and international financial lenders), who are at the financial centre of the Mining and Development boom. As Eyben states:

> Anthropologists committed to social purpose can take advantage of the ethnographic method to explore the relationship between ideas and organisations and, with this knowledge, help achieve the outcomes they desire (Eyben 2000, p. 10).

Therefore, I became interested in researching the operating environment and the internal discourses which motivated the development outcomes of mining companies. With the aim of better informing and explaining the Mining and Development discourse in Mongolia.

I initially approached several mining companies with the research proposal of conducting an internal and external ethnography focused on Gender and Development. Ballard and Banks assert that:

> one of the principal reasons for the enduring opacity of mining corporations is their notorious reluctance to expose themselves directly to ethnographic scrutiny' (Ballard & Banks 2003, p. 290).

However, by contrast, I found that each of the three companies I approached – BHP Billiton Pty Ltd (BHPB), Ivanhoe Mines Mongolia Inc (IMMI), Energy Resources Ltd (ER) – were receptive to the aims of my research.[26] I began my research with BHPB, who contributed

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[26] It should be noted that the both Western-owned companies that were approached – BHPB and IMMI – insisted that there be a reciprocal business-case for the research. However Energy Resources, a Mongolian-owned company, acknowledged the possible contribution of the research to sustainable development in Mongolia and were explicitly motivated by these reasons.

some in-kind support towards the field expenses and a 'top-up' fund to my scholarship. The research agreement with BHPB was specifically framed to make it clear that the research was to be conducted independently of the company's interests and it was stipulated that the company would have no control over the intellectual property or the written materials related to the study. To further avoid any issue or conflict of interest, I arranged a long-term visa with the World Bank, thereby securing additional independence from BHPB. Being associated with the World Bank also provided access to the whole spectrum of International NGOs (INGOs) local NGOs and community stakeholders active in the extractives sector.

3.4   WAD and Method

It was this background that I took into my analysis of the Gender and Mining literature, and which is traced in Chapter Two. That chapter argued that unpacking the thick vocabulary of both the company and the community is of paramount importance to understanding the meanings associated with gender, development, change and sustainability in Mongolia. For instance, Caroline Humphrey explains that the culturally specific way in which notions of 'ethics' and 'morality' are articulated constitute what could be termed a 'thick vocabulary' (MacIntyre 1985; Humphrey 1997). A similar focus on the mining company and its discourse and activities is, however, not widely employed. Indeed most theorists tend to take mining companies at face value, as actors directed and determined by a set of 'thin' moral principles, outlined by global and international standards, and they restrict their analyses of those companies and their activities, to those official documents.

As Ballard and Banks emphasize, there has been a focus in the anthropological literature on the effect of large-scale mining projects upon communities, at the expense of a study of the corporations. They observe that a '[c]loser attention to the internal structure and politics of mining corporations has the potential to offer rich insight into the anthropology of multinational capital and its global processes and local entanglements more generally' (Ballard & Banks 2003, p. 290-291). As a result, I felt my nascent exposure to Mongolian culture placed me in a position to conduct research in the community on their perceptions of changes brought on by mining and to compile a record of their interpretation of development. I wanted to then

compare this with the company's perception of change and development. The broader goal was to document the discourse of Mining and Development in Mongolia with the aim of identifying areas of benefit and disadvantage in the company-community relationship. Therefore, I conducted a two pronged ethnographic research process – one directed at the community and one directed at the mining company.

The research undertaken for this thesis is an attempt to extend this approach to consider the thick vocabulary which informs the ontologies of the mining-company discourse and practice (and on the basis of which its 'thin vocabulary' is employed) in order to deepen the understanding of both these facets in the context of company involvement in community development. This research therefore extends across the moral and intellectual culture of the international mining company and the Mongolian community, each of which are comprehensible in terms of different thick vocabularies in one 'field of sociality'.

Given this methodological aim, and in light of the theoretical discussion of the previous chapter, WAD emerges as the theoretical position informing the methodology of this thesis as a whole. Kapoor provides an example of the clear link between the methodological aim of reading and interpreting thick vocabulary, and a post-colonial interpretation of the culture of development:

> What this postcolonial perspective enables us to do is to view culture, not as something separate and 'out there', whose outlines can be precisely and objectively determined from afar ..., but rather as an immediate and inescapable lens or horizon. Its contours may well be shifting and imprecise, but we cannot view, interpret, or make our world without it. Culture tints, filters, gives perspective; yet, privileging one colour means excluding others; filtering in also means filtering out. The implication for development policy ... is that, far from being neutral or objective tools, policies are always cultural artefacts. They emerge from a time and place, and are framed according to institutionally generated narratives and constrictions (Kapoor 2008, p. 21).

Kapoor argues that we cannot 'view, interpret or make our world' without our own cultural lens shaping our decisions. Mining companies, international financial lenders, NGOs and Mongolian communities all have their own traditions, directed by their own moral, intellectual

and cultural backgrounds that contribute to their development perspective. WAD theorists argue that an adequate understanding of the traditions and associated social norms that govern society makes available future possibilities of reciprocal change and recognition between actors across differing traditions. For example, if the company understands the moral and intellectual culture of a community (or, vice versa) negotiation of development outcomes would be potentially more cohesive.

There are four further points to note from the extract from Kapoor. Firstly, the idea that focusing on one narrative obscures one's view and ability to interpret meaning implicitly supports Ballard and Bank's argument that corporations require analysis as cultural entities, and so mirrors the work that anthropologists have traditionally undertaken with respect to communities. Secondly, Kapoor directs attention to the misconception of the neutrality of 'thin' policies and describes them as 'cultural artefacts', therefore questioning the ability of universal CSR policies and standards to transcend different cultures. Thirdly, Kapoor points to the ever-present cultural 'filters' which form the lens through which a researcher views another culture (see below). Finally, Kapoor cautions against privileging one cultural perspective over another.

In terms of conducting this research, I attempted to acknowledge as far as possible my own preconceptions, and the way in which they inform the collection and interpretation of data. As Spivak argues, the representations made by researchers of marginalized peoples are 'intimately linked to our positioning (socioeconomic, gendered, cultural, geographic, historical, and institutional)' (Spivak quoted in Kapoor 2004). I would also add that our positioning contributes to our interpretations and representations of the perceived 'powerful' and non-marginalised groups. That is, in a cross-cultural working environment we bring our own values and power relations to a particular cultural setting, which warrants attention when researching across cultures.

Thus it is of paramount importance for the researcher engaged in cross-cultural work to acknowledge as clearly as possible the background and assumptions that inform their work. In methodological terms this is a commitment to locate the researcher, as a collector and interpreter of data, within the discursive frameworks that he/she brings to bear in identifying and structuring the data collected, and in constructing an interpretation of that data. The aim

is to bring into focus not just the data and their interpretation, but also the interpretative process in which they are both articulated and signify, and to subject that process itself to analysis. The aim of foregrounding the researcher's position as collector-interpreter in this way is to draw attention to the premises structuring the researcher-informant dialogue in the individual interviews in which such a dialogue is analysed and interpreted. It is ultimately these premises, what this thesis calls the 'ontological commitments', and which ground the statements of both researcher and informant in a thick vocabulary, that the methodology seeks to make manifest.

Thus with regard to my own position as a researcher in dialogue with various informants, during my data collection I constantly posed to myself questions such as the following: How much can I, as a white, middle class, university-educated woman understand the relationship a herder woman has with her land, her herd, her husband and her environment? Or, how can I completely understand the pressures of a male mine manager whom has been on site for five weeks, has a multi-million dollar deadline to make and family pressures in another country? Therefore, as a Western researcher in a cross-cultural setting I am particularly cautious of the implicit assumptions that exist in the questions, topics and discourse of my enquiry – the factors that comprise the 'thick vocabulary' in which I am situated. Likewise, I apply this caution when interviewing other researchers, company professionals and consultants, since 'reflexivity is equally important for organizations...' as for individuals (Eyben 2000, p. 11). This methodological reflexivity is intended to embody the insights of the situated ontological approach that respects, elicits and analyses the changing thick vocabularies of these different cultural traditions.

3.5   Ethnographic Techniques

In terms of specific techniques, the methodology for this research involved the use of various ethnographic techniques to collect data from the social context. Hammersely and Atkinson argue that ethnography positions

> [t]he ethnographer... overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking 37 questions; in fact collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues with which he or she is concerned (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983, p. 2).

A prominent technique used to gather data from both the company and community was the method of participation in the setting. Within the community this involved sharing hospitality with families, collecting water and dung, milking animals, shopping for and cooking food, minding children, and occasionally attending significant events such as child naming ceremonies, weddings, festivals and dances. In relation to mining companies this participation in the setting involved attending safety inductions, observing daily routines, weekly meetings, lunches, and after-work socialisation. I also attended a 'team-building' trip for three days with the IMMI staff and a field-trip and community-liaison event hosted by Energy Resources staff.

Coupled with information gathered participating in the setting, I also conducted numerous semi-structured in-depth interviews. In total I recorded 112 interviews and these were then translated by Mongolian native speakers into English. *Table 1: List of semi-structured and recorded interviews* outlines the categories and number of informants I spoke to in both categories. In the three mining-companies with whom I conducted research, the following groups were interviewed: directors and managers from all related departments (environmental, business-development, community relations, etc.); workers within these departments (both at the corporate office and at the mine site); contract workers to the company (drillers, medics, and consultants); service workers (cleaners, kitchen staff and groundsmen); and ex-employees. With regard to interviews conducted within the community, the following groups were interviewed: families; single-headed families; retirees; students; herders; business men; transitional workers; new immigrants; and truck drivers. Finally, from the civil society and International Lenders group the following were interviewed: managers; case workers; program managers and directors from both INGOs and NGOs; consultants; activists; and advisors. It is important to note that many other unstructured, off-record and unrecorded observations and meetings were held in the field and narratives from these interactions have been used in this thesis.

Informant groups	Number of semi-structured and recorded interviews	
	Khanbogd	Tsogtsetsii/Bayan Ovoo
Community members	26	29
Government representatives	6	9
	Nationwide	
Company representative	27	
Civil Society Organisations	7	
International Lenders	8	
Total	112	

Table 1: List of semi-structured and recorded interviews

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) also supplied me with transcripts of focus-groups conducted with women in different areas of the South Gobi. Erin Richardson, a master's student studying Gender and Nationalism at the University of Melbourne, also provided transcripts of interviews she conducted with women in Ulaanbaatar (Richardson 2009). Most of my findings do not use data from either of these two sources, however the information provides further context, general understandings and broader knowledge applied to the thesis.

The interviewing technique employed in the 112 semi-structured and off record interviews required a commitment to jettison the illusion that there is a neutral space in which all just "speak" and "understand" each other as "equals" as is presupposed by the liberal ontological commitment (Kapoor 2004). Instead I attempted to find a way to facilitate narrative and difference on its own terms – i.e. to give informants maximum scope to tell their story in their own way, accepting that in this process, they are already taking account of their interests, and adjusting what they say to the context in which they are saying it.

An instance of this was observed when going into the field - I was aware that in the Mongolian language there is no direct word for 'community' or 'gender', in fact when describing the social

term 'gender', Mongolians use the English word. In this context, eminent Mongolist, Caroline Humphrey, argues that social meanings, morals and maxims are derived and orchestrated to the particular Mongolian social contexts in which they are used. My interviewing technique sought to ensure that I did not import such Western terms and their associated culturally-specific meanings uncritically into the interviewing process (Humphrey 1997). So instead of framing questions specifically in terms of 'gender', or the traditionally Western associated feminist issues, I focused on the more general issue of 'change', allowing the informants to define and articulate the issues in terms that were important to them. The aim of this technique was to ensure as far as possible that the concepts and categories of 'gender', 'development' and 'change' that were used in the interviews, were governed by the interviewees themselves. Chapter Nine will demonstrate why this technique is important, in that it allowed me to observe that company employee responses to terms in the questions differed across social and cultural frames – Mongolian and expatriate. This observation further sheds light on the embedded nature of language and meaning and the recognition of the importance of this difference in negotiating development agendas.

Furthermore, drawing on the issue of impacts and change, I employed a process that contained adaptive questions. Avoiding loaded questions, I did not immediately ask 'what are the impacts of mining?' but rather 'what have been the significant changes in the area in the last X years?' where X would depend on the age of the interviewee.[27] The interview usually started with an inquiry into life in the town after socialism and continued by inquiring what had changed in the last ten years. The date of ten years was used as it extended beyond the starting point of both mine sites and so allowed for association of change and its connection to mining without determining it. I was told by many people that 'there have been no changes in the last ten years, but many things have changed in the last five' – which coincided with the arrival of mining. I would then ask 'what has happened in the last five years that has caused changes?' and many people replied: 'mining, of course'. After receiving responses from both

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[27] I understand that it could be argued that I am 'pre-supposing' change and simply replacing one category with another. However to avoid getting entrapped in semantics, as the thesis is focused on observing the introduction of mining on Mongolian communities, when the idea that something is introduced or new carries with it changes to the norm, I felt this term was acceptable and less loaded then 'impacts' which often carries with it negative and abrupt connotations.

Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii communities which demonstrated mining as a source of change, I then began to frame my questions in terms of what changes had been caused directly by mining. Finally, when a theme or specific issue was established I would ask more probing questions to explore the details and nuances of the issue. Therefore, as this example shows, it is the interviewees that set the agenda that determines the direction of further questions and therefore the issues which are relevant to them (Ragin & Amoroso 2011).

Alongside this interviewing technique, I employed the observation method to distinguish between the responses of men and women and to watch the gendered dynamics within a certain setting (Gupta & Ferguson 1997). Occasionally when sensitive issues arose, it became apparent that discussions were best held privately with women, without men present. Another important observation that contributed to my technique while interviewing was noting that men and women responded differently to the same questions (Reinharz & Davidman 1992). I noticed that often when asked if any changes had happened in the community, the men would smile and say that 'everything was fine', which women later explained was to ensure no 'loss of face'. The women would speak more freely of the negative consequences and began to discuss the increase of dust, the loss of pasture and other impacts quite eagerly. As a senior female Mongolian mine worker explained to me:

> Woman will answer more deeply about health and the pasture impacts … they are more concerned about the livestock, children's health and education and also their children and the married children … woman are concerned about the inter-generations.

In social settings, it was only after a woman had introduced these topics that both men and women began to discuss the issues openly and in depth. Although, the lack of male disclosure represented a power relation between the men and women with regard to such issues, I did not explore this deeply as it was not the focus of the research.[28]

3.6   Field sites

The methodology described above was applied to the field of sociality, which constitutes various research sites across Mongolia. These can be grouped into two: the Mongolian

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[28] To see discussions relevant to this, Mette High (2008) has explored power relations and gender roles in much detail in the North and centre of Mongolia.

capital, and the country's largest urban centre, Ulaanbaatar, and at two sites in the South Gobi, each of which comprises a community and an associated mine-site. Ulaanbaatar and the mine-sites are the locales in which the company ethnography was pursued, while the two South Gobi communities represent the sources of the community ethnography. We begin our discussion with a description of the Mongolian capital and an outline of the corporate culture which it supports.

3.6.1 Ulaanbaatar: The Corporate Hub

Most of the international development and business transactions in Mongolia are conducted in Ulaanbaatar. Over half of the population of the Republic of Mongolia lives in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, and the remainder in the other 21 aimags.[29] The once small capital of Mongolia was planned to accommodate 120,000 people, however, the city rapidly developed during the socialist period, and since the transition to democracy it has grown further (Chinbat 2004). Ulaanbaatar is the central governing hub of the entire country and now supports a population of 1,112,300 (Mendsaikhan, et al. 2010).

The transitioning nation of Mongolia is still predominantly state-centralized; as such the major governing and regulatory bodies, universities, specialist hospitals, cultural palaces, civil society organizations and business centres are based in Ulaanbaatar (Rossabi 2005). Mongolia has witnessed a rapidly growing minerals economy and increased foreign interest in its affairs. In 2008 there were 4,706 valid mineral licenses in Mongolia and all the large mining companies have offices in the Ulaanbaatar CBD. Multi-national mining companies, including the companies under research (Ivanhoe Mines Mongolia Inc, Rio Tinto Ltd and BHP Billiton), as well as the contracting companies that service them, are based in Ulaanbaatar. There are also a growing number of Mongolian mining companies, namely, the privately owned Energy Resources Ltd and state owned Erdenes Tawan Tolgoi LLC, both of which are also involved in this research. Likewise, many of the large international development banks are located in various buildings, including The World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Many of these banks are often in competition, though also sometimes

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[29] An aimag is a provincial governing area, much like a smaller version of an Australian State.

in collaboration, with each other to establish loans with mining companies or governments for resource or human development. Importantly, these organisations also set the community development standards which are used to regulate company behaviour.

There is growing engagement in responsible mining by civil society, however to date this sector still has very little power in the actual negotiation process. Primarily, the research was engaged with The Asia Foundation (TAF), a donor agency funded by the U.S. government which employs a multi-stakeholder approach to responsible mining from a liberal economic perspective. The Responsible Mining Initiative (RMI) is a recent organisation set-up by TAF with the aim of facilitating engagement and capacity building of government, industry and civil society. I had the opportunity to assist in and observe professional development training for community relations staff from a mix of mining companies, facilitated by my supervisor. This workshop provided insight into different approaches and understanding of community relations and community development that informs the findings in later chapters.

I was also engaged with two locally run gendered-based organisations: The Gender Centre for Sustainable Development (GCSD), who are the leading gender and development researchers in Mongolia and The National Centre Against Violence (NCAV), whose central concerns are gender-based violence and sex trafficking. Finally, I also interviewed workers from The Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD) which is a strong legal rights based organisation that has relatively high involvement in analysing and critiquing mining developments, including the OT project proposals considered in this thesis. Weekly meetings were arranged with the different interest groups to discuss issues arising in responsible mining, development issues and gender concerns. All of these organisations are based out of Ulaanbaatar and NCAV has outreach centres in regional centres including the South Gobi.

Ulaanbaatar was also where my field work began. I arrived in Mongolia to conduct the fieldwork in January 2009 and departed in December 2009. I spent the first five months within the various corporate settings of several mining companies, the World Bank and civil society organisations in Ulaanbaatar. The following five to six months were spent collecting data in the mine-affected communities of the South Gobi (to be discussed in the following chapter). Phase one of my research was based in Ulaanbaatar in the BHPB and World Bank offices. During this time I observed and engaged with mining companies. I also reviewed the

corporate documentation related to community development and participated in 'responsible mining' workshops and training events (BHPB 2004; World Bank 2006; BHPB 2007; BHPB 2008; World Bank 2009(a); World Bank 2009(b); World Bank 2009(c)). Throughout this phase I observed the internal relationships between corporate, in-country, and site employees, as well as the dynamics between male-female, expatriate and Mongolian employees.

BHPB had several explorations ongoing in Mongolia; however my research was focused on the company's engagement with the community of Tsogttsetsii, which neighbours[30] a large coal deposit in the South Gobi called Tawan Tolgoi. My initial research reviewed the Social Baseline, the Social Impact Assessment (SIA), and involved a scoping mission to the site. However, due to commercial reasons and corporate restructuring, the BHPB Mongolian office closed, and its interests in the deposit ceased.

BHPB's departure from Mongolia threatened the continuation of the research project and the completion of this thesis. To address this, since I had gathered a great deal of data on the South Gobi community of Tsogttsetsii, while at BHPB I approached Energy Resources Ltd, a Mongolian-owned mining company operating in the area to ensure that I could continue to collect data to inform the thesis from this site. Further, I approached the venture between Anglo-operated Rio Tinto Pty Ltd and Canadian based Ivanhoe Mines Inc who jointly operate a company called Ivanhoe Mines Mongolia Inc (IMMI).[31] IMMI have a large copper-gold mine also operating in the South Gobi seventy kilometres south of Tsogttsetsii. IMMI agreed to support my study and so I acquired a new field site - the mining project at Oyu Tolgoi (OT) and its neighbouring community of Khanbogd. In summary, this thesis has one 'field of sociality' that has many actors which inform the research. There are two mining companies

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[30] I use the term neighbour to describe the spatial positioning of the mine and the community – as sharing a boundary. I am aware of the connotations that 'neighbour' carries in terms of implying a friendly, reciprocal or close relationship. However, I employ 'neighbour' in a purely spatial sense, and not to suggest any particular quality of familiarity or intimacy to the relationship between the mine and community

[31] The OT exploration license was originally owned by BHP Billiton (BHPB), however it was bought by Ivanhoe mines in May 2000. The mine currently is 34% owned by the Mongolian government who are in a joint venture with Rio Tinto Ltd, the primary stakeholder, and who thus have complete management over the site. The Joint Venture has now changed names and is called Turquoise Hill Resources, however at the time of research it was known as IMMI and the supporting company documents reflect this acronym. Therefore I will use IMMI to avoid confusion.

and two mining-impacted communities within the South Gobi; primarily I draw my research from the community of Khanbogd and the mine project at OT, and secondarily from the community of Tsogttsetsii and the mine project of UHG, both projects being ultimately run from corporate offices in Ulaanbaatar and internationally.

3.6.2 The South Gobi

Mongolia is geographically diverse. To the north of Ulaanbaatar is the 'Khangai' region which refers to an area which has rounded, as opposed to craggy, mountains. To the south of Ulaanbaatar is the Gobi area (see Map 1). The majority of the large scale minerals development is happening in one particular aimag in Mongolia – the Omongobi (South Gobi) aimag.[32] These two locations support similar but varied climatic and natural resources (in terms of water and pasture) and therefore have slightly different population density, migration patterns and social behaviors. A general misconception in Western literature is that the Gobi is a "desert" – however the equivalent Mongolian word is *Tsol*, and this is only used to describe a few areas within the region that are without water and are uninhabitable. In fact the word *Gobi* means 'low-lying and arid…with sparse vegetation' (Lattimore 1962 p 27).[33] There are five Gobi aimag's in Mongolia: Dundgovi (Middle Gobi); Dornogovi (East Gobi); Govi-Altai (Gold Gobi); Govisumber (Craggy mountain Govi); and Omnogovi (South Gobi) aimag.

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[32] The word aimag originates from the Turkic word 'tribe/clan' and originally aimags were separated by areas ruled by dominant clans. However, during the socialist era they were reorganized into administrative areas by the central socialist government under the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (Jagchid & Hyer 1979).

[33] The distinction between understanding the area as a place with vegetation as opposed to a desert is important, as often miners degrade the Gobi landscape as a type of frontier sandpit with no social or environmental meaning. This will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Map 1: Political map of Mongolia – Aimag areas designated by colour, red arrow points to South Gobi

Source: http://www.ezilon.com/maps/asia/mongolia-maps.html

The specific area of focus for this research is the area heavily impacted by minerals exploitation in Omnogovi aimag, positioned where the red arrow points on Map 1. A Mongolian government official explained the strategic significance of Omnogovi to me as follows:

> Omnogovi has always been a powerful and economically strong aimag in Mongolia; it has good herds, a strong strategic and military presence, it is the home of many spiritual centres, and now it has the mines.

Historically, this aimag's primary industry was livestock herding, which has existed for thousands of years in the area (Lattimore 1962; Humphrey 1978; Fernandez-Gimenez 1999; Addison, et al. 2012). In fact, 70% of the population are herders, followed by 10% of the population involved in military and public administration jobs (Centre for Policy Research 2008). Omnogovi, is the largest aimag in Mongolia but is one of the least densely populated

places in the world – with a current population of just over 47000 or 0.28 people per square kilometer (Mendsaikhan, et al. 2010). Due largely to the lack of water and harsh, arid climatic conditions, groups of herders and communities are widely dispersed. Mongolian people generally agree that the lifestyles of the Gobi people are some of the harshest in the country, with temperatures ranging between minus 50 degree Celsius in winter and up to plus 40 degrees Celsius in summer with very little rainfall.[34]

Although Omnogovi is only approximately 500 kilometers from Ulaanbaatar it is isolated due to the lack of infrastructure – for example, it is a twelve to eighteen hour drive along an unsealed and unsigned road, from Ulaanbaatar to the aimag center of Dalandzadgad (DZ). From within the aimag, Omnogovi is made up of a further fifteen soums (see Map 2); a soum is the highest administrative level within an aimag. A soum is then divided into bagh regions which are more symbolic and administrative than actually empowered governing bodies. As such, the research focused on the soum level where communities are impacted and company development programs are directed. The primary focus of the research is Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii soum, within which the two large mine sites of Oyu Tolgoi (OT) and Uhaahadaag (UHG) respectively, are located. Tsogttsetsii is located approximately 100kms east of Dalandzadgad, while Khanbogd is approximately another 80kms south of Tsogttsetsii (see Map 2 & 3).

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[34] The Omnogovi has an average precipitation of between 67.5mm and 132mm annually

Map 2: Soums of Omnogovi featuring the Coal Road (road not to scale)
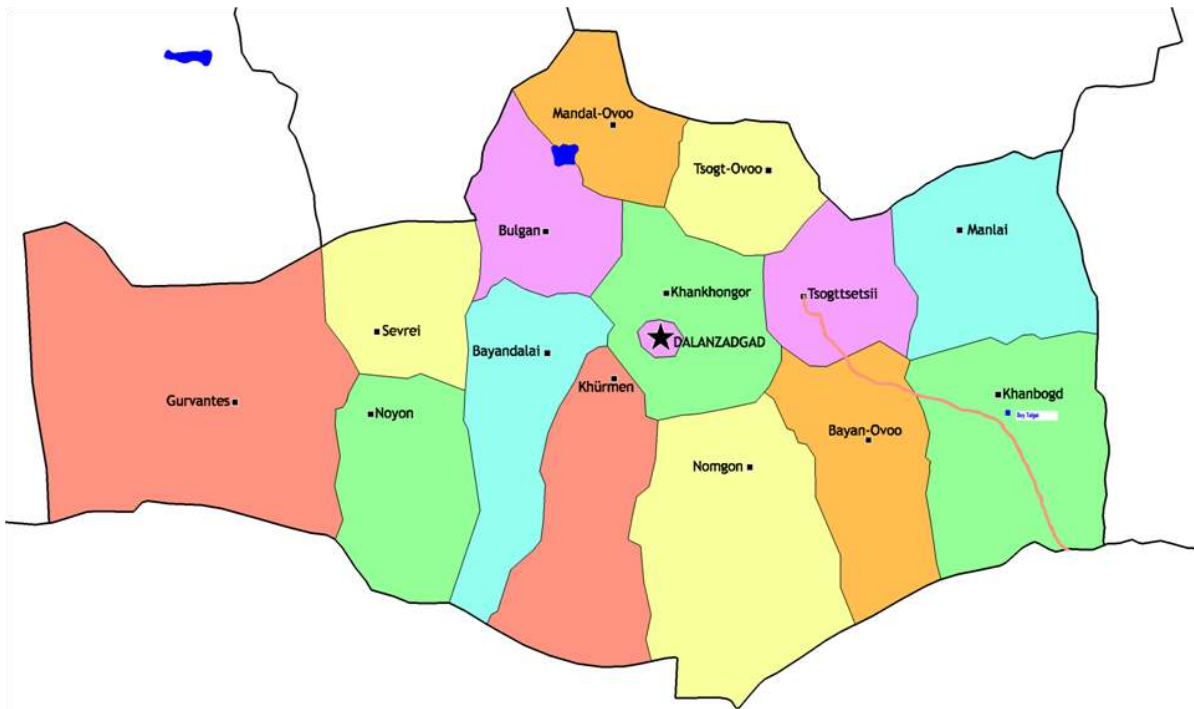
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%96mn%C3%B6govi_Province

Connecting these two towns is a recent infrastructure development known as the 'Coal Road'; the Coal Road traverses the 260kms from the UHG mine site to the Chinese border (Energy Resources LLC 2010; Mendsaikhan, et al. 2010). At the time of research, the border crossing was open on a temporary basis for local trade but is now open permanently for local trade and trade of exporting minerals. As such, the coal is stockpiled in large heaps on the border, just before the 10 km stretch of 'no man's land' between the Mongolian border and the Chinese crossing. I travelled the entire route of this road on several occasions and interviewed affected herders, small businesses, truck drivers and local authorities. According to the data collected from the local traffic authorities, approximately one thousand trucks a day go to and from the mine to the border, along a dirt track that billows dust all over the surrounding pasture and into people's homes. Dust is a significant problem in the area and will be discussed in detail in Chapter Nine. On entering the field, it became apparent that any analysis of the social impacts of mining from these two mine sites needed to include the

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impacts of the Coal Road and its effects on people in Bayan Ovoo. However, due to time constraints, in-depth research was not conducted in the Bayan Ovoo town centre, and instead focuses only those herder households impacted by the Coal Road. Thus this chapter provides a more detailed description of Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii. However, it is worth noting that, due to the proximity of all the soums and the generic Soviet era planning, they are socially and spatially very similar.

Map 3: Minerals Map of South Gobi

Source: http://invest-mongolia.apip.com/blog/replacing-turquoise-hill-first-quantum-minerals
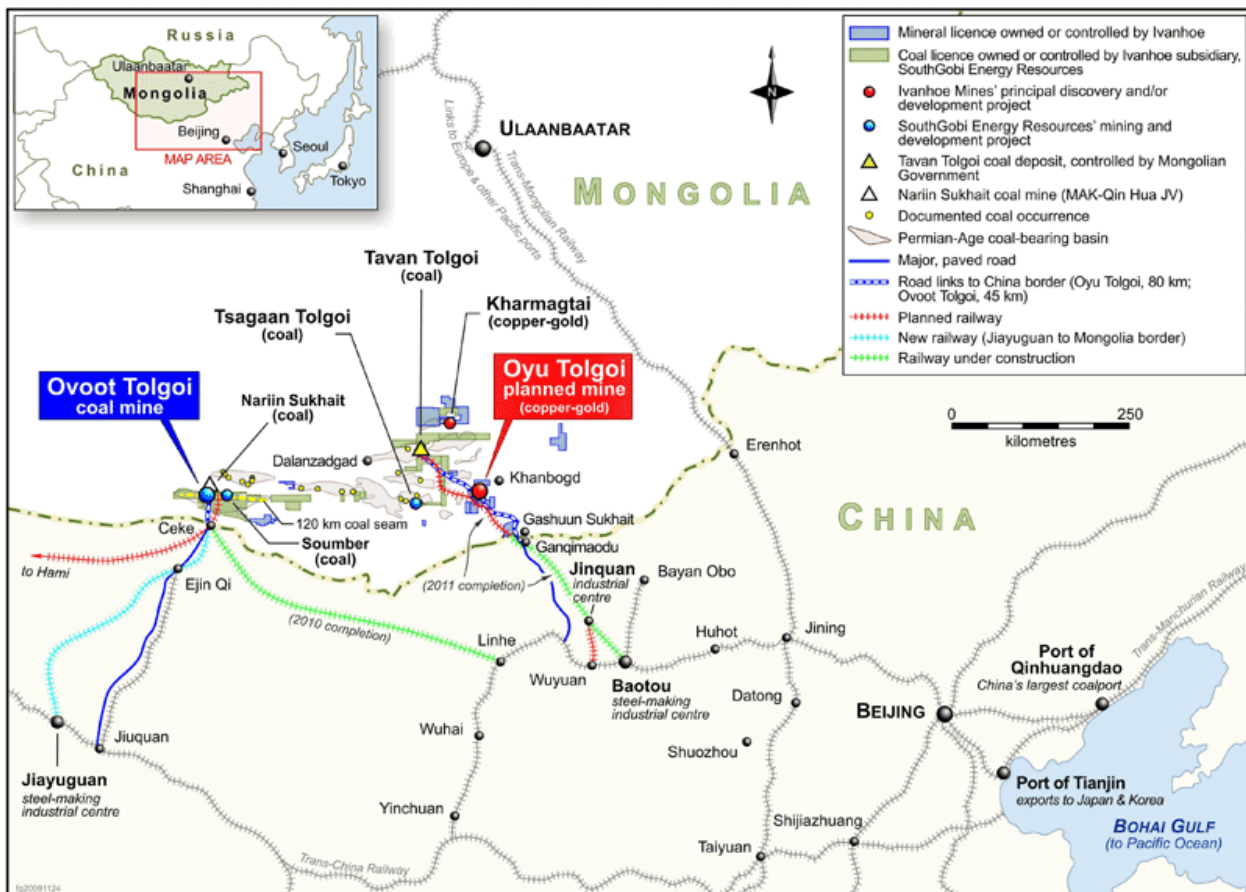
3.6.3 Khanbogd and Oyu Tolgoi (OT)

Khanbogd centre sits under a local rocky escarpment that protects the town from winter winds and is the home to many wild and endangered species including, the Lynx and the Wild Goat (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009). The town is one of the most picturesque centres in the South Gobi with a valley and seasonal river that

flows between once a year to once every three years (see Image 4). At the time of research Khanbogd had no paved roads and electricity for only six hours a day; three hours in the morning and three hours in the evening. Khanbogd soum was first established in 1924 and was known as 'Galba' and consists of 4 baghs; Nomgon, Gaviluud, Jaukalant and Bayan bagh. A bagh centre has one small standing *Bashing* that was active in the socialist period, however it is more rarely used now.

At the time of research, Khanbogd soum was populated by 2974 people, 1776 of whom lived in the Khanbogd centre and the remainder were living as herders in the surrounding bagh's (Centre for Policy Research 2008). That is, at the time of research almost half of the population was herders and half were living in the soum centre. Khanbogd centre is the administrative region for the soum where the local government centre, hospital, police, all shops, pre-school, and a primary school. There is, however, no high school so high school aged children board at Dalandzadgad. Much of the local decision-making, trade and public services are located and carried out in the centre of Khanbogd, and herders travel there for such requirements and to sell their own wares almost weekly.

During my fieldwork the town had no running water, and residents obtained water from the central town well where it was purchased, collected in drums and then transported back to homes on trolleys by men, women or children (Hawkins & Seager 2009). The well was electrically-powered and as such only operated during the hours when electricity was available. As there was no central water management system in Khanbogd, there was no sewerage or showers. Dwellings in Khanbogd centre are ger district style set-ups, with a wooden fence, a ger and often an additional, ancillary building.

Image 4: Khanbogd Town Centre 2009. Dry River bed in the foreground and town centre in the background

Source: Author

To those that are familiar with the Mongolian countryside and other soum centres, one of the most striking features of Khanbogd soum is its conspicuous wealth. Many large new 4WD cars are observed around town and there are substantially more large houses/buildings than in other soum centres throughout Mongolia, including neighbouring Tsogttsetsii. Researchers and journalists often attribute this wealth to the proximity of the OT mine, however research has shown that the wealth was derived from informal *Ninja*[35] mining from a mountain nearby as opposed to revenue from the formal OT operation.

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[35]A 'Ninja Miner' is an informal miner in Mongolia, termed as such because of the green basins they would walk around with on their backs, reflecting the characters from the TV series Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Small scale mining represents a large amount of the informal working sector in Mongolia. An estimated 60,000 to 100,000 people work in 'illegal' mining, however this is more common occurrence in the northern and central regions of Mongolia and less so in the Gobi area (World Bank 2006). Nevertheless, when gold was found in a mountain in Khanbogd people flocked from all over the soum area and across Mongolia to a place that was nicknamed 'Iraq'. Many of the research participants of the soum informed me that families received money that built houses, bought cars and business and funded university schooling for their children from the income provided by illegal mining; however this came at environmental costs. The mine was closed by authorities when the underground shafts drilled deeper and many people lost lives in shaft collapses.[36]

Oyu Tolgoi (OT), the mine neigbouring Khanbogd, is situated in Jaukalant bagh, 45kms from Khanbogd centre and 80kms from the Chinese border. OT is widely regarded as the largest untapped copper deposit in the world and I was informed that the 'more we drill the more we find'. Likewise Keith Marshall, the director of the project (at the time of research), was quoted as saying 'the only way to describe it is that it is just an awesome deposit. I have been 30 years in the mining industry and I haven't seen anything quite like this' (Chaney & Stanway 2010). The size of the mining project cannot be over-stated. It is the largest financial venture in Mongolia's capitalist history and by the time the mine is completed it is expected to contribute 30% of Mongolia's total GDP (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009).

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[36] When I asked whether people in Khanbogd had lost their lives I was told 'no, luckily no one lost their lives from this area, maybe it is because we are from this area that the spirits protected us'. My informant continued to speak of the sadness she felt from the destruction of the mountain which they told me was completely levelled now and no longer reflected a mountain (I did not get to view the place so cannot provide more details). According to Mongolian shamanic tradition, the spirits inside a mountain need to be undisturbed and, as such, people are not to dig holes that upset the spirits. However, the act of mining whose sole activity is to dig into the earth challenges this broader belief. In this instance the woman seems to suggest that although they knew they were upsetting the spirits by digging in the mountain, the spirits still protected them as they were locals but they didn't protect those from outside the region who presumably did not honour them in local worship (see High 2010). Herder cosmology and tensions with mining are discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

During the time of the research, the OT investment agreement was still being debated in the Mongolian parliament. Therefore the mine operation had only been partially developed. The site had employed 2000 workers when constructing the mine but had recently reduced the capacity to 400 when I arrived on-site. As one employee noted, 'we have been waiting for 5 years for this agreement. Once it is signed we want to be able to get to construction and extraction as soon as possible. That's why this is all set up and pretty much ready to go'. Due to the lack of operation and reduced staff (from 2000 to 400 employers) the site itself was relatively inactive at the time of research. At the time of writing, correspondence with informants informed me that 12000 employees (three times the population of the entire soum) are currently on site and construction will be complete by mid-2013 (please see a comparison between Images 4 and 5).

The mine is both an open-pit and underground operation and both copper and gold are being extracted. There is one large blue shaft which is the entrance to the underground mine and there is also a second shaft under construction. '"It is the equivalent of a 20-story building," Marshall said, referring to a 110-meter ore extraction shaft in the middle of the Oyu Tolgoi site. "It is going to dominate the Gobi desert – probably from 50 or 60 kilometres away, you are going to see this shaft" (Chaney & Stanway 2010). Likewise, the mine camp contains about 200 gers (some made of the traditional felt and others engineered to meet safety standards from cement), long dongers (a colloquial term for movable, workers' sleeping quarters and office blocks), a large mess hall, a basketball court, ping pong centre, small wooden financial bank, an exploration camp (the original OT camp) and a bar (see Image 5).

Image 5: Oyu Tolgoi Mine site at the time of research 2009

Source: Sandorj Sandmand

Image 6: Oyu Tolgoi Mine site 2012. Source: Sandorj Sandmand

3.6.4 Tsogttsetsii and Tawan Tolgoi (TT)

One of the first things that I noticed when I drove to Tsogttsetsii soum from either Dalandzadgad or Khanbogd was the amount of coal scattered on the road, having been dislodged from trucks travelling from the mine. This stood in contrast to Ulaanbaatar, where extremely poor people walk alongside the rail tracks looking for fallen scraps from coal trains. The scatters of coal presage the vast streams of coal hidden in the valley below, before one enters and catches direct sight of the coal deposit of Tawan Tolgoi in the Tsogttsetsii soum. Tsogttsetsii and Khanbogd are similar demographically, however due to their specific locations, the differing proximity of each town to its respective neighbouring mine site, and the fact that the mines are at different points in their lifecycles, the towns are at different stages of change and development.

Image 7: Tsogttsetsii soum centre 2009 with the mine in the background – observe the dust.

Source: Author

As in the case of Khanbogd, the majority of the population of Tsogttsetsii at the time of research was herders. Of the 2,197 people there were 570 families with an average family size of 3.8 people. Of these 570 families, 123 of them lived in Tsogttsetsii soum centre, 36 lived in the adjacent but smaller Tawan Tolgoi mine town (constructed in the socialist era) and 411 of them lived in the rural area. The soum consists of 3 baghs, Siirest, Bilgekh and Tsagaan Ovoo with the population of each being 532, 718 and 847 respectively. The Tawan Tolgoi area is included in Tsagaan Ovoo bagh and the Coal Road stretches through most of the Siirist Bagh.

Over the last twenty years there has been an increased movement of rural to urban migration[37], observable by the rapid growth of ger districts in urban centres within Mongolia.[38] Likewise, in-migration has begun and will continue to be a feature for the mine affected communities in the South Gobi (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009, (World Bank 2009b, Energy Resources LLC 2010). The World Bank predicts a 'population influx' of over 5000 people in Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii respectively with 'repeated movements between country and city; resulting in a breakdown of old concepts of class and belonging as well as producing renewed social strife' (World Bank 2009b p 30).

An important demographic feature of Tsogttsetsii (and Khanbogd soum) is the above average level of female-headed households that constitutes 18% of the population compared to the national average of 11.2%. That is, nearly one fifth of the population of the community is made up of single female households, this social characteristic is not attributed to mining but is traditionally considered a social feature of the Gobi areas (examined in Chapter Five) (Benwell 2009). However, observations and interviews in the field showed that women were

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[37] The increased influx of people into Ulaanbaatar is attributed to the economic and political re-structuring produced by the socialist transition and the arrival of herders who lost their livelihoods to Dzud. Chinbat states that current 'unemployment in the countryside, big differences in living standards between the city and countryside and the concentration of universities and colleges in Ulaanbaatar' have also contributed to the continued trend of people moving to the city (Chinbat 2004).

[38] Likewise, as Bruun and Narangoa point to the uni-directional movement between urban to rural and rural to urban, these boundaries are impermanent (Brunn & Narangoa? 2006)

experiencing the burden of social ills caused by overburdened public services but particularly, the increased crime, alcoholism and family based violence that is attributed to poverty and the stressors of immigration and mining (Cane 2014).

For example, during my time in Tsogttsetsii the police and I had many conversations concerning the changes occurring within the town. The following conversation is characteristic of our discussion and the changes observed:

IC: What type of crime has increased?

Policeman: Well, crimes related to hooliganism, alcoholism, burglary, and car accidents.

IC: Why is it increasing?

Policeman: Well, the number of companies operating here is high now and that brings a higher number of people from here and there across Mongolia, some have criminal records and some are very poor. Alcohol related crime is common problem. However in the case of mining and mine workers who have a heavy physical work load this type of crime [alcoholism] has certainly increased.

Likewise, in discussions with women who had lived in Tsogttsetsii their entire lives, they noted the increase in violence and noted that they no longer felt it was safe in the streets after dark.

IC: Has the town changed from 10 years earlier?

Gerele: It's more dangerous than that time. The locals and the strangers can't stay peacefully. They often have fight against each other. Locals don't normally fight. Fighting happens only against strangers. It scares me. I'd be scared if someone follows me when I walk alone. Particularly these days, there are too many strangers in town, which makes it worse.

IC: Worse than before?

Gerele: Yes, before we knew everyone, these things would never happen. Now there are many strangers, we don't know them and they don't know us.

Particular to Tsogttsetsii, and not commonly witnessed in Khanbogd, was the number of drunken men on the streets. The fights between strangers and between men and women, out the front of the hotel and drinking venues, were a daily event. On one occasion, a translator and I were assaulted in a shop by a drunken man. After attending the police station to report the incident we were told 'the man was previously convicted a number of times and all of them were about hitting woman'. Although alcoholism and violence is a problem in many communities in Mongolia, the Tsogttsetsii people described an increased incidence of assaults due to migration and mining. More importantly, they also discussed that the community, once familiar and safe, is now ruptured by increased crime and violence fueled by alcoholism and poverty (United Nations Development Programme 2011, McGrath, et al. 2012, Khan, et al. 2013).

The Tawan Tolgoi coal deposit is situated within the Tsogttsetsii soum. The Tawan *Tolgoi* (literally meaning 'five heads') coal deposit, in Tsogttsetsii soum neighbouring the town of Tsogttsetsii, is predicted to be the largest 'untapped' coal deposit in the world. Mining has been a part of the Tsogttsetsii landscape for much longer than in Khanbogd, and extraction from this deposit began before the 1960s by hand with extracted coal being transported by camel caravans. The large scale industrialization of mining in Tsogttsetsii is of relatively recent origin, and has grown rapidly with large scale extraction and coal trucks exporting coal globally. The deposit is operated by a number of companies, the largest being Uhaahadag. I will discuss the details of this operation in the following chapter when I compare the growth of the mine and the disconnection of the community from the development process.

At the time of research, 4-6% of Tawan Tolgoi deposit is being extracted and is run by two companies. One is the small consortium of companies, referred to as 'small TT', which is the original aimag-owned company currently jointly owned by the Omnogovi government (51%) and Mongolian private companies (49%).[39] The second site which is operating on Tawan

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[31] The research doesn't engage closely with this company, however all people, from the World Bank, to the community, referred to it as a very poor operation – in terms of safety, environment, and the basic engineering of the deposit.

Tolgoi is owned by a Mongolian company called Energy Resources Ltd. The project is technically operated by the Australian company Leighton Asia and has a 5% equity investment by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The following table provides a breakdown of the responsibilities of the parties involved in the UHG project. The combination of these companies is called Uhaahaadag, which is the company under research for the Tawan Tolgoi deposit. Throughout the thesis both names will be used because when discussing impacts that are associated to mining, it would be unfair and inaccurate to direct them completely to UHG as there are many neighbouring mines in the area. The impacts are therefore cumulative in nature and can't be directly associated with UHG.

Table 2: Company breakdown and responsibility

Company	Role
Leighton Asia	Hauling, loading, waste management, water management, road management and the mined land management
Energy Resources	Owner of the lease, running of the camp, camp safety, community relations, EIS and hydrology
Leighton Asia and Energy resource	Mine planning and maintenance, H2O planning, safety and environment on site and the drilling and blasting
Major Drillers	Exploration
EBRD	Financial lender and overseeing community and Environment responsibility activities

3.7   Conclusion

To understand the deeper meaning of the impacts of mining on the community and the decision making processes that are made to mitigate these impacts by the company, a two-pronged ethnography directed at both the communities and companies was conducted. The

research methodology applied ethnographic techniques to capture the intangible power relations and discourses of the 'field of sociality'. Specifically, ethnographic research methods utilizing observation and participation *in situ*, coupled with in-depth semi-structured interviews, were used in the research directed at both the community and company. The particular aim of these interviews was to unpack the gendered discourses and power relations of both community and mining company, in a way that allows the researcher to observe and account for the intangible and tangible relations in society. To accomplish this, my methodology was consistent with the theoretical framework of post-colonial feminists and Women and Development theorists, with all research techniques being carried out, to the best of my ability, in a self-reflexive way that recognized the limits of my understandings and interpretations. Particular attention was directed at allowing the companies' and communities' informants to direct the agenda of the interviews and pose the issues which they felt were of concern to them.

Chapter 4 - Landscapes and Culture

4.1 Introduction

There are broad social and political factors that have contributed to the 'thick vocabulary' in which a Mongolian subject articulates himself/herself, and which constitutes what I have broadly termed a Mongolian ontology.[40] In order to be able to address aspects of the social impacts of mining, this chapter will examine the nature of cosmological relationships between persons, animals and landscape that inhabit elements of the Mongolian ontology (Humphrey 2012). I aim to demonstrate the relationship and significance of landscape and animals to the herder's notion of self, in order to develop an understanding of both the difference in Western and Mongolian notions of self and the impact mining has on herder lifestyles (Fijn 2011). By drawing on an example of the way in which company employees treat herds surrounding the mine, I demonstrate the different social meanings, cultural significance and social responsibilities that drive negotiations of change by mining. In later chapters, this example provides evidence that will assist in interpreting the company's handling of impact mitigation within the scope of its own decision making processes.

Building on the cosmological concept of a Mongolian relationship to nature and landscape, the chapter turns to a discussion on the advent of mining to the South Gobi. The chapter describes the growth from a small-scale locally run extraction process, to a large-scale internationally-run operation. There are many ways in which the development of large-scale mining and its interaction with culturally distinct and developing world contexts can be theorised. Of particular interest to this section is the way in which Gender and Mining academics have drawn on the period of emerging industrialization and capitalism to explain the patriarchal nature of mining and the consequent negative impacts on women and the

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[40] This is in the context explained in Chapter Two that recognizes ontology is not fixed and that plural ontologies exist and interact within any given setting (De Castro, 2004). However, the broad term 'Mongolian ontology' is used to describe the a combination of the elements of a 'Thick Vocabulary' and ontological commitments (social, historical, cultural, gendered, and religious precursors) that can be said to constitute the subject and/or community.

community (Merchant 1990; Robinson 1996). I examine the premises underlying such theories which form the basis for their interpretation of mining as a 'patriarchal' enterprise and test them against the Mongolian cosmological context in the South Gobi. The chapter concludes that Mongolian ontologies are based on cosmologies that are incongruent with mainstream Gender and Mining associations of land and patriarchy in mining. This is not to say that mining is not patriarchal, but that in the Mongolian context alternative theories may need to be derived to explain biases in in power relations and constructions.

4.2   Herding and Mining: A Troubled Co-existence

A significant part of the ontological fabric of these rural communities can be grounded in the practice of herding identity, relationships, roles and agency (Sneath 2003; Swancutt 2007). Like many other ethnographers, my fieldwork supports the observation that the historical legacy of the tangible and intangible aspects of herding have had a significant impact on Mongolian approaches to life and their understandings of self. This also impacts upon the way in which Mongolians position themselves discursively within broader social hierarchies (Swift & Mearns 1993; Cooper & Gelezhamstin 1994; Bulag 1998; Sneath 2003; Baabar 2005; Swancutt 2007; High 2008; Fijn 2011; Benwell 2009). Mongolian people live either a sedentary or a transhumance lifestyle and often move between these lifestyles at different ages and seasons. For instance, children are often bought up in the countryside and then move to a sedentary urban setting for schooling, and in different seasons older people may move into sedentary dwellings in colder months and urban/sedentary people often join herders in warmer months (Erdenebaatar 1996).

When I first travelled to Khanbogd, I looked outside a herder's front door and found it hard to imagine maintaining a herd in such a dramatic environment. To my untrained eyes the landscape looked arid, sparse and dry in comparison to the northern areas I had previously visited. The wife of the family I was staying with noticed my reaction to the landscape on that first day, and remarked to me: 'I know it looks dry to your eyes, but that is some of the best pasture and water in the area'. She continued and explained to me the significance of the rangeland area in which her home was located. As I will describe shortly, many of these families have been living in the area for hundreds of years and have close affiliations to the land and natural resources that sustain their lifestyle. This first observation and her

subsequent comments highlighted to me my particular construction of nature, and its radical difference from that of herders in the Khanbogd soum (Castree & Braun 2001). What looked dry and nearly uninhabitable to me was, in fact, one of the richest and most fertile areas in the region.

Western misconceptions of the Gobi landscape are also commonly overheard in mining camps in the South Gobi; for example, comments like 'it's a desert – a dust bowl and they complain about the dust' were overheard on many occasions. I began to observe that Western conceptions of the Gobi environment were, to a large extent, directing the mining company's decision-making processes towards the herders, the landscape and the environment. Robert Friedland, the founder of Ivanhoe Mines Mongolia Inc (IMMI), was reported to have said in an interview:

> … and the nice thing about this [mine site]: there are no people around; the land is flat, there's no tropical jungle; there's no NGOs. We're only 70 kilometres from the Chinese border… (New Internationalist Magazine 2006)

This statement, recorded and quickly broadcast across Mongolia, was incorrect and offensive to locals on many levels. Particularly because there were (at the time) over 600 people living in the area of the proposed mine operation and a further approximately 2500 people in the vicinity. Although I also perceived the area to be very harsh and dry, I came to learn the area was not a desert or *tsol*, but an arid area where herders could sustain themselves with access to the right natural resources. Moreover, though the area is not a 'tropical jungle' it did hold some of the wettest areas in Khanbogd, areas that were imbued with many social meanings which formed an intimate part of the herders' ability to foster a fragile, but sustainable livelihood in those rangelands.

In the South Gobi, harsh arid climatic conditions and relatively less pasture (than the northern area) requires herders to move frequently. Neighbouring families live approximately 3-10 kilometres apart in the South Gobi, whereas in the Arkhangai areas north of Ulaanbaatar, herders may live only 1-2 kilometres apart. The movements of herders generally involve moving with the season, approximately 4-6 times a year within a radius of between 20-100kms (Fernandez-Gimenez 2002). The winter camps of herders include solid structures in

which their animals may shelter to protect themselves from the cold and wolves. The inserted Figure 1 was collected by Dr Jane Addison while researching in the Gobi, and provides an example of the movement of a herder in a 'good' climatic year when herders move less to find pasture and a 'bad' climatic year where they travel more frequently.

Figure 1: A herders movements in a good and poor climatic year

Source: Addisson, 2012, p189

Of note in the figure are the comparative distances that are traversed in good and bad years (ranging from a maximum of 17 kilometres in a good year and 160 kilometers in a bad year) and the frequency of 'camp relocations' in good years (6 movements) and bad years (11 movements). As the figure shows, herder families do not just drift aimlessly as foreigners often believe; there are informal laws concerning land ownership which are used to resolve disputes and on the basis of which access to land and resources are distributed between families (Fernandez-Gimenez & Batbuyan 2004). However, these arrangements are not absolutely binding - a 'higher law' exists stating that pasture and water is never owned by any one individual or family and that, therefore, any herder in need of that territory may graze on it (Fernandez-Gimenez 2002). In saying this, the privatisation of land is becoming more common and local disputes are more frequent.

4.2.2 Competing Land Uses

The herder family I spent much of my time with in Jaukalant bagh was the household of Gana and Onon. I found that their insights into herding lifestyles and the interactions with mining companies and operations epitomise those of many of the herder families surrounding the OT and UHG sites. Gana and Onon have no children and live alongside Onon's sister and husband and their daughter. Two gers make-up this small family group and they move and work their herd together. The extended family is large and they have lived in Jaukalant bagh, for generations. They can recall five generations of their ancestors in the area, and have nine siblings, four of whom I met and conducted interviews with. During the summer when I met them, the siblings lived within a 10 km radius (summer months) of Onon's ger and all have their own families and are primarily reliant on herding for a living. They are economically a mid to upper range group of herders with about 20 camels and 300 plus goats and sheep per household. In an average year they herd their animals within a twenty kilometre radius of what is now the OT mine site, and in extreme weather conditions they can move as far as 250 kilometres from the site.

The OT mineral deposit is located under the surface of the summer pasture used by all the herders in the area, including Onon's family. The development of the OT mine has thus had a significant impact on herders' patterns of movement, and the access to natural resources required to sustain their herd. Onon specifically identified the erection of the OT fence line as

the creation of a barrier to this movement, a barrier which also cut her family off from natural resources to which they formerly had access. She observed:

> In 1999-2000 it was a very very hot summer. There was no rain in the bagh, we all moved down to the south side near the Chinese border and camped there that summer. When we came back in autumn there was a fence up and construction was beginning.

Similar to Addison's figure above, Khanbogd herders, including Onon's family, were required to travel further for pasture due to drought conditions that year. When they returned to their winter shelters they found a 12 kilometre square fence erected around land which was previously their summer pasture land. The land which was taken was known as *Bor ovoogin Zadgai* (Brown ovoo[41], enough water) and is important to herders due to the abundance of water sources and rich pasture in summer to sustain their herds and their livelihood. Onon pointed past where I was standing during the interview and said, 'our summer camp was at the OT site, there is very good pasture there. Now the fence has been built so we have lost that pasture. See our pasture was where the offices are now'.[42]

At the time of research, data showed that the loss of the summer pastoral land for most of the herders in the area had occurred without consultation with the herders, or compensation being provided to many of the families residing in the area. At this time, Ivanhoe Mines was the primary shareholder of the operation and managed the community relations part of the operation, which would include the development and administration of a re-settlement policy (as opposed to Rio Tinto, whom took over control of these areas some years later). I asked Onon if the company had engaged with her, or if the government had told the families of the decision to enclose the land, and she replied; 'nobody gave us any explanation. Some people

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[41] An Ovoo is built on a tip of a mountain/hill or in a spiritually significant site to hold, protect and worship the spirit of the mountain. The Ovoo is a cairn of rocks built by people circling the rocks three times in a clock-wise rotation and throwing offerings of milk, food or rocks onto the Ovoo. The Ovoo will build over time to form a large mound of rocks and offerings and is understood to protect the spirit of the mountain (Humphrey, 1995).

[42] It is important to note that in the early months of 2013 and continuing into the present, OT is trialling the use of animals pasturing within an area of the mine site pastureland. The action signifies an acknowledgement of the land lost and anecdotal evidence suggests contentment by the herders in regard to this exchange.

at the soum administration might have been given some explanation on it but we were never told anything'.

4.2.3 Resettlement and land rights

The researcher learnt that the company had in fact resettled eleven families in the area but had missed many others. In a discussion with an onsite informant, they informed me retrospectively they considered this an oversight.[43] As a manager of the community relations team which re-settled eleven families relayed to me, 'we missed 21 families; we should have re-settled 21 more'. What became apparent was that many herders in the region lost a great deal of their land and livelihood due to the establishment of mining, often without any form of compensation. The decision to relocate only families with winter shelters and not all those that used the pasture throughout the remaining seasons, was observed at both Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii from both the companies under research.

As an observer, I noted that any discussion about the loss of land brought out strong emotive reactions from the herders, and it became clear that the mine-site area and its surrounds held a particular significance for them. Obviously it had an economic value, since it provided food and water for their livestock throughout summer. However, there was also a social aspect as the herders would gather along the river in the summer months. Many informants told me the area was a fertile summer place where both livestock and wild animals fattened up for winter, as well as a place for social recreation in the warmer summer months. Onon's step-brother noted; 'we used it [the now OT site] to water our animals, also wild animals used it as their water source. Often we would use the banks of the river to settle on for the summer'. Likewise, Onon's uncle stated 'not only just my family but all of the families of Jaukalant bagh used it also. In the summer and winter not only domestic animals but wild animals and black tail Gazelle used this land for water'. These descriptions reflect a situation that is observed across many parts of Mongolia, where after the harsh and isolated cooler months, communities gather closer together along water sources not just to fatten animals but also to socialise amongst different families and groups, and thereby in cultural exchanges central to the fabric of community life.

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[43] It is important to note that the company has now economically compensated these families.

Finally, within these statements I detected pride of place and connection with their land on the part of the herders; the summer pasture and the river near Jaukalant bagh centre are particularly picturesque with mountains and the riverbank containing many trees, which are rare in the South Gobi (see Image 8). In fact one of the herders stated proudly 'we have the most trees in the soum, you know we counted them one day'. I came to learn (and will discuss in more detail later) that the relationship one has to land is known as *Nutag*. Bymbajav Dalabiyuan notes 'the meaning of nutag might range from one's birthplace to the place one grew up to one's parents' originated province and district' (Dalabiyuan 2012, p. 21)

In 2004, Mongolia passed the new Mongolian Land Law, which is administered by the government and is described as unclear, hazy and often difficult to follow by herders (Fernandez-Gimenez & Batbuyan 2004). Essentially, the new Land Law 'leases' winter shelters to herders for an annual tax paid to soum level governments. In distinction to the shelters, the land around the encampments are not leased or owned by a particular family. These areas are considered 'common use', which can be shared by many families but are leased by none. That is, the herder has legal rights of 'possession' to the winter encampment but only the rights of 'use' to the surrounding pastures. The primary critique of the law is that it, 'contains serious ambiguities in its failure to define 'common use' and to distinguish sufficiently between 'possession' and 'use' for herders (Fernandez-Gimenez and Batbuyan 2004, p. 147).

Consequently, families using areas in the summer, autumn and spring are grazing on 'common use' areas and are not considered by formal law to have 'possession' of that area. That is 'the Law appears to prohibit allocation of summer and fall pastures under use or possession (allowing only for common use)' (Fernandez-Gimenez and Batbuyan 2004, p. 147). Therefore, it is possible for companies to compensate families only for their leased land and the ownership of a winter shelter. Conversely they do not have to compensate the families that use the land without a structured shelter for the remaining three seasons of the year.

UHG and IMMI have both made public commitments to apply internationally recognized standards to re-settlement processes. UHG have adopted the performance requirements of EBRD (who adopt them from IFC standards) and ADB that need to be followed to meet the

terms of the lending contract. Examples of two of the guidelines applicable to the UHG re-settlement process are:

> "Performance Requirement 5 'Land Acquisition, Involuntary Resettlement and Economic Displacement; to avoid, or at least minimize, involuntary resettlement wherever feasible by exploring alternative project designs'. [And]

> 'ADB Safeguards Requirements - Involuntary Resettlement (SR2) The aim of this Safeguard policy is to address impacts on property, assets, and loss of livelihood' (Environmental Resources Management and Sustainability East Asia 2010)

Likewise, IMMI have agreed to adhere to the re-settlement policies of the Mongolian law, the Investment Agreement and the Rio Tinto standards. Rio Tinto standards are informed by IFC and World Bank best practices.

Although it became apparent that international standards and expertise had a role in facilitating 'best practices' and minimizing distress on communities, it also resulted in problematising a completely culturally relativist or local level approach. A closer look at the companies suggests that they (or the international lenders) also carry with them implicit Western values that continue to target and direct actions negatively towards the community. For example, IMMI re-settled eleven families successfully, however they missed twenty one families who customarily used the land. It leads one to ask whether pre-conceived ideas of property and ownership are directing the resettlement process rather than customary concepts of land or ownership. This is a thesis within itself but illuminates potential underlining ontologies and values that are directing the companies' decision making processes. Chapters Eight and Nine will again re-engage with this concept when SIA and decision making processes are examined in more detail.

Image 8 – Southern side of the OT fence in Jaukalant bagh

Source: Author

4.2.3 Co-habitation: Herders and the Herd

In Mongolian cosmology, humans and non-human entities exist in the form of animals and spirits. It is considered that spirits are at the top of the ontological hierarchy and it is they who then allow people to live and conduct activities with animals on the landscape (Swancutt 2007, Humphrey 2011). Natasha Fijn's seminal thesis, which explores the relationship between herders and their herd in Mongolia, posits that this relationship has developed as a mutual, co-domestic existence:

in adaptive terms, I suspect that both human and non-human animals have experienced symbiosis, or a co-evolutionary domestication process, through their profound influence upon one another over thousands of years. (Fijn 2012, p. 242)

That is, the Mongolian herder and the herd animal live together within a co-domestic existence, such that both their lives are interlinked and dependent upon one another. Therefore, it is not surprising that an important thematic impact for herders was the changes resulting from mining on their animals.

The co-domestic relationship of the herd and the herder was easily observable in the South Gobi and the interdependent nature of the herder-herd relationship became immediately apparent. Principally, changes from mining were explained in terms of the effect on the herd, often with equal weight or primacy being given to the effects on animals over humans. I observed various aspects of this in the way herders spoke of the animals in their herds, the knowledge they displayed of the ancestry of their animals and particularly with regard to how they spoke about those who they perceived to lack the requisite respect for the herd. The following is an extract from my field diary and sheds light on the company's engagement with herds and the herder's reaction to this:

> The fence line of OT and UHG are both thin strips of metal wires that are easily entered by goats and sheep. As the pasture within the fence line is longer, and the area is part of their traditional grazing lands, the animals frequently cross into the area to feed on the site. This has made herding difficult for the herders as they need to continually monitor the animals that once roamed freely. On the occasion that the herd does enter the fence line, the herders feel very uncomfortable about entering to retrieve them. On many occasions when the herd is seen edging towards the boundary, all jobs around the ger are ceased as the husband jumps on the motorbike, or, if he is away and utilising the motorbike, the wife runs some distance towards the fence to prevent the animals entering (sometimes several hundred meters). On the occasions that the family does not get to the herd in time, the security guards hired by the company observe the animals and drive towards them very fast and chase them out by charging them with the car and sometimes throwing rocks at them (Field Diary, Jauklhant Bagh, Khanbogd Soum, July 14 2009).

Watching this practice happening many times, I observed the unsettled feeling of the families and the uncommon display of emotions towards the actions of the security guards. Herders would tell me that the guards were '*muu hun*' (bad people) and extend their little finger as a sign of disrespect of them. Being unfamiliar with herding and wanting to understand the situation more clearly I asked them why chasing the animals was bad and they explained to me that making the animals run that fast in summer strips the fat they are collecting for winter, which means they may not survive the cooler season. They also stated that throwing big rocks and hitting the animals was 'bad' as it injured the animals, with deep cuts and broken horns.

My initial analysis of this issue suggested that the herders reaction was motivated by a 'livelihoods' issue, in that the actions are considered to be 'bad' since they have an impact on herder livelihood, via the health of the animal. However, as I travelled further around the two sites I begin to note that this issue was most frequently expressed as a criticism of the companies' behaviour. The frequency, sadness and sometimes anger relayed when this common story was told began to suggest that the issue was more than simply economic. For example, Gana (Onon's husband) explained to me: 'these animals were given to me by my ancestors. I know every one of these animals, I know their bloodlines, I have grown-up knowing their characteristics, traits and flaws'. As Gana spoke of the family herd, the families began to describe in humor and jest the traits and the temperament of the animals, and the ancestry of each animal. It struck me as similar to how I would speak of neighbors or distant friends, with a kind fondness. After sometime, the families explained that the herd was a legacy of their family, a heritage or bloodline that had been passed on from their ancestors.

Essentially the relationship, as Fijn states, is more than merely an economic relationship:

> Herd animals, and herders, are usually born within the encampment (*khot ail*); learn each other's habits, temperaments, and behaviours from an early age; interact with one another on a daily basis; and then die within this same sphere as co-adapted co-inhabitants, who are co-domestic with one another.

Therefore, the actions of company employees in chasing after the herd and throwing rocks at them, represented not merely the creation of an economic hardship, but also constituted an attack on a part of the *khot ail* and the family heritage. As a herder said to me in a similar

statement to one which is quoted by Fijn: "We feed them and they feed us" (see also Fijn 2011, p. 241).

Whereas the Mongolian herder ontology perceives the herd as equal and part of the construction of being, according to Fijn the traditional Western perception presupposes:

> that a herd animal succumbs to domestication at the whims of a superior human through intentional design, in a relatively mechanistic relationship designed to maximise human profit for human gain (Fijn 2011, p. 241).

I enquired of the herders if they had asked the security men to stop chasing the herd, and they replied that they talked with the security men and had been told by them that they had received direct orders from the 'foreigners' of the mining company to chase the herd off immediately. I then asked whether the security guards were from Omnogovi, and they replied fervently, 'oh no a countryside person wouldn't do this, they are from the city'. After speaking with foreign directors and the Mongolian community relations team on-site, I learnt that 'foreigners' had not given the security men any such directions, and that instead the Mongolian security men, knowing what they were doing was offensive to the herders, were using the foreign mine-workers as scapegoats for their own behaviour. I also later found out, by speaking with the manager of Occupation Health and Safety (who hired the security guards), that the act itself was motivated by boredom and was carried out with the knowledge that such an act could be offensive precisely because of the special relationship between herders and their herd.

Thus there seemed to be a shared understanding between herders and the Ulaanbaatar based security guards with regard to the relationship between people and animals – one that stems from Buddhist and shamanistic practices that perceive animals as co-habiting with humans and not merely as beings solely available for human use. The fact that the guards appealed to 'foreigners' as a scapegoat, thus blaming someone likely to be ignorant of the significant relationship between herd and herder, underscores the fact that they share this ontological commitment with the herder community – one they assumed a Westerner would not perceive or share. However an anomaly exists in that, although the Mongolian herder and security officers shared a similar ontology, the security team continued to insult the local herder's livestock. This suggests that more than one social factor is in play in this situation

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and that influences other than merely cultural ones are at play. The fact that the herder makes a distinction between the behaviour of rural people and urban Mongolians suggests for example that regional differences must play some part in interpreting the social dynamics at work in this situation. Indeed, Chapter Five demonstrates the role that regionality or regional differences play in the discrimination experienced by women workers on the mining sites.

What emerges from these observations so far, and will be further explored in Chapter Eight, is that herder attitudes to the environment, landscape, animals, and peoples all make up a worldview which is different to a Western corporate or business based one (Vivieros De Castro 1998; Vivieros De Castro 2004). This difference is located in the particular constructions of social categories used in discourse which, at first glance, are shared across cultures, but on closer examination exhibit significant differences. Thus while both herders and Westerners employ the category 'animal' or 'land', the way in which this category is embedded into herder practice, and the meaning and significance it attains from this embeddedness, means that in their actual application and significance such terms differ from the Western understanding of the notions of 'animal' and 'land'.[44] This is one way in which the 'thick vocabulary' of a Mongolian herder differs from that of a foreign mine-worker, and is analogous to the way in which Mongolian notions of 'self', 'gender' and 'power' differ from Western feminist constructions.

4.2.4 Relations and Rules of Spirits and Nature

Generally speaking, in Mongolian cosmology the land is constituted as its own being or as its own living entity, inhabited by spirits that govern and protect nature. For example, female spirits inhabit water courses (blood of the *Tengris* or Universe) and male spirits inhabit mountain areas (bone of the *Tengris*) (Humphrey 1995). Humphrey explains that the practice of honouring and engaging with landscape is often symbolised via engagements with spirits. High further argues that the belief in spirits underlies the importance 'of suppressing individual autonomy out of respect for the presence of other existences'' (High 2008, p. 145). In this sense the ontological starting point of a herder or a Mongolian with these beliefs begins with

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[44] As people have many multiple and different worldviews of entities, I am not attempting to describe a complete worldview of Mongolian cosmology, I am simply providing basic insights that are generally adhered to and that provide insight into Mongolian ontological perspectives.

the universe, the land and the spirit, with themselves as a subject in relation to these forces. That is, the individual is not privileged as an autonomous entity with priority over the natural and social worlds, but is seen to coexist with these forces and other individuals within a broader social reality. Within this reality, 'land' is part of the construction of Self, and it is this embedding of the individual within landscape, in a social sense, that is the source of the codes that govern behaviour, and which also authorises a herders' access to pasture, natural resources and healthy animals.

However, forms of worship are not limited to small groups of herders. A number of physical objects are worshipped by a few people, several by whole soums and a few mountains and areas by virtually all Mongols (Humphrey 1995). As my informant from Khanbogd, Onon, explained:

> at the local level, especially in soums, we worship the mountains and rivers very often. There are some rocks and mountains we give food samples to - the mountains and rivers which are near our winter shelters are particularly important to us (see an example in Image 9).

According to Swancutt, these rituals are practiced on the premise of an '... exchange for proper sacrifices, nature spirits throughout the Inner Asian region allow people to conduct pastoral and other activities in human inhabited areas, making pastures plentiful, and protecting them from natural disasters' (Swancutt 2007, p. 245; see also Humphrey 1995; High 2008). This was supported by Onon and her sisters who described the type of blessings offered and the prayer they hoped for, 'when we give ritual sprinklings of milk to the spirits I pray for our life to be healthy, wealthy, and peaceful'.

In addition to protecting pasture and creating favourable living conditions, spirits also monitor behaviour and punish those behaving unethically (Swancutt 2007, p. 245; Humphrey 1995; High 2008). When the U.S. explorer Owen Lattimore traversed the country in the 1930s, he described these rules as a 'code of the laws of nature and the harmony of man with nature.' One of the main rules is that 'any unnecessary disturbance of nature must be avoided ...' (Lattimore 1962, p. 123). In such a case, it is wrong to move stones pointlessly from one place to another or scruff the ground and make marks on it (Humphrey 1995). Likewise, it is

an offence to remove green or living plants and only fallen branches can be collected as firewood. Importantly for the content of this thesis, it is also a law against nature to dig large holes in the earth, since it disrupts the spirits in the area (Humphrey 1995; High 2010).

Image 9 – An Ovoo overlooking Tsogttsetsii centre

Source: Author

Lindskog, describes how *nutag* as 'land' and 'place' forcefully holds an affective and sensuous quality for the people who live in, and move through, this land" (Lindskog 2010 p 130). She continues to describe how that this sense of belonging to land and place or '*Nutag*', which is made up of land, trees, mountains and steppes, creates a sense of being emplaced in the landscape and gives Mongolians a rootedness and particular sense of place. More so, she states that this feeling of home:

> invokes affections and emotions in most Mongols, and as such does not immediately only pertain to the herders whose pastoral lifestyle physically ties them to their *nutag*. The notion of *nutag* is flexible and can be widened to include the whole land of Mongolia – it may connote where you are born, where you live or Mongolia as a country (Lindskog 2010, p. 119).

In this sense, the idea of land and belonging is not uniquely experienced by herders but is something that Lindskog argues is a part of a Mongolian morality more generally. Therefore, one aspect of land for Mongolians is a moral attachment to it and from there flows a moral obligation to protect it.

In Mongolian cosmology landscapes are not simply occupied by humans and animals, but are also populated by non-human entities that contribute to Mongolian relationship to land and nature. In the case of 'land' or 'landscape', Humphrey explains that within Mongolian culture this category is perceived as 'something with energies far greater than the human' and that people inter-relatedly and/or subordinately interact with these agencies (Humphrey 1995). As Swancutt argues, spirits are at the top of the hierarchy of beings, and it is these non-human entities that permit people and animals to live and conduct activities on the landscape (Swancutt 2007). It is for this reason that herders place cultural and spiritual significance on many environmental landscapes, including mountains, springs and rivers.

Moreover, Lindskog explains the importance of the relationship between land, its natural resources and the *Nutag* (social belonging to land) need to be balanced. She cites a conversation with a Mongolian informant to explain:

> If you do not follow the rules connected to nature (*baigaliin yos*), for example if you cut young and wet trees (*noiton mod*), throw milk into the river, pollute the springs, streams

and rivers with dirt and garbage or hunt illegally, the spirits of the land (*hangain delhi*) will be angry and there will be *dzud*. It is important to be in harmony with nature and to follow the rules. If you come to a new place you should follow the rules of that *nutag*, for example in the Gobi and in Arhangai there are different rules. We follow the rules as our ancestors did. Ah... *Baigal* (nature) is precious to me, and I love my *nutag* (Lindskog 2010, p. 275).

Lindskog's quote introduces the moral obligation to protect nature and implies, by reference to the multiple different regions (Arghangi and Gobi), that this concept is broadly accepted across Mongolia. However in this quotation it is specified that the applicable rules of nature are relative to specific regions, also supporting the notion of regional differences noted above. Importantly, the quote also states that visitors to a region are expected to follow the rules of that area. That is, there is a social maxim requiring a visitor to abide by the rules and laws set out by the hosts specific beliefs and relations to their land.

4.3   Mining and Mongolian Cosmology

As mentioned, one of the highest natural laws is the prohibition against 'scuffing', or digging. By its very nature, mining requires large scale excavations and results in major transformations of the landscape. This creates an obvious tension between the activities of the mine and the moral obligations of the herders.[45] It was therefore not surprising that I was told by herders in both Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii, who were following the unwritten law of *nutag,* that they partially attributed the negative impacts resulting from the large amount of excavation at the mines sites and the development of roads across water courses conducted by the company, as the reaction of the angered spirits. Herder's often posited that these disturbances of nature had angered the spirits in nature and therefore rain had decreased[46], dust increased and the area had begun to be less habitable.

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[45] High agrees that in informal mining areas 'It is generally agreed throughout the mining and herding areas that such black spirits did not previously exist in the area and have only arrived with the onset of the gold rush.' (High, 2010, p. 172)

[46] The lack of water in this area raises particular concern for communities bordering mine sites which use large quantities of water in their operations (World Bank 2009). For all the operations that are developing in the South Gobi, a massive amount of water is required for human consumption and minerals processing. The mines intend to use deep underground prehistoric aquifers that they say will not impact on the surface water

An important informant in this study, living within close proximity of the mine, provided a vast amount of knowledge about the history of the mine site and the changes in Tsogttsetsii. Damdin, an elder within the community, was a miner working on the Tawan Tolgoi deposit prior to its large scale expansion and is a member of the *UHG Community Representative Committee* in Tsogttsetsii soum. He has lived in Tsogttsetsii for more than 40 years, working in the first small scale coal mine in 1973 (seven years after the operation started). His house sits overlooking the Tawan Tolgoi site and he has literally watched the daily growth of mining in the valley. He, like many of my informants, was supportive of mining but stressed the need for responsible management.

Damdin provided a description of the valley during the Socialist period before it changed significantly with the arrival of mining. Damdin's oral history provides a description of the valley before the large scale extractions began. Furthermore, his account provides insights into Mongolian ontological commitments, and the way they inform the discourse of community members about the impacts of mining.

> Damdin: During the *Neg Del*[47] the population of both humans and domestic animals were high. Approximately 40-50 families used to be around but now almost all have gone. Since the *Neg Del* collapsed and the animals were privatized a very small number of families and domestic animals are around these days. I guess there were around 30 families living here. Some of them were forced to move out by the mines – the conditions are now inconvenient. The whole natural landscape has been changed by scarcity of vegetation, dust problems, and the drinking water source is getting worse. Water sources this year are worse than last; spring, hand wells, and ground

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used by the community. The companies have conducted studies in the area that have concluded that there is sufficient water that will not impact on communities for the life of their mines. Currently both communities surrounding OT and UHG have told me their water is affected, either by a reduction in water availability or an increase in salinity. Furthermore, the World Bank has told me and reported that water will not be available in the South Gobi after forty years. In this case they plan to pipe water from two northern rivers of Mongolia. This causes not only local concern but these two rivers feed in to Russian water sources with the potential for difficult geo-political issues.

[47] The Neg Del was the central governing body of the socialist era at the soum level – an administration like the now soum government.

water wells, plus fresh water springs are becoming poor.

IC - Why do you think the water source is getting worse?

Damdin - Well, it's probably because of cutting the trees in the forest nearby and also increasing groundwater holes in the arid land. These ground water holes are dug for the mining uses and that dries up the soil water. These are the major reasons for destroying water sources and nature, I think. For instance, Mongolian gazelle was an endemic species and is now listed in the World's Red Book as an endangered species and has but totally disappeared. Back in those old times, wild antelopes, red deers and domestic animals used to graze together here and there in this little mine dip and in the north and south-facing of Mt Tsogttsetsii. Also, Ulaan Nuur (Red lake), known as salt-marsh, used to be rich in wild animals. Today you can't find them anywhere.

Firstly, Damdin begins his account with a description of the population of *both* animals and humans – reflecting the inter-connected space animals and people share in the Mongolian description of community. Secondly, he explains how the animals and people have 'almost all have gone' as the 'conditions are now inconvenient'. Thirdly, he infers the lack of water as being a major reason for the inconvenient living standards, which he attributes to two causes: Firstly, the removal of trees; as stated above, the cutting down of trees is one of the five supreme laws of nature which govern the steppe and removing trees angers the sprits and makes living in the environment difficult (see High 2010). Secondly, he attributes responsibility for the lack of water to the activities of mining. Although Damdin has a vast understanding of the mining process (himself being employed at the site for 36 years) he initially associates the lack of water with the removal of a small amount of trees from a hill, and then points to the greater amount of water used by the mine. This implicit discursive prioritizing supports the ontological commitment grounded in the cosmology discussed earlier, namely, that it is the power of the spirits in the environment which continue to have equal or more power to affect change in the Mongolian environment than the individual activities of humans on the land. This suggests an ontology that is premised on a broad construction of community, one that is situated and includes the inter-relationships between the land, non-human entities, animals and people.

4.3.1 Changing Landscapes and Shifting Cultural Practices

Damdin's account describes the changes to the environment and the community. The following account is also important as it shows the development of the mine from a locally organized industry to a large-scale international process. What becomes noticeable is that as the scale of mining increases, so does the lack of control the community has over the protection of their land and the mining process. What eventuates is the removal of the community from direct involvement in the sustainable process of mining, to the position of 'stakeholder' within a CSR framework, this coincides with the degradation of their *nutag* or, as the CSR policies state, the environment.

Damdin continued his narrative and explained to me the process within which the mine developed. The insights demonstrate the effect the mine has as it slowly encroaches on the activities of the people. It is also an account of the history, which I have not found in English literature. Before 1966, during the socialist period, there was an Artel in Tsogttsetsii. An Artel is a Russian word that describes a semi-formal agricultural association. In Mongolia, 'Artels' have been described as being similar to bagh level governance organisations during the socialist system. Damdin explained that 'before 1966 the land was owned by Tsogttsetsii soum' and the original extraction of coal from

> Tavan Tolgoi mine was utilised and the coal was transported by camel caravan to Omnogovi province, at that time the director of the Artel was Mr Sandagdorj, as I was told, to make funding the Artel he started coal caravan transport to Omnogovi province.

That is, the Tawan Tolgoi deposit was originally owned by the people of the bagh and a small collective of local residents extracted coal for the use of aimag residents – the people owned, transported, and benefited directly from the process of mining.

Moreover, during the Artel administration, cultural practices were more in accord with local traditions. As Damdin explained:

back in those days miners used to be very spiritual. They dug the land by hand or by help from camels and they would offer dairy foods and Haddack[48] back to the land/nature. People also used to burn junipers and care for the land.

Here, Damdin explains how the original miners on Tawan Tolgoi extracted the coal using practices that respected the prevailing values of the community at the time. The miners were aware of the injunction against scuffing and digging the earth, and to mitigate this would offer signs of respect to reconcile spirits so that the land would continue to support their use of resources, much as herders still do in the area today.

Damdin finished his oral history by providing details on the mines expansion both in scale and ownership. He states:

> then since 1966 the government gained the ownership, Tawan Tolgoi mine was first approved by the Ministers' committee decision and started operating. Until 1990 the mine was used to supply coal to three aimags in the Gobi and some parts of Ulaanbaatar city... Since 2008 the companies export coal to China, on top of supplying local consumers. Lots has been changed since Energy Resource came here, particularly the changes are happening with drinking water, pasture land, and even with wildlife conservation.

Damdin explains that the deposit was bought by the local aimag government in 1966 and larger scale extraction commenced in 1990, a period that coincides with the transition to democracy and emergence of capitalism. At this time the coal market expanded but remained mainly within the aimag and some sections of Mongolia. Finally in 2008, when capitalism became central to Mongolian governance and economics, the extraction process becomes fully industrialised and internationalised – resulting in the emergence of large scale negative impacts on the landscape. This historical account is not intended to infer that the community needs to be in a public space to have power over minerals development, but is used to demonstrate that as the community becomes further removed from the control of minerals extraction, so has their ontological rationale and positioning become more removed from

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[48] Silk scarf offered in worship or as respect or reverence for someone or some thing.

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minerals development – an element of community life which would seem crucial to any notion of sustainability.

4.4   Global and Local Interpretations - A Discourse of Distance

With regard to community relations and development, EBRD and the international consultants are now central to the decision-making and construction of activities undertaken to mitigate the negative impacts of mining, while the community are no longer directing this process. However, if we are to understand why current mitigation practices do not include activities such as the making of offerings to mitigate (in part) such impacts we must look further than the simple exclusion of the community from this process. This is particularly apparent insofar as portions of the community relations team are made up of Mongolians (albeit not members of the local community).

There are three different actors, based primarily out of Ulaanbaatar, engaged in work alongside the community: 1) Energy Resources community department, which is made up of workers (primarily Mongolian) that collect data and distribute information at the 'site level', directed by EBRD. 2) International consulting companies (primarily Western workers) which utilise data from the Energy Resource workers and conduct rapid data collections from the community, auditing and overseeing performance against EBRD standards. 3) EBRD (primarily Western workers) who set the standards for community development and oversee the monitoring in-conjunction with the international consultants. What emerges from this structure is that the community is no longer central to or directly involved in any sustainability practices but are relegated to 'stakeholders' to be 'consulted' - a position entirely outside of the decision-making process. More so, the practices that were once used to counter the spirits are no longer observed in any of the 'sustainability' documentation or community relationship or development practices (see Energy Resources LLC 2010).

The fact that large-scale mining is largely enabled by and a product of the emergence of industrialisation and the development discourse that has accompanied it, has led some Gender and Mining academics to analyse the discourse of mining in terms of the gendered coding of nature. Gender and Mining academics have made the observation that the emergence of industrialization corresponds with the devalorisation of nature and culture. They argue that the Western intellectual tradition has recognised the coding of 'nature' as female,

and has identified the idea of 'mother earth' with the fertility of the soil (Tallichet 1995; Kopusar 2002; Robinson 1996). Robinson claims that historically, the notions of 'miner' and 'earth' were assigned traits of masculinity and femininity respectively, and that at some point mutual respect obtained between the masculine, that of miners, and the feminine, giving earth (Robinson 1996). Robinson states that traditionally the 'fact that she (the earth) concealed her secrets that these veins were hidden from human kind, was taken as a prohibition on probing and searching for them' (Robinson 1996). Similar to the Mongolian relationship to nature, Robinson cites Merchant, who notes that historically, underground mining was considered an 'abuse of the mother, earth' (Emberson-Bain 1994; Robinson 1996).

Robinson remarks that the advent of technology and the growth of capitalism at the beginning of the modern era saw a marked change in such a conceptualisation of nature. This is supported by Cronon, who states:

> The development of a world capitalist system has brought more and more people into trade and market relations which lie well beyond the boundaries of their local ecosystems… In an important sense, a distant world and its inhabitants gradually become part of another people's ecosystem, so that it is increasingly difficult to know which ecosystem is interacting with which culture (Cronon 1983, p. 14).

Robinson argues that, based on scientific and technological developments, mining became 'the necessity of mastery of the earth and her bounty, in order to ensure human progress' (Robinson 1996). The masculine association of progress, civilisation and modernity became the dominant values in society over the feminine associations of sustainability, culture and tradition. She states:

> Two new ideas, those of mechanism and of domination and mastery of nature, became core concepts in the modern world. An organically orientated mentality in which female principles played an important role was undermined and replaced by a mechanically orientated mentality (Robinson 1996).

Like many eco-feminists, the advent of the modern era challenged the age old association of and respect for 'women and nature' and replaced it with a mechanically-oriented mentality (Emberson-Bain 1994).

Robinson's proposition is analogous to Damdin's account of the development of mining in Tsogttsetsii, which identified the customary mining practices in place when the deposit was processed by the local Artel and replaced with a 'mechanically orientated mentality'. The earlier practices demonstrate a need to respect nature and also a form of reciprocity to maintain cultural balance between nature and the activity of people. However, as the site became larger and more industrialized, EBRD began to oversee operations and set standards to direct it, and nature became detached from the core of the extractives processes. In fact, the cultural definition and perception of nature and the environment are re-named and re-conceptualised as universal 'environmental standards' and 'environmental impact assessments' removed from the community and positioned as abstract governing principles.

Many Gender and Mining specialists view this historical change as being the catalyst towards a 'globalised patriarchal order' in which the feminine (culture and nature) is subordinated with respect to the masculine (industrialisation and mining). According to Connell the onset of the modern era was the time when the 'modern "gender order" and its characteristic hegemonic masculinity' began to emerge' (Connell 1998). Many theorists in Gender and Mining understand the aforementioned formation of the current gender order (in which there is a hierarchy of the masculine over feminine) as deriving from this era and associate the onset of the male-dominated character of mining with this period.

This theory of the gendered nature of mining and the oppression inherent in it describes the discourse of Western owned and operated mines and companies that are operated by Western management of the Western ontological tradition. However, in the case of cultures like Mongolia, in which nature is conceived differently, this opens the possibility that the discourse of mining and the notions of oppression and domination might have a different cultural valency. This is where the theory becomes problematic in the Mongolian context. Western codes of nature and the gendered relationships cannot be conveyed universally; different societies define power, penetration, nature, technology and therefore oppression in many different ways. This notion becomes particularly pertinent in Chapters Five and Seven when I explore patriarchy in the Mongolian setting.

In Mongolia, for instance, the spiritual and gendered connotations between landscape and mining have to be understood differently. This was explained to me by a fellow anthropologist

who also assisted me with translations in the field. Although she noted a similarity with Western culture, insofar as Mongolians also traditionally position the earth as a mother (there being a shared belief amongst Mongolians of the mother earth and father sky), she identified two significant differences (Dulam & Vacek 1983). Firstly, she noted the differences between settled and nomadic (or agriculture and husbandry focused) cultures. In nomadic cultures earth – the land - is considered the mother that gives life to everything, feeds every creature, but is never something to own, possess, penetrate, or use. In contrast agricultural societies own/privatise land, plant seeds as a man plants his seed in a woman's womb. As a result, whereas Western cultures have a long-standing cultural background within which to associate the domination of land, via the penetration of the ground with the sexual 'penetration' of a woman, such an association is not commonly perceived in the Mongolian context.

Secondly, she explained that one should not look at the distinction between both earth and the sky and their associated feminine and masculine identities in such binary contexts. She explained that mountains and ovoo's (the caverns on top of mountains mentioned previously), which are a part of the earth are considered masculine, and rivers and lakes as generally female. In this sense she explained that neither the earth nor the sky is purely male or female but that each contains an element of each.

Consequently, an analysis of the gendered coding of mining as the 'masculine' 'penetration' of a 'feminine' earth, does not apply directly to the Mongolian context. The Gender and Mining account (drawing on Merchant 1990) of mining as 'mastery' of nature, with 'mining' coded as masculine, 'nature' as feminine and the relationship of 'mastery' thus interpreted as 'rape of the Earth' only makes sense from within a culture where those specific codes hold. There is an embedded supposition in Robinson's interpretation of Merchant that all mining is bad for women, based on an implicit argument that mining is the 'sanctioned rape.... of the earth', and that the earth is assumed to be the basis of 'women's original power' (Robinson 1996). However, literally transposing this theory to the Mongolian context, would render mining as the rape of both men and women (as earth and water), therefore destabilising the cultural coding of masculinity as representative of mastery over the earth, and of mining as inherently masculine. This distinction is also important as it supports the theory that we cannot import Western perceptions of nature into different cultural settings, where different conceptions of

nature and sexual characteristics reside. More so, it supports the WAD feminist theory that we often have to move beyond gender as a sole form of analysis to understand the constructions of power in different cultures.

4.5   Conclusion

In both Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii, the onset of large scale minerals extraction and the rise of negative impacts carry with them international standards and experts guiding community development and sustainability. These issues range from negotiation of land use and re-settlement, cultural heritage and economic livelihoods, to respecting cultural customs and beliefs. This chapter has observed that these new changes and modalities in the community often are in tension with their moral obligation to protect nature. That is, their language within which they understand their *nutag* and *baigal* (belonging to land and nature) are replaced with 'social and environmental impacts', a language and a set of meanings (as discussed in Chapter Eight) which are already steeped in Western ontology and carry their own culturally specific gendered meanings.

Consequently, as the community's social relationship to the land, animals or spirits becomes more marginalised, so does their ability to participate in the process of sustainability. I am not arguing (nor are my informants suggesting) that previously held Mongolian rituals can countervail large scale extractive impacts, whether Damdin's logic is scientifically plausible is irrelevant, what is important is that it reflects the 'thick vocabulary' of the community which structures the community's episteme, and which becomes the space where understanding, devising and assembling reality emerge (Taylor 1995). If this reality is not recognised, then where can the affected communities partake as active agents in development? In this case, it would seem that an important task of the company or researcher is to ensure that community views are not marginalised, but instead to find a way of centralising or, at the least, incorporating the community's ontologies as an integral part of the language of sustainable development in Mongolia.

For example, in Mongolia the land is constituted of both male and female characteristics and historically, disturbing either of these sources was remedied with the correct customary practices. In present day extractions these norms are no longer observed. As such, elements of Gender and Mining theory are sagacious and recognisable in Tsogttsetsii – there has been

a shift from valuing nature to mastering it, which has coincided with not only women, but both men and women being marginalised. Some elements of Robinson's theory can be applied to the Mongolian context if we recognise that mining has mastered both men and women. In this sense, our perception of patriarchy needs to shift and becomes more recognisable in the WAD sphere of not always needing to fight for equality, but creating opportunity and recognition for the community itself (Jhonson-Odim 1991). The following chapter will examine how women in the Mongolian context define and confront patriarchy within their cultural contexts.

Chapter 5 - Community and Company ontologies

5.1 Introduction

The fundamental theoretical tool used for analysis in this thesis, is that the significance of the actions of social actors are to be interpreted by identifying the relevant, underlying ontological commitments that inform those actions. The aim is to use this approach to interpret the dialogue, practices and decision-making of the parties engaged in the company/community relationship. This chapter is concerned with laying bare the basic ontological commitments of the gendered subject as revealed by both the community and company. Insight into the gendered subject will provide a framework for the analysis of later chapters, which more closely examine the gendered discourse of Mining and Development.

As my field sites included peoples from herder, urban and rural sedentary settings, I have considered these contexts in my feminist analysis as much as possible. The chapter begins with an examination of Carolyn Humphrey's treatment of hospitality and patriarchy in the Mongolian context (Humphrey 1987; Humphrey 2012). Her structuralist approach to the analysis of social roles, and their anchoring in ontological categories identified within a typical Mongolian herder household, is shown to be both informative and limited in its construction of patriarchy. I contrast this with an approach which seeks to bring out additional features of the relationship between ontological categories and social roles suggested by Henrietta Moore (Moore, 1994).

Following this exploration, the chapter aims to demonstrate that, far from being static, the company is a diverse entity, exhibiting a complexity of overlapping ontological commitments. In this regard, this chapter begins to develop the intersectional approach outlined in Chapter Two, arguing that ontological categories are interlinked, and that this complexity needs to be taken account of in both the community and company contexts in order to properly interpret the nature of their dialogue.

5.2 Herding, Hierarchy and Hospitality

Humphrey states 'Mongolian society is surely among several where not only is hospitality an undisputed moral good but the proper way of treating strangers and guests are

elaborated into "rules" or "maxims" (*yos*) (Humphrey 2012, p. 564). Although hospitality without expectation of returns 'is a prime ethical and practical virtue', Humphrey explains that it is conditional on certain protocols and relative to social hierarchies rather than being an unencumbered or universal norm (Humphrey 2012, p. 563). Thus Humphrey crucially links the social institution of hospitality, and the social roles issuing from it, with social hierarchy.

The central importance of hospitality to life in Mongolia, and the division of social roles associated with it, was clearly apparent to me on many occasions. On my first visit to Tsogttsetsii, I was travelling with a Mongolian BHPB Health and Safety officer and a company driver. We arrived in Tsogttsetsii at 6pm. We booked into the only hotel in town, which had eight small rooms above a small one room cafe, and which also hosted the only bar in town. The officer, aware that I would be travelling back to Tsogttsetsii alone to complete my fieldwork, wanted to introduce me to some of the more powerful families in town who would act as support for me when I returned.[49] The owner of the hotel, Batbayar and his wife Oyunaa, lived on the second floor in a large room with the hotel guests located down the hall. They and their family were Tsogttsetsii residents and were respected throughout the town. Batbayar was both a business man and a Tawan *Zuut Malchin* (Five Hundred Herder) which is a State honorific title given to exceptional herders who maintain a healthy herd of 500 plus head of animals. Like many Omnogovi residents, he spent a lot of time between the countryside with his herd and the town, in which he owned the hotel, the cafe (downstairs in the same building), and the local general store.

I was introduced to Batbayar and we shared tea and curds which are routinely presented to guests upon arrival. The importance of social roles in this process, as noted by Humphrey, was clearly evident. For example, I observed that rooms/gers were entered without knocking, after which we would sit and tea would be served, usually by the wife or eldest female child of the family. As Humphrey notes: 'while this is going on conversation should be only of the most general kind, health, weather, etc.' (Humphrey 1987, p. 44), and indeed, I often observed that the men would sit and hold discussions and exchange

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49 He explained to me that if I were known in town as connected to a family, it insured my safety, opened people
   to accepting my research and improving trust when speaking with me.

pleasantries. After pleasantries were exchanged, the BHPB officer introduced me and my research and asked the family to watch over me on my return. A general agreement followed, and everyone relaxed into general dialogue while Oyunaa (Batbayar wife) prepared a meal.

During this first visit to Tsogttsetsii, Oyunaa served tea, and did so in order of social ranking determined by age, seniority, and gender - that is, the driver who was the oldest and male, was served first (though less senior than the officer), then the younger male officer and finally myself as a female of the same age and seniority. After Oyunaa completed this, she then went to prepare food, while we discussed general news with Batbayar. According to Humphrey: 'essentially Mongolian manners are concerned with correct ranking and hierarchy, with assigning and accepting social roles...' (Humphrey 1987, p. 48). It was clear, as Humphrey observes, that roles in relation to this act of hospitality were distinctly organized along age and gender lines; women undertook the task of domestic labour while men sat and discussed livestock, travel and any news. These roles and the sexual division of labour associated with them have been identified by Western scholars focused on Mongolia, who often note the negative connotations of the roles assumed by women, and their implications for the status of women in Mongolian society more broadly (Humphrey 1987; Jones 2006; High 2008; Humphrey 2012).

It is important to note that Humphrey's analysis has developed over time from the more WID based analysis of gender-based relations (Humphrey 1974), to a more complex understanding of the construction of gendered power relations reflective of GAD (Humphrey & Urgunge 1996). However, I have observed two things in regard to this: 1) Humphrey's earlier work is currently more often used to characterise patriarchy in Mongolia, although her later work is a more nuanced account. 2) regardless of the complexity of her particular analysis, the subsequent role or position of women is often reduced to that of a relatively passive actor. As this chapter will explain, while parts of Humphrey's analysis and those academics that have followed are insightful, there are aspects of her analysis of these roles which are reductive in the context of the Gobi

region and tend to over-simplify the roles of women and their significance in the Mongolian context.[50]

Specifically, Humphrey's early analysis of social hierarchies is concerned to use certain basic categories identifiable in a Mongolian herder household to explain the differentiated roles observed within that household. She identifies two basic categories: gender (that is, the way in which objects in a household ger are identified as either male or female) and space 'Mongols persistently categorize objects in terms of their position in space' (Humphrey 1974). Following this she describes the relationships between the items within a ger in order to describe how these relationships determine the roles of men and women in those spaces, and hence 'define social positions' (Humphrey 1987). It is important to observe that for Humphrey, an understanding of the nature of 'social positions' frames the way in which gender and space are related within the ger. Her account will explain the relations between gender and space in the herder household by aligning them with 'actual' social positions. Thus there is an implicit assumption that gendered objects in the herder household map directly onto gendered persons acting in that same social space.

For example, Humphrey explains how a ger is divided into four main areas:

> The area from the door, which faced south, to the fireplace in the centre, was the junior or low-status half, called by the Mongols the "lower" half. The area at the back of the behind the fire was the honorific "upper" part, named the *xoimor.* This division was intersected by that of the male, or ritually pure, half, which was to the left of the door as you entered, and the female impure, or dirty section to the right

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[50] Humphrey's analyses can be viewed as a 'holistic structuralist' one, which anchored itself in a particular ontological construction of the objects making up the situation to be described. Dreyfus and Rabinow characterise 'holistic structuralism' using the work of Lévi-Strauss as an example that a catalogue of basic idealised items, observed in the situation to be described, is made, and the final description employs those items to describe that situation in terms of the actual relations observed between them. As a result, the understanding of the 'actual' situation crucially informs not just the description of the relations, but also the significance accorded to the basic idealised items identified at the first step in the analysis. This can lead to the omission from the description of important features that do not fit the terms of the understanding used to frame the relations between the items picked out in the first place (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982).

of the door, up to the *xoimor*... each of these was the designated sleeping place of people in different social roles and the correct storing of various implements and possessions of members of the family. It was considered a sin to move any utensil from its right place into another part of the tent. A woman's object was considered to pollute the men's area and a special ceremony might have to be performed to erase it (Humphrey 1974, p. 273).

As Henrietta Moore notes, this specific paragraph encodes a set of ideas as to how the 'organization of space reflects the hierarchical nature of relations between women and men' (Moore 1994, p. 73). That is, Humphrey notes that spatial divisions in a ger are assigned a gender, and then observes that the regions designated as female are de-valorised in relation to those designated as male – that is, the female region is termed 'impure'/'dirty' while the male section is 'pure'', a woman's object 'pollutes' the male space (Humphrey 1974; Lindskog 2000). A structural description is developed whereby the male space is accorded a greater privilege than the female space, a description authorised by the adjectives applied to each of them (pure/impure, pollution, etc.) (Lindskog 2000). This also includes the relationship based upon an understanding that the objects' positioning reflects a broader social relation in which men are hierarchically privileged over women. In other words, the relations between gender and space in the ger are explained by framing these basic items in terms of a particular understanding of the broader social reality in which they are located, which is in line with the basic methodology of holistic structuralism.

Although hospitality and its consequent roles and objects are clearly gendered in nature, I argue that this cannot solely be explained in terms of the gendering of space that Humphrey's identifies. As Moore notes, Humphrey's type of structuralist analysis has a place in emphasizing the symbolic meaning of these cultural symbols, however she cautions 'that the decoding of symbolic structures does not constitute an interpretation of those structures' (Moore 1994, p. 73). That is, she explains that Humphrey associates a hierarchy between the figurative categories of man and woman with the 'existence of relations of dominance or to the particular sets of social relations between women and men (Moore, 1994 p 74)'. Moore continues that this is not incorrect, but highlights that

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privileging broad cultural representations over what people really do in their day to day lives undermines any attempt to specify the actual relationship. Utilising Moore's argument that 'meaning does not inhere in symbols but must be invested in and interpreted from symbols by acting social beings' I began to recognise from the actions and statements of Mongolian women that meanings of these roles, to those women, are based upon more complex notions of power, custom and culture (Moore 1994, p 74).

5.3 A Dialogical Analysis

5.3.1 Effortless movement

I discussed with many women working in the Mongolian communities and companies, Humphrey's interpretation of the position of women based on cultural practices within the ger,. The women at a gender-based NGO, Gender Centre for Sustainable development (GCSD), provided information that was representative of these perceptions and summarised the views in a way that contributed to my understanding of social roles and hierarchies in Mongolia. The women of GCSD represented a cross-section of Mongolian social contexts: both rural and urban, and herding and sedentary settings. The majority were tertiary educated and had engagements to various degrees with feminist theory and worked in the field of gender and development. On reading the extract from Humphrey's work quoted above, they reacted to it by employing a common Mongolian idiom '*davsalsan tailan baina*' (we feel it is too salty), which is used to suggest that something is exaggerated. On further discussion it became clear that these women regarded the description of gender roles and hierarchies as clever but partially un-representative of the actual Mongolian situation. Subsequently they provided me with an explanation of this power relation, one they argued required a broader view of the social reality in which the gendered roles were actually lived out.

The women from the GCSD began by emphasizing the practical considerations informing the divisions. Noting, primarily, that gers are simply small and, as such, they needed to be ordered according to basic practicalities, with utensils being placed in spaces that are most useful to support the herder lifestyle. As one of the women noted: 'for example, the

leather bag for *airag*[51] is on the right [male side] so men can mix it a few times when he walks in and out of the ger when herding.'

In addition the adjectives describing the spaces as either 'pure' or 'impure' were not considered significant, as one of the women from GCSD informed me:

> Actually the idea of purity and pollution came with Buddhism (unfortunately not the original teaching by Gauthama Buddha). And one to two, centuries ago these kinds of ideas were very strong, women were considered dirty partly because of menstruation - and this is universal isn't it? So I think the division of a ger, which is far more ancient than the Buddhism wave in Mongolia, cannot be explained by purity or dirtiness of people.

In her more recent article Humphrey observes that the notion of impurity is based on the fact that women give birth while holding onto the poles of the ger centre and through this establishes a correlation between the impurity of regions within the ger, and menstrual and birthing practices specific to women (Humphrey 1974; Humphrey 1995). In Humphrey's later work researching Daur Mongols,[52] she provides a more detailed and nuanced description of the particularities associated with impurity and women and how it can be used as a source to both negatively objectify and also empower women (Humphrey & Urgunge 1996, p. 173). However, again I observe the interpretation that women are subordinated due to their 'impurity' is the most coined interpretation to reflect gender hierarchies in Mongolian literature. For example, High observes how the notion of impurity/purity:

> …divides the clean from the dirty, it similarly separates the upper from the lower, the male from the female, the orderly from the wild (Lindskog 2000). Whilst such divisions are most strongly asserted within the domestic space of a *ger* (Humphrey

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[51] A homemade alcoholic beverage from fermented mare's milk made and drunk throughout Summer.

[52] An Inner Mongol group with somewhat different customs to Outer Mongols - Inner Mongolia being the part of Mongolia situated in and governed by China and Outer Mongolia being the sovereign state to the north.

1974), they are also apparent in many other aspects of social life (High 2008, p. 123).

This statement of High's reflects the understanding of purity and impurity and the consequent social hierarchies represented in Humphrey's earlier and, I would argue, less nuanced work. The overall meaning suggesting that the women are considered subordinate within and outside the domestic space and, moreover, perpetuating a discourse that women are less valued in the social life.

By contrast, the Mongolian academics and policy makers I discussed this with pointed to two further important differences. Firstly, that the associations of women's impurity was only practised for a relatively short period of Mongolian history, and in fact is no longer supported by religious institutions and rarely heard or considered amongst the population. Secondly, that the conception of the division of the ger space in fact pre-dates the notions of purity/impurity, and forms a part of Mongolian cosmology dating back to the first Mongolian origin stories. Other layers of the Mongolian cultural tradition which do not neatly support the notion that the feminine is de-valorised are occluded from the analysis, and so are not permitted to inform an analysis of the significance of separately gendered roles.

Furthermore, I was also advised by the women from GCSD that wider, cosmological considerations were also significant in understanding the relationship between spatial organisation, social hierarchies and the ontological frame in which they are enacted. It was explained to me that although practical realities go some way towards accounting for the placement of mundane items within the ger, 'on the other hand, the simplest things can be explained with the deepest philosophy.' The women then discussed with me the basic structural ontological commitment by which Mongolians position themselves with regards to space, and this moves far beyond the symbolic representation of objects and subsequent social hierarchy as observed in a structuralist analysis.

Indeed Mongolian anthropologists explain the division of the ger using Mongolian mythology in terms of the concept of the beginning of the universe. Mongolian anthropologist S. Dulam writes that according to ancient legend, the 'first place' emerged

at the beginning of history and became the centre of the ger (Dulam & Vacek 1983). Therefore, the places and areas around the ger primarily represent different directions of the earth and are not based on the gender of individuals but rather on a primordial conception of spatial direction embedded in the nature of the universe. Moreover, he explains that the masculine/feminine division of the ger space comes from the location of furniture and utensils used by men and women. In this sense the areas were named because of the practical nature of the objects, and that these objects are positioned in space in a manner which aligns them to fundamental directions within the universe.

5.3.2 Behind the fire

The significance of this cosmological background to an understanding of the Mongolian household, and the roles that emerge from that understanding, can be seen in a significant omission in Humphrey's earlier analysis (Humphrey 1974). Although she mentions it, she crucially neglects to discuss the most important structure in the ger, the fire, and the fact that it is honoured as a female form. This omission not only weakens her analysis of the gendering of space and objects within the ger, and the social roles that flow from this gendering, but it also troubles the interpretation of the feminine as de-valued with respect to the masculine in the Mongolian society. It also brings into question the assumption that there is an overarching social hierarchy of a particular sort which determines the structuring of the space within the ger and the social roles enacted therein.

Giving attention to the position of the fire place as an object within the symbolic representation of Mongolian cosmology, and the roles which surround its care and upkeep within the ger, allows a different picture to emerge of the significance of social roles. At the centre of every ger is the fire, the iron fireplace which is the source of warmth and light in sub-freezing winter months and also is the main fuel supply for cooking and cleaning. The central hearth is regarded as sacred to the Mongols 'for fire is sacred' (Jagchid & Hyer 1979, p. 150). There are numerous taboos associated with the use and lighting of fire and many rituals which invoke fire for purification and protection (Jagchid & Hyer 1979; Atwood 1996; O'Gorman & Thompson 2007). There are three

stories concerning the creation of the fire spirit, the most commonly espoused being the following:

> The fire is said to be produced by a series of pairs, one male, the other female for instance, the male steel and the female flint, the male sky and the female earth, the upper ninety-nine divinities and the lower seventy-seven-fold earth, the father king and the mother queen (Atwood 1996, p. 126).

In this instance the fire is made by male and female dualistic parts and the spirit of the fire becomes/remains a female spirit; fire is honoured as a goddess and is thus primarily cared for and served by women (O'Gorman & Thompson 2007).[53]

In essence the fire is symbolically the 'soul of the family' and 'the wife is the steward of the family's fire and hearth and is accordingly the first to wake up every morning…' (Monfemme 2012). That is, once a man and woman are married, it is the female that ceremoniously lights the first fire in their ger, to bring forth:

> …children-sons, daughters-in-law, and daughters-as well as to pacify the state and make the king and queen and their property flourish (Atwood 1996, p. 127).

Embedded in this sentence is a privileging of the males (sons and married sons), however it is the woman whom has the role to protect the spirit that creates the broader possibility of protection. Obviously there are gendered roles and hierarchies at play - for example, the ritual aims to firstly protect the male,[54] however it should be noted that it is the woman that has the role or power to create the energy/spirit which enables this protection to occur.

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[53] Mette notes that the Horchin Mongols, Atainian Buriats (and) Haslund also describe the fire as a feminine spirit. However, she didn't hear it called a female form in her Uyanga province. Likewise Humphrey found the Daur Mongols perceived the fire spirit as male but the protector of the spirit as female – she observes an inter-connected relationship between the sexes in this analysis.

[54] It is interesting that the interpretation supposes that the male is protected because he is more important and not weaker.

5.3.3 Contesting Interpretations of Power

It is important to not reduce the ritual of fire lighting to a mere adjunct of a gendered role. As Atwood states, the process of fire lighting itself evokes many overlapping meanings which situate the family in a broader cultural milieu, within which the family (not the individual performing the role) is constituted as a fraction of a broader whole (Atwood 1996). Systems of overlapping identifications are at work whereby,

> the State, the cosmos, and the family are all seen as composed of dualistic, male and female pairs, generating progeny. The aim of the ritual is to identify the tent and family both with the cosmos centred on the fire and the state, and the man and woman of the house with the sovereign genitors of the realm and of the cosmos itself, and by so doing render the house and family prosperous and invulnerable to harm (Atwood 1996, p. 127).

The importance of the fire is reflected across different strata of Mongolian society – rituals are practiced daily in herder gers and also at the government level, such as the recent controversial fire ceremony held to celebrate the 100 year anniversary from Qing rule (Waters 2012). This ritual was controversial as the government held the fire-lighting ritual and, specifically didn't include women by using wood and soil from a sacred mountain more often worshipped by men and which women are traditionally not permitted to walk upon. This act was viewed by GCSD and other gender-based NGOs as an example of how manipulations of culture and tradition can be used to subordinate women. Historically, these ceremonies and rituals have not excluded women and is said to be a change accompanying the poverty of the transition period during which women's equality has been publically eroded (Terbish and Oidov 2005, Walters 2012).

Notwithstanding the importance of the issue of 'culture' being used to excuse the disempowerment of women (see Volpp 1994), I intend to concentrate on the relationship between gender and power in the Mongolian context. The Mongolian community relations officer of the OT mine noted that power relations and gender relations in the communities were not cast in terms of individualism or binary notions of self/other, or us/them, but within the context of the family situated as part of an organic patchwork of overlapping familial relationships, which together form a larger community. The Mongolian connunity

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relations officer argued that women and men within a household, position themselves ontologically as a family unit, not as atomistic individuals (man and woman), and that unit nests itself within a larger collective of interrelated and inclusive familial units, forming broader groups called *Ails*.

While some theorists have given attention to the gendering of fire, they do so within a theoretical frame which is committed to the ontological position that the feminine is de-valorised with respect to the masculine in the Mongolian cultural context (Humphrey 1974; High 2008). The result is that the significance of social roles concerning fire is read solely in such terms. I argue that such a reading occludes an understanding of the ways in which Mongolian women, living out those roles, and drawing on the resources of their culture, find significance and resist re-inscription within a theoretical framework that is committed to viewing them, and the symbols associated with them, as hierarchically subordinated within that culture.

So, for example, although High observes the significance of the gendering of fire, she also reduces its complexity and ontological significance by observing the role of the fire/stove (even as female) as a spatial demarcation for opposing sexual powers operating within a hierarchical fashion. She explains that the precise position of the fireplace is located to clearly demarcate a 'consistent opposition between high status (male) and low status (female) space... to further concretise peaceful hierarchy in life' (High 2008 p160). High also observes the significance of fire and interprets its position in the structuralist context within which Humphrey places objects to signify social hierarchies.

I observed that Mongolian women inhabiting these spaces do draw on the earlier Mongol tradition to interpret their own spaces, and any account of the way in which they live out their roles in these contexts must register their ability to mobilise this layer of their own traditions. Therefore, rather than characterising them as the 'victims' of a devaluation, their own cultural tradition provides them with the resources to contest any such 'devaluations' through their own interpretations of a space within which they themselves do not feel devalued. Such active engagement of Mongolian women with their culture, in ways that contest an interpretation which would restrict their sphere of action to one

determined gender hierarchy (male over female) was explained to me. A GCSD female worker relayed the following:

> If we look at west and east side of ger we cannot say anything about domination and patriarchy. Now about the upper and lower part, this division exists too and that can be linked better to domination and patriarchy. The Upper part is offered to guests, elders and people with higher positions. When I travel to the countryside I am offered to sit in *hoimor* [upper side] a few times when there are no older or senior people around. Even when there are elders and seniors I am usually offered to sit on the right side. I move to left side only when there are too many people to sit on right side, but nobody tells me to move, I do it myself as a Mongolian woman.

WAD theorists argue that the struggles of African women cannot be understood without understanding both 'woman' and 'Africa'. Similarly the construction of woman and the negotiation of power in Mongolia requires attention to the 'Mongolian' (Zinn 1996). The informant demonstrates that social rules do not determine behaviour. Women in Mongolian society, in the herder context, have a high degree of agency with respect to these rules. This is not something 'extra' to being a woman in that society. Women do not have to 'fight against' or 'transgress' those rules in order to attain that agency or exercise it. That agency is present as part of what it means to be a 'Mongolian woman', as part of the thick vocabulary in which those women articulate themselves.

5.3.4 Regional Gender Differences
Another social layer in terms of gender characteristics of Mongolian people was the role of regional difference. Mongolian women either from the South Gobi itself, Ulaanbaatar or the mine site, pointed to herders and rural people as having gender relations that differ from those in urban areas. They most often attributed the difference to the roles and responsibilities of herding, as have foreign observers.

> Where equal division of labour has reigned… women in Mongolia have always been equal to men, since their participation in livestock breeding and related livelihood activities was as essential as that of men's (UNESCO 2004, p. 317).

More so, I often heard people in Ulaanbaatar commenting on the harsh conditions of the South Gobi (extreme temperatures, minimal water, and low populations) and how this shaped men and women differently to their counter-parts in the North (See Benwell 2009, pp. 125-130).[55] An informant of Benwell's notes:

> Gobi life is very hard and only Gobi people can survive in the Gobi. There is even a saying that it is better to be born as a deer in the Hangai [steppe regions] than to be born as a man in the Gobi. Gobi women are adjusted to the nature of the Gobi. (Benwell 2009, p. 159).

In particular, women in the South Gobi are widely considered to be strong, protective of their family's interests, and adept at dealing with very difficult conditions.

The regional difference between gender constructs was also noted by the female community relations manager who attributed the difference to the distance and population of the South Gobi area. She explained in an interview:

> I have also been working in the Gobi for two years and I have noticed the gender issue here. It is much different to urban areas and Arghanghai area [where I am from], because in the Gobi you will see the density of the population is less and the distance between families is at least three kilometres.

Likewise, I observed a difference in women's attitudes as individuals, and the power relations within the family unit as somewhat more independent and authoritative than women in the North. For example, later in the evening on the first night that I stayed with Oyunaa and Batbayar, after the customary serving of tea by Oyunaa, she invited me downstairs where all the women were sitting and drinking beer and having a party. Her husband Batbayar remained upstairs and assisted the children with school work. This type of traditional role reversal, where the man cares for children and the women drink, I have not witnessed in other areas in Mongolia and people inform me it is unique to the Gobi regions.

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[55] Benwell states: 'In 1996 I was also told by an older man that matriarchal families had been common, though only in the Gobi, around 1900.' I have not read other sources in English that support this (Benwell 2009, p. 228).

High discusses the patriarchal linage of herding families, and notes that there are specifically determined roles within the herder families such that men are generally considered the 'head' of the family (High 2008). Similarly the community relations manager told me quite directly, 'the woman stay at home more and while of course it is typical in Mongolian families for [the] man to be head of the family and woman has to respect them'. I do not contest that the basic structure of Mongolian families isn't patriarchal, there are publically recognised roles (including the hospitality maxims discussed earlier) that reproduce and reinforce this hierarchy. However, I do argue that regional differences impact on patriarchy and therefore need to be taken into account when understanding Gender in the South Gobi.

Whereas, Humphrey and High explain that as the primary carers of livestock, men do most of the travelling and visiting to neighbouring gers (High 2008; Humphrey 2012). High notes:

> As men from other ails frequented our ger during the day, I started to realise what men's herding partly entailed. Animals generally know where they are going, and so do the men; in the latter case it often being to a ger for the first drink. After having some homebrewed vodka, they continue a little further before stopping at the next. As the men circulated between the gers in the valley, they allowed me a view into their visiting practices... (High 2008, p. 188).

In these instances, the men are observed as spending the day visiting neighbouring gers and drinking, whereas the women remain at home, working and serving other travelling male herders. Humphrey notes, 'such guests expect to be received with unremitting hospitality, while the male host may well be absent, all of which severely taxes the women, who have to sustain the generosity for as long as the guest chooses to stay' (Humphrey 2012). This description is taken from Central Mongolia and I didn't always observe similar conditions in the South Gobi.

According to my informant, the South Gobi social and environmental conditions are distinct, and therefore social arrangements clearly follow a different pattern from other regions. She explained:

> Camels in the Gobi are semi-wild and the man goes often to find the camels. While the man and husbands are going outside of their families and wives are staying at home.

Sometimes they [women] have to make decisions and they have the power while the man is gone. Therefore women are independent and it seems they have power.[56]

Thus the degree within which women have agency and are empowered to navigate their social roles and consequent power relations is contested, particularly in the South Gobi where women are uniquely positioned. Unpacking power and patriarchy as understood by the Mongolian community relations officer and High, draws quite different conclusions. Humphrey and High perceive this particular social exchange/labour division as a burden on women as the men are depicted as somewhat free to visit and drink all day. In Humphrey and High's statement, there is an obvious inference that a gender inequality exists in this activity. By contrast, my informant and other literature argue that men travelling from their gers effectively acknowledged the independence of women and, to a degree, enable it with their absence. Indeed this is the very reason that women are considered more empowered, strong and independent in the Gobi (Benwell 2009). These two interpretations of the same activity - one which views the women as disempowered and one that views it as the source of women's empowerment - indicate regional and interpretive differences.

5.4 Intersectional Power Relations

In the discussed cases of hospitality, the Ger formation, Fire, and the understanding of herders' labour activities, I demonstrate that theorists rely too heavily on Western constructions of power to interpret the position of women in Mongolia. Such an analysis not only over-simplifies the situation, but misses ways in which roles are performed in a cooperative relationship between gendered actors, in situations which effectively distribute a balance of social power to women.

I have argued that the gender relations depicted by Mongol theorists constructs male and females as more individualistic and operating within a patriarchal binary power relation. In this dichotomy, the masculine characteristics of purity and the feminine impurity are positioned in a gender hierarchy that position masculine characteristics above the de-valued feminine traits. These gender constructions are then seemingly aligned to all activities of labour and

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[56] For a discussion on the reputation of the sexual behavior of Gobi women due to travelling partners in the broader Mongolian perspectives, see Benwell 2009.

hospitality in the ger and household. However, I have argued that this understanding of power cannot be directly applied to the South Gobi context and a more complex understanding of power, one that analyses a number of factors including culture and regionality alongside gender, is appropriate. Finally, this analysis suggests that the basis of Mongolian ontological commitment is aligned more closely with the WAD ontology and definition of power. This is in tension with the WID and GAD Liberal individualist ontology and subsequent constructions of patriarchy which position men and women as competing individuals in a binary power formation.

Importantly, this understanding of the Mongolian subject and subsequent power relations becomes a crucial element when theorising the basis of a community in Mining and Development. For example, do the company engagements interpret the situation of women in the South Gobi as Humphrey and High do, as 'unequal' to men, and therefore premise their development programs on their empowerment? Or, are they understood as empowered subjects, as developing world feminists and as I suggest - able to contribute to utilise their cultural and regional maxims to contribute to the direction of minerals development in their community? Chapters Six and Seven will examine this ontological tension to analyse the impact it has on the efficacy of companies to deal with gender in company policy. However, first it is important to understand the company in more detail. I will therefore introduce the ontologies of the companies under research, with a more detailed consideration of the issues being presented in Chapters Seven and Eight.

5.5 Company ontology: Complicating stereotypes of homogeneity

Mining companies are often referred to in the Gender and Mining literature as if they are fixed and homogenous entities (Ballard & Banks 2003). They are most often referred to as 'the mining company', as if this label was a specific definition capable of explaining all companies and the way they operate in all circumstances globally (Emberson-Bain 1994). By contrast, anthropologists and most social scientists adopt various methodological protocols to ensure that a community is not homogenised in this way. In particular, the different groups, cultures, ethnicities, and sexes are each carefully demarcated, so that that the overarching totality that is the community can be carefully studied. The same cannot be said about the analysis of mining companies, particularly in the Gender and Mining field, in which companies are neither

perceived as fluid, changing or operating within complex discourses (see exceptions Coumans 2012; Ballard & Banks 2003; Kemp, D. Keenan, J & Gronow J, 2010, Grosser & Moon 2005). However this conception is not limited to those outside mining companies, since those companies present themselves in the documents they produce as a united group, operating under common unified slogans, such as 'the way we work', or 'who we are and what we do', which reproduce an image of a homogeneity of individuals, values and ideologies collectively striving to achieve common aims (Rio Tinto 2009a; Rio Tinto 2009b; Rio Tinto 2012).

In direct contrast to such depictions of the nature of the mining company, from both inside and outside its boundaries, the results of my fieldwork show that any mining company can only be understood as an amalgam of various diverse groups, enmeshed in complex social discourse and contesting amongst themselves the identity of the company itself. I consider the lack of engagement with this complexity to be due to a lack of information on internal corporate practices, combined with the consistent replication of the image of a company as a fixed, monolithic entity.

Just as feminism has previously deconstructed social stereotypes to expose the underlying internal and external power relations at work within a group, individual or society, this thesis aims to provide insight into the individuals and groups and the subsequent intersections of power that constitute a transnational mining company. The current intention of this section is to provide information concerning the discourse of the culture of the companies that were the subject of the fieldwork, while the following chapters will observe these relations more closely to examine hierarchies of power and decision-making processes that affect the community relations and development programs in which those companies were involved.

5.5.1 The masculine mining man and sustainability
The initial fieldwork plan envisaged that the research would primarily focus on Rio Tinto and Energy Resources (as Energy Resources and Rio Tinto were the primary shareholders of each project). However, once in the field it was clear that the constitution of each of these corporate sites was more complex than this, since they were each made up of a combination of the primary shareholder employees and many different subcontracting companies, each specialising in different parts of the minerals extraction process. There is thus a significant

division, internal to the corporate site, between those workers directly employed by the company operating the site, and those indirectly employed by it as contractors. Importantly, although all contractors come under the umbrella of the primary shareholding company and are thus *meant* to adhere to the standards and guidelines of that company, the various groups of contractors are far from homogeneous, each having their own characteristics and internal hierarchies and power relations, which both intersect and conflict with official corporate structures in ways that contribute towards practices that diverge from global company standards. The significance of the company/contractor division and its effects on the mine site is discussed in Chapter Seven.

An identifying feature of OT and UHG is that, at the time of research, all of the contracting companies present on the corporate fieldwork sites were headed by expatriate workers ('expats'), overwhelmingly of Western origin,[57] and, additionally, they were almost exclusively male.[58] As Cannon explains '[w]estern mining expatriation is fluid and transitional, where class is often determined by ethnicity and sex, and where one's identity from home can be turned upside down' (Cannon 2002, p. 27). That is, the dominant social categories of the expat working structure are more likely to be constituted by nationality, gender and expertise in ways that do not reflect the social categories from which the expat worker is drawn in their country of origin.

Literature and media often depict the mining culture as being encapsulated by 'rugged masculine miner working-class culture' (Kideckel 2004, p. 49; Al Jazeera 2011), something akin to a description by Allen in Lahiri-dutt:

> …mining evokes popular images of hard refined men, distinct and separate from other workers, hewing in mysterious dungeons of coal, dirty, strange men, in some ways frightening and for this reason repellent…' (Lahiri-Dutt 2006, p. 43)

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57 The managers were from Canada, Australia, the US, France, and South African, along with one Filipino manager.

58 At the time of research: i) The community relations department was a male Western manager but now he has been replaced by a Mongolian woman. ii) There was one female foreign expat at the UHG operation and none at OT.

Robinson and Lihiri-Dutt draw upon the images and symbols within mining that project mining as a solely masculine domain. Particularly they focus on the physically laborious nature of mining, which they suggest depicts 'images of mining as human endeavour [that] incorporate the imperatives of physical strength, endurance and filth, all characteristics of masculine work' (Robinson 1996, p. 90). Lahiri-Dutt argues that the dominant 'occupational identity' of the male miner has rendered the work of women invisible, that 'the heavy manual character of the work, the dirt and risk tend to be emphasised and tend to make the male miner the typical labourer…' (Lahiri-Dutt 2006, p. 4). In both these cases, theorists are drawing on the theoretical understanding that the discourse of mining is shaped by a dominant masculine image, which reflects the normalised gender roles which exist within the community in which mining takes place, and those gender roles reinforce the notion that women and women's concerns properly belong outside of mining practice.

My observations on site were that company discourse was indeed a masculine discourse. The spectrum of understandings I encountered are represented by the following two statements. The first was made by an explosives manager on site who asked rhetorically: 'what's gender got to do with rocks?', while the second was made by a business manager in a corporate setting, who said: 'we already do gender, we have many development programs directed at women'. More commonly mine workers of both Mongolian and Western backgrounds situated themselves somewhere between these two statements.

Gender was a topic that was not openly discussed but instead somewhat hidden from public view (Lahiri-Dutt 2006). Specifically, discussions on gender, women and women's issues always took place in private on a 'one or one' basis with me - *never* in group settings, and especially not in the presence of other male miners. Another facet of the 'hidden' nature of gendered issues in both corporate office and mine site settings was the fact that informants would consistently go 'off-record' during interviews, or provide me with classified and confidential material concerning gender issues, on the understanding that they not be identified as the source of this information. It became apparent from such discussions that gender was an issue that was widely recognised by people within mining, but that the official acknowledgement of gender did not reflect how widespread a concern it was in the daily affairs of corporate offices and mine sites.

Another important outcome of my fieldwork observations was the fact that the masculine discourse of mining was equally imbued with other discursive factors that were similarly oppressive. My first impression of the 'dirty, strange men' in the mining world was very different to my expectations. When I first arrived at one of the mine sites I was met by the deputy director, a younger man who I'll refer to as Luke. Luke provided me with many experiences and insights into the culture of mining and how foreign people and companies operate in developing countries. I landed at the OT airport and Luke gave me a lift back to camp. He was polite and somewhat reserved, and was proud to identify himself as a third generation miner who had quickly achieved professional success. Although his educational background was in commerce, at 31 he was one of the managers in a group in charge of the entire operation. On our drive towards the camp we discussed our mutual desire for travel and he began to ask me about my research. I explained this in an abstract philosophical manner, speaking of ontology and discourse in gender, which I promptly begin to regret, as I thought it will be met by deaf ears. I recalled afterwards that I had been advised on numerous occasions by researchers and professionals attached to the industry about 'corporate and company talk' and that 'if I spoke like that' [academically] people would switch off and walk away. In fact, Luke responded by telling me that he was very interested in philosophy and quite glibly stated that he was reading Foucault but preferred Wallerstein. This first encounter, and the many subsequent ones I was to have with other workers in OT and UHG, destabilised the stereotype of the 'rugged masculine' mining man within the industry.

On the other hand, another informant, Dan, (previously a school teacher) who was a very senior employee at OT, displayed many of the elements of the rugged masculine image stereotypical of the mining industry. Dan had previously worked for a company that is reputedly known as the 'cowboys of the mining industry.' They are named as such, as they are reportedly tough, hardworking and a little reckless. As one informant pointed out to me, 'they are great for building a mine quickly, but not so much for building a community.' Due to their reputation for efficiency in constructing a mine, Ivanhoe[59] management had head-hunted

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[59] At the time of research, Rio Tinto had only recently purchased stakes in the OT operation from Ivanhoe Inc, resulting in large numbers of Rio Tinto staff and management standards being implemented. The stipulated 'takeover' and consequent division between Ivanhoe and Rio Tinto was obvious both on-site and in the corporate office - adding evidence to the heterogeneity of mining companies.

a group of managers and workers from this company to develop and construct the mine rapidly.[60]

I soon learnt that the 'cowboy' reputation was something that the men in the 'Ivanhoe camp' were proud to identify with. When I asked Dan if he was employed by Rio Tinto, he replied 'God no! I'm not one of those, I'm an Ivanhoe man'.[61] Observations in the field disclosed that being an 'Ivanhoe man' carried a perception of being the traditional stereotypical miner focused on construction, extraction, hard work, and making money. Whereas Rio Tinto miners were perceived as a 'new type' of miner, one that was considered softer, too focused on the community and moving away from the business of 'just digging dirt out of the ground'. These perceptions of Ivanhoe as a less socially responsible company than Rio Tinto, was corroborated by the level of financial investment in the community and environment departments from each company, as informally discussed with me by managers on-site. While Rio Tinto placed large amounts of resources into sophisticated forms of social and environmental development, Ivanhoe had a smaller budget that focused on community donations and sporadic aid.

Cannon highlights and critiques the symbolic stereotype that mining is simply 'digging a hole in the ground and extracting metal' (Cannon 2002, p. 83). She argues that this position obscures the cross-section of workers and work that is conducted on a mine site that often requires a variety of highly skilled technicians and accountants, working in offices, who are not classical images of rugged masculinity. However, she balances against this the fact that the 'frontier discourse which accompanies the international industry in its colonial and neo-colonial dealings in Less Developed Countries' reinforces masculinity and the masculine discourse of the company, as every worker operates as a "pioneer" or "cowboy" (Cannon, 2002, p. 83).

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[60] For an account of different stages of mining and the historical characteristics that personify the different groups in the different stages of mining, see Cannon 2002.

[61] An important note here is that he was employed by Ivanhoe as compared to Rio Tinto and neither of these companies were his previous company that was described as a 'cowboy' of the industry.

By applying a GAD analysis to Dan, it is possible to begin to unpack the masculine discourses on site in a way which demonstrates Cannon's point. Dan specifically identifies as 'an Ivanhoe man', deliberately playing on the well-known advertising image of the lone 'Malboro Man', in order to align himself with a well-known 'cowboy company'. Notably Dan also contrasts himself to the perceived ethos of Rio Tinto, a fact which illustrates that within the mining sector as a whole, there are well-known and accepted differences between companies, and that these differences attract certain personalities, and lead to the forging of certain types of identifications and loyalties. Thus, insofar as Dan identifies proudly as a rogue, masculine and rugged man, he considers himself to belong with Ivanhoe, and not at Rio Tinto, where a more compliant, feminine and soft character would belong. These differences and the possibilities they provide for various identifications by those expats working in the mining industry points to the complexities and differences between companies, in ways that are not readily visible to those outside the mining sector, a fact which resembles the kinds of multiple identifications taking place between individuals as members of differing groups within a community. An observation further supported by Luke, who was also an 'Ivanhoe man' but did not represent the 'cowboy' image perpetuated by Dan.

5.5.2 Identity and ethnicity

Another social influence that contributed to the ontological framing of the company was ethnicity. My fieldwork observations suggested that expat groups continually define and re-define themselves against the different national groups present on the mine site. For example, the Australians teased the 'whinging Poms' and they in turn jested at 'convicts, criminals and larrikinisms' of Australians. However, these defining difference dissolve quickly 'as they identify as a group in distinguishing themselves from the [Mongolian] "nationals" (Cannon 2002, p. 90). This distinction between expats and Mongolians was clearly visible, not only because expats were those occupying managerial roles and the positions of power, but also by the superior accommodation, flexibility of 'on-site' rules and considerably higher pay enjoyed by expat workers. These differences reinforced the discursive privilege enjoyed by expats over Mongolian workers – a fact that Mongolian workers were clearly sensitive to (as discussed in Chapter Seven) (Khasg-Erdene 2013).

I argue that these differences, observed at both UHG and OT operations, perpetuated a colonial and paternalist discourse towards Mongolians and Mongolian institutions in general. The following conversation I had with one of the U.S. underground expat workers in the dining hall, exemplifies this:

> I love it here, my workers they would do anything for me. If I asked them to do jumping jacks [star jumps] for 2 hours and I left and came back, they would still be doing them and they would be smiling - they'd enjoy it. I'm like a king to them.

This form of 'othering' (Butler 2003), where expats define themselves against Mongolians, was not uncommon. Frequently, the distinctions that pitted Mongolians as the 'other', in distinction to the expat as the "norm", was couched in terms of perceived limitations/lack of skills ("they just don't get it") and/or perceived 'unusual' cultural differences that negated their agency. This power relationship will be explored in more detail in Chapter Seven and becomes important when I explore gender, othering and ethnicity in relation to the classification of SIA.

5.6 The role of Community Relations: an agency of change

All of these groups (corporate, contractors and on-site workers) involved in the operation are required to follow the broader standards and guidelines of the company responsible for the operation of that mine site. It is the role of the company community relations (CR) department[62] to observe and monitor not just the internal working environment of the company to ensure compliance with these standards, but also to survey the external situation in the community to ensure that obligations to the community embodied in company standards and guidelines are carried out (Kemp, D. Keenan, J & Gronow J, 2010). The types of roles that I observed the team perform correlate with those identified by Kemp's and included:

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[62] Each company has their own definition and combination of issues that are placed in departments and run by teams that work in community development, community relations, public relations and environment and safety issues. I am using the term 'community relations department', as it is the area within which community development often falls within in a company (see Kemp 2008)

[community] consultation and engagement, public relations, sponsorship and donations, community programs and responding to community complaints. Anecdotal evidence suggests that operations in developing counties tend towards a greater proportion of time spent on development-related activities as opposed to public relations and communications… (Kemp 2010a, p. 3-4).

This characterises the CR team as a group of workers that are aware of the activities in the community and are alert to the respondent commitments of the company.

Although the departments are responsible for a large task, funds, resources and internal commitments often override and impede the work of CR teams. As Deanna Kemp explains:

[m]ining managers, whether in exploration, construction, operations or closure, have a pragmatic and pre-determined set of drivers informing their work, such as daily production goals and quarterly/annual planning and budgeting cycles. This reality can inadvertently undermine corporate policy commitments and development efforts (Kemp 2010b, p. 207).

She continues by noting that if production targets conflict with community development objectives, it is often the case that production and profit considerations override the community's needs (Kemp 2010b). Fieldwork revealed that managers positioned in departments considered closer to the 'core' business of mining (e.g. engineers, construction managers ect) are effectively accorded more power over the control budgets, and through this can influence corporate activity in ways that reduce the CR department's ability to perform its role.

A close informant of mine at OT, Scott, described the role of the CR department in two different ways, both of which are revealing because they illustrate the tension between an 'official' notion of the role of the CR department, and its actual, practical process. His first characterisation correlates directly with the formal description of the CR role as described in the CSR literature. Scott explains:

The purpose of the community relations department is really two key elements, umm the first of the elements is to be the extension of the company or the corporate entity

amongst those people; groups and communities and stakeholders that are directly and indirectly impacted by the business.

This description is emblematic of the definition of CR that observes CR as having both internal and external obligations in the community and within the company (see Kemp 2010b).[63]

His second description arose from an attempt to elaborate on the meaning of the phrase 'an extension of the company' in his statement above:

> So by extension I mean, the human representation, (stops and thinks further as if trying to grasp something) but it's more than representation, it the manifestation of the company's stated objectives to be a long term partner, to be a neighbor, build trust, it's kind of the manifestation of that [objective]. It's the mechanism that manifests those platitudes and broad objectives. So, yeah face, ears, eyes, nose, mouth, hands and feet, so the personification of the company's commitment to working with communities in a productive and cooperative fashion.

In this description, Scott gets to what he perceives as the actual practical work carried out by the CR team, and articulates this by employing a bodily metaphor which characterises this team as the human embodiment of the guidelines, principles and values that the company has committed itself to in regard to the community. In giving the CR team a metaphorical bodily existence, he conveys the idea that they do not work as a clinical, abstract detachment or as a 'public relations wash', but instead perform a practical and humanistic task, which requires all the disparate senses to perform sound community relations.

Scott's following description of the second, internal role for the CR team is a further example of the way in which company attitudes extend further than most of the literature recognizes (for exceptions see Kemp, Boele et al. 2006; Kemp 2010b; Kemp, Keenan et al. 2010). Here Scott provides a demonstration of the nuances with which the company approaches CR,

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[63] Kemp draws on the model of Kelly and Burkett to show the changes in CR work from a PR protectionist approach to the emerging inter-disciplinary approach. (see Kemp 2010, p. 5)

which suggests that an understanding of company commitments to CR cannot be reduced to corporate greenwash and PR. He continues and explains the second role of the CR team:

> The second element is a function of the first element because it is engaging internally to provide monitoring, oversight, input and assurance internally. So the way the company works in every discipline, department and functional accountability area, is consistent with the company's relationships outside of the fence.

In this comment Scott explains that the role of the CR team is to also focus on the internal behavior of the company and contractors to ensure that each group, individual and activity are behaving and working in alignment with the company's CSR commitments and the legal agreements with the relevant government and regulators.

Outside of a relatively few scholars (Kemp, et al. 2006; Kemp 2010b; Kemp, Keenan & Gronow 2010), this element and role of the CR team is often under-theorised, misunderstood or at an extreme, simply dismissed as corporate 'green wash' (Coumans 2012). Teams working internally within the company to bring about genuine improved CSR are often dismissed as biased, un-objective or operating solely to foster a hidden company agenda (Coumans, 2012). Miners are certainly aware of the prevalence of such attitudes. During our interview, Scott paused and looked at me to gauge my reaction to his description of the role of the CR team. He then re-iterated the point as follows:

> So it's not all just external, a lot of the purpose of the community relations department is to inform and frankly hold accountable internal departments, colleagues, bosses whatever – make sure the company is doing what it says it does.

Prior to commencing my fieldwork, my engagement with the literature lead me to hold more pessimistic attitudes of CR, but after observing and discussing the work of the team at OT and UHG, I was sufficiently convinced that the team genuinely wanted to promote responsible community development and internal organisational change.

As Scott and I continued our discussions, the importance of the role of the CR team became clearer. The following time we met I asked him again to clarify his understanding of the role of the CR team in the company.

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I'll explain it this way. Ok. So we have an area in Khanbogd and the government, community and the company, want to build a mine, right? So, IMMI (Ivanhoe and Rio Tinto Partnership) are going to build a mine. Now, imagine the construction of the mine is like a massive tank, like a huge army tank that can tear everything up in its path and the people driving this tank is Dan and his crew. These guys don't care about the community, or standards, or commitments they care about saving money and their bonuses. If they construct the mine, before schedule and under budget they get bigger bonuses then they move on to the next construction job.[64] Our [CR team] first job is to make sure no one in the community is getting damaged by the tank – we protect the community and the environment etc. Then we also want to try and direct the tank, ultimately we don't want it to be a tank *but it is* a tank, it's a machine and it's massive, so we try and direct the tank, which is not easy because it is bigger than us and better financed.

This representative explanation of Scott's, combined with his earlier interview, was one of the most enlightening insights into the process, impacts and structure of mining companies I experienced during the course of my research. Again we observe the roles of the CR team as working externally with the community ('protect the community') and the internal work within the company ('direct the tank'). Moreover, he confirms the previously discussed masculine discourses of mining by depicting the mine construction to that of a military zone, traditionally the vanguard of masculine characteristics (Tickner 1995). Finally, the analogy of the 'tank', as an unstoppable, assaulting weapon of war that presumably destroys communities[65] is frightful and depicts the sheer size and scale of mine development.

After our previous discussion, I found this analogy almost ominous in that he seemed to confirm the stereotyped portrayal of mining as a massive construction that places profit and productivity before social and environmental sustainability (Ferguson 1999; Mines and Communities 2012). Likewise, I wondered if the earlier 'nicer' discussions were public

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[64] See Cannon pages 75-101 for an explanation of the history and associated characteristics of construction workers in the global mining industry (Cannon 2010).

[65] See the cases of Porgera, Bougainville and OK Tedi disasters as examples.

relations and/or the corporate spin from the company. However, I realized that this was a simplistic analysis that does not take into consideration: 1) the corporate language; and the 2) more informal, site-level miner language - both discourses which constitute parts of the company ontology. That is, both of his descriptions provide insight into different individuals, groups, values and context. Groups that are imbued with language and discourse that are fluid and structure the actions and attitudes of the mining company.

GAD and WAD theory encourage the deconstruction of dominant discourses in society to uncover the roles that get sublimated and oppressed. As discussed, the prevailing dominant and normative discourse of mining is profit and construction, which are associated with masculine characteristics, and CR and sustainability issues are associated with feminine characteristics (Grosser & Moon? 2005). The dominant and normative position of the masculine characteristics of profit and construction, in turn, homogenize the company at the expense of the role of other teams and individuals working against this dominant or normative behavior. When these teams are subsumed under the behaviors of the homogenized 'mining company', or, dismissed as 'corporate greenwash', they are in affect dismissed of their voice and agency, furthering the dominant position of current stereotypes and minimizing the position both internally and externally for the CR team to improve.

5.7 Conclusion

In this Chapter I have explained that both the communities and mining companies are made up of individuals, and groups all interacting and competing within a socio-cultural sphere. I have demonstrated that these entities navigate between complex power relations that are often subsumed by dominant discourses. My interpretation of individual social relations of Mongolian women operating within their cultural maxims reflects upon the arguments made by developing world feminists that criticize Western feminists for importing notions of global patriarchy and constructing the female subject as a passive participant. Initial descriptions of the space and social positioning in the ger interpreted this focus on gender in terms of an occlusion of the cultural factors which point to a more complex situation. In the Mongolian cultural contexts, I observed that women perceive social hierarchies and experience the discourses within which power is exercised differently to what a gender-focused interpretation would suggest. This alternative perspective was

reached by the way in which Mongolian women themselves negotiate and interpret themselves as subjects/women and as Mongolian women within the space of a ger and within the context of a family with wild camels and travelling partners.

Within the company, at the individual level, the contrast between Dan and Luke demonstrated that the company consists of complex individuals imbued with their own social values and sexual constructions. As Cannon states: 'Western employees working on mine sites... are a similar, yet varied bunch' (2001, p. 82). Furthermore, it showed that the stereotype of the masculine discourse of mining is still prevalent in the industry and it does couch itself against more 'negated' feminine approaches. However, these individuals also demonstrated that there is a cultural shift within the industry that attempts to resist past approaches and improve responsibilities of mining companies, as is seen by the work of Rio Tinto.

Just as the individual miners were more complex than my initial expectations, so was the discourse of the company in terms of the groups and the relations which intersected them. Mining companies are not fixed entities but are ontologically diverse entities that change with external and internal pressures. Finally, Scott's discussion and my observations on site illustrate that mining companies are not homogenous but groups that work with and against each other to develop the mine and minimize negative change – both to varying degrees of success.

The application of a WAD analysis and a gender-focused interpretation of the company and the community in terms of a particular ontology, uncover an important finding of this thesis. Primarily, local specificities are often made to conform to dominant discourses – the particular gets subsumed by the universal. The problem I perceive with High and Humphrey's perception of power relations or broader perceptions of mining companies is that the basic elements of analysis are grounded in a wider commitment to a social order that ontologically privileges a particular interpretation of society over the specific cultural contexts of the group. Moreover, this suggests that women in Mongolia or men in a mining company can perceive themselves as operating within a different ontological frame – one that considers the cultural specificities and traditions as being equal to alternative power relations, including gender, in their constitution. The analysis subsequently provides a divide between literature depicting Mongolian gender relations

and the practice of mining companies and their mutual perceptions of self and power within their living reality. In doing so, there is a risk of misunderstanding the interactions and relations between the company and the community in practicing Mining and Development.

Chapter 6 - Expectations and Discursive Power

6.1   Introduction

In this chapter I focus on the nature of the company-community engagement as part of the broader discourse of Mining and Development and examine the area where the community and company interact with each other. I observe that participants in this discourse position themselves relative to each other in specific ways which determine the nature of the engagement. This chapter considers how, through their discursive acts, participants outside of the community implicitly position the community as a passive object, requiring the intervention of an external, active agent. These participants are represented by three informants who each represent a different kind of non-community stakeholder in the company-community engagement: Foreign mine-workers (Dan); foreign fieldworkers (Lisa); and representatives of international organisations (Bill). Applying Graulau's explanation of the discourse of Mining and Development, and through representative statements collected by key informants concerning community development, I analyse the implicit discursive positioning each applies to the community (Graulau, 2008). This analysis is used to suggest a way to reconfigure the positioning of the community by engaging explicitly with community 'expectations' of mining over and above the usual approach of merely accounting a 'baseline' study and reporting of its 'impacts'.

Essentially, the arrival of large scale industrialized mining in Tsogttsetsii and Khanbogd has changed the nature of each of these communities, and these changes were often articulated to me by community members not only in terms of impacts (whether positive or negative) but also in terms of the future expectations which they held of mining. This is significant because although existing company CSR frameworks are set-up to register community-reported impacts, they are far less responsive to community 'expectations'. Through an examination of community expectations of mining, this chapter explores the discourse of development between companies and communities in the South Gobi. An examination of the expectations of development on the part of both the company and community shows the nature of the emerging discourse between these groups, and helps illuminate the power relations that shape the development agenda in the South Gobi.

Arguments for 'agreement based' engagements have begun to be made by Nish and Bice (2012) and O'Faircheallaigh (2009a), and nascent assessments demonstrate a shift in the industry towards community based participatory engagement. However, as this chapter highlights, particular emphasis should be placed on the manner in which the company discursively positions the community in their engagement. The aim is to re-orientate the hierarchy currently observed in Mining and Development in the South Gobi to re-position the community as active players in the current development dialogue.

6.2   Mining for Development Discourse

In general, theories concerning the mining industry and its relationship to economic development are framed in terms of dichotomous oppositions, such that each term in the opposition is endowed with attributes that carry with them socially-determined values. Often these embody positive or negative connotations that are grounded in particular social practices and cultural norms. As Graulau points out:

> The theories that embrace a positive view of capitalism in the classical political economy tradition and mainstream development economics generally support mining for development. The theories that are critical of the capitalist order, including structuralism, dependency, neo-dependency, world-system, feminist and discourse theory, generally have a strong opposition to mining for development (Graulau 2008, p. 129).

These competing negative and positive characterisations of mining can be seen to affect the ways in which both company employees and independent researchers approach the analysis of company engagement with communities. In developing countries, transnational corporations are often perceived as, '"engines of development" or "tools of exploitation"' (Letnes 2004, p. 260). It is this ideological lens itself that is of interest here, and particularly the way in which it shapes certain attempts to analyse the factors determining company engagement with a community.

As outlined in Chapter Five, mining companies ought not to be viewed as monolithic or static entities. Any company is made up of different groups with different and sometimes competing interests and areas of competence and expertise, and these differences give rise to, and are

the consequences of, particular power relations (see Chapters Seven and Eight). As a reflection of this, the considerations in this section apply to the various groups that inhabit the space between the company and the community. The most influential being those working in the area of Mining and Development (CR teams, environmental management teams, external consultants, and advisors) and those directing the business, government and budget end of the company (corporate directors and construction managers), whose actions have an effect (sometimes inadvertent) on the strategies and budgets of the Mining and Development outputs.

Graulau argues that those actors with a positive view of capitalism and modernity overwhelmingly claim that mining provides beneficial outcomes for developing societies. International financial lenders, many government bodies in Mongolia and mining companies typify this positive view of capitalism and globalization (Graulau 2008). These groups openly advocate that responsible mining will create positive development in Mongolia (World Bank 2009b). For example, although the IMMI SIA notes that there will be both positive and negative impacts of mining on the community, the overall conclusion is that such impacts will be positive, as exemplified by the following statement:

> The impacts of the OT project on local development will be mostly positive. These impacts may occur in all spheres of local economic and business development (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009, p. 134).

The view that impacts would be largely positive is not only held at the organisational level, but is also a position maintained and articulated by personnel within the companies under research.

During fieldwork, informal conversations with a broad spectrum of employees from different areas of the mining companies held outside of 'office hours', provided insight into the personal views of employees about the role of mining in developing countries. Most of these informants articulated pro-development attitudes towards the community surrounding the mine in these 'unofficial' contexts. Quite early in my fieldwork I had a discussion at the OT bar with a company director, 'Dan', who I introduced in Chapter Five. Dan's attitude symbolizes the broader masculine discourse of foreign workers on the mine site, who in my experience

wielded most of the decision-making power in the company (see Chapter Eight). The overwhelming attitude shared by these workers was that mining was a positive development for local communities.

> Dan: So I'm going to tell you a story which I guess is also trying to direct you a bit. This town in Indonesia was a small town with one light bulb and one fridge, a house fridge that we used to get a cold beer. Three years later, the town, which had no paved roads, has three kilometres of paved roads and electricity in nearly every house. I mean we turned that town around, if it wasn't for us that's how they would still be living!

> IC: That's a lot of work.

> Dan: That's what we are going to do here. Did you know we were going to build a town? We sat down, with their town planners and ours and we designed a plan for 40,000 people. In the Indonesian town no one wanted to live there until we built up the town. I mean we made the town nice, with electricity and roads and then the wives and families moved closer to be near their husbands and the town grew and more people wanted to work in the mine because their families could be closer.

In his explanation of mining's potential positive impact on neighbouring communities, a side point to note is that Dan employs the pronoun 'we' when referring to the company responsible for the Indonesian mining development he is describing. This is despite the fact that his age meant that he could not have been part of the initial stages of the development which he describes. Indeed, in the field I commonly heard company employees employing 'we' to refer to the company employing them in this way, such that they identified their attitudes with those of the company and positioned themselves as 'belonging' to it, as if it formed some kind of community of which they were a part.

Nevertheless, Trigger alerts us to the cultural values implicit in 'discourses of pro-development ideology' within the mining industry (Trigger 1997, p. 16). In his case (relative to Australia) he observes similar values. These values can be seen to be at work in my discussion with Dan insofar as he explicitly makes a value-judgement concerning the condition of the town when he states: 'I mean we made the town nice'. This statement clearly implies that in Dan's opinion, prior to the infrastructural development for which the company

was responsible, the town was in an 'undesirable' state, one that the mining development remedied. This points to what Trigger suggests is a deeper discourse in the minerals industry: 'the element within development ideology that portrays mining as creating a civilized (and hence morally commendable) social life in the context of economic growth and progress' (Trigger 1997, p. 164). When Dan states, 'I mean we turned that town around, if it wasn't for us that's how they would still be living', he implies that the way that community are now living is better than before – a rise from a more backward state to a more 'civilized' one.

Importantly, the notion of 'civilized … social life' not only carries with it value-assumptions, but also inherent views about the nature of the social and the roles of men and women within it. In particular, Dan's story, as a reflection of pro-development discourse, is gendered. He pointedly emphasizes that the town is now a community to which 'wives and families moved'. This observation contains two implicit assumptions that link the pro-development conception of mining development with the outcomes for women which it perceives arise from that development. Firstly, with industrial development comes 'an implanting of good-quality social life', where the measure of its 'quality' is its suitability for 'women' and 'families' (Trigger 1997, p. 164). Likewise, this measure implicitly depends upon certain gender stereotypes which position women as vulnerable and passive and men as providers and protectors.

Secondly, it separates women from the process of mining development itself by positioning them as those who benefit from mining without partaking in it. This construction begs the following question: What are the respective roles of men and women in pro-development discourse? Trigger argues that the company positions itself, 'as the bearer of moral progress through creating a high quality social-life, there is a complementary conviction that those who develop resources are masters of technical excellence …' (Trigger 1997, p. 165). The company and its workers use 'technical excellence' to create the conditions of 'civilization' for those outside of the company, in this instance, women and the community. Further, as the company (and those who work in it) are situated as the masters of the technical apparatus which creates the good moral life, they are essentially positioned as masters of the moral community that they have effectively created.

6.2.1 Anti-Development Discourse and Mining

In opposition to these pro-development views, much of traditional anthropology and many NGO advocates/supporters and researchers are critical of capitalism, globalization and mining and their ability to assist developing communities (Emberson-Bain 1994; Ballard & Banks 2003; Kirsch 2010; Coumans 2011). An implicit or explicit supposition of this position is that mining will inevitably damage or disadvantage a community and/or country. As an example, Ballard and Banks draw on Ferguson (1999) to explain:

> the mining town frequently functions as a symbol and promise of modernity for local communities and workers alike, though residents all too frequently find themselves betrayed, cast aside, and disconnected from the processes of development and modernity that globalization promises (Ballard & Banks 2003 p 292).

Ferguson argues that positive 'expectations' of mining and globalization are experienced by the community as 'false hopes' that will eventually betray community members (Ferguson 1999). Likewise, Coumans argues that there are 'typically short-term winners and losers in communities ... while marginal community members and women suffer more of the negative impacts' (Coumans 2011, p. 30). Such conclusions are found widely throughout the literature in this field, specifically in civil society advocacy groups (Kirsch 2002; Graulau 2008; Mines and Communities 2012; Ombudsman 2012). Importantly for the purposes of this chapter, it can be observed that the prevalence of these conclusions, and the attitudes that they embody, can also condition the way in which researchers position themselves with respect to a community, and in some cases shape, to an extent, their gathering of data from that community.

For example, in Khanbogd I observed an interview carried out by Lisa, a foreign fieldworker engaged as a consultant by an international financial institution. Lisa was a worker in the field of Gender and Mining, and critical of both mining and its effect on women. She was hired by the company to discuss the social impacts of mining with the Khanbogd community. As part of her methodology for gathering data she had organised 'focus groups' as a way to get the women in that community to feel 'comfortable' and discuss in confidence the effects of mining as they saw them. Her initial question to the focus group was 'how has the impact of mining negatively affected your family?' The women with whom I had been living closely, all looked

around not knowing what to say, since in most cases, mining had benefited them, particularly in financial terms, and hence they were largely receptive to it. There was silence, and then finally one of the women stated 'well I need to collect the water now, so it is more difficult'. Though ostensibly an impact, the circumstance in which the answer was given signified that it was primarily offered as a means to avoid causing offence to a visitor and their particular understanding of the situation. However Lisa did not investigate this any further to unearth the complexities that lay behind this response, and instead I watched her nodding in affirmation. The 'data' had confirmed her preconceived notions of mining and its negative implications for women and the community.

The results of Lisa's interviews were then compiled into a report which directed the development of infrastructure in the area. The use of the data obtained by Lisa in relation to the difficulty of collecting water was used in an official report to argue for the development of infrastructure for running water in the town. Interestingly, although Lisa had held an anti-mining position, her recommendation was a macro-levelled pro-development project through technical 'modernisation' (similar to Dan's approach). From my own fieldwork it was clear that running water was certainly viewed as a positive development by the townspeople, however if the women in the focus group had been allowed to contextualise their own issues, additional concerns could have been highlighted and other priorities identified, as will be discussed below.

In a different context, but along similar lines to this argument, Catherine Coumans cautions against the ways in which 'expert' opinions can misconstrue the community voice (Coumans 2011).[66] She explicitly critiques the work of anthropologists, development experts and Socially Responsible Investor (SRI) companies for the role they play in enhancing CSR reputation at the cost of the community requests. She argues, as does this chapter, that anthropologists need to 'engage in "sustained reflection on the implications and consequences of our

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[66] Since publication, some of her statements have been shown to misleading. However, I am using this example because her critical perspective of this area is encouraged to open the debate (both the positive and negative implications for engagement) and also because Coumans argument, like many, although critical of the current Mining and Development paradigm does not seem able to move beyond the paradigm she actually critiques.

interventions'" (Coumans 2011, p. 40) in the name of 'community development'. However, despite the value of her argument, she does not provide or propose an alternative mechanism through which the community could enhance its voice within the current discourse of company-community engagement. Instead she suggests that anthropologists, experts and SRI's need to become more attentive of their own positioning within this process, and more self-reflexive about their ethical positions, assumptions about development approaches and their transparency of information.

In this it is noteworthy that Coumans also does not question, as some Gender and Mining and WAD theorists attempt to do, the parameters of the discourse within which this lack of self-reflexivity occurs in the first place. It is also interesting to observe that in seeking to address issues in the engagement of such groups with a community, her focus excludes the community as an active agent in this dialogue, and instead focuses on the possible actions that actors external to the community might adopt towards themselves and towards that community. This risks reducing the community to a passive construction of external expert investigators, and forecloses the possibility that failing in the nature of this engagement might be remedied by enabling community agency, through facilitating its intervention in the work of anthropologists and experts, for example. The next section will argue that the position of Dan, Lisa and Coumans all reproduce (implicitly or explicitly) the current company-community discourse that dis-empowers the community instead of repositioning the community and their role in it to change the nature of the discourse itself.

6.2.2 Discourse and Power

Dan and Lisa are emblematic of the fact that any worker carries with them their own cultural lens into a mine-affected development area. In this regard, as a foreign fieldworker entering the South Gobi, I had to confront my own cultural assumptions during my period of fieldwork. I originally went into the field expecting to mostly hear stories of disgruntled community members and families negatively impacted by mining, and indeed I did hear many such accounts. My perception that mining was innately harmful was gained from limited literature on the positive impacts of mining and my own ideological position which was formed from immersing myself in the Gender and Mining literature, with its predominantly anti-development tendency. I implicitly took into the field with me an anti-development position,

and I believed that corporate literature was untrustworthy and/or, 'corporate green wash', and that the impacts of mining are overwhelmingly negative upon communities (Hamann & Kapelus 2004). However I learned very quickly that this simplistic picture missed many of the nuances of mining in Mongolia at this time.

Gender and Mining fieldworkers are confronted with a discursive field that is polarised between anti-mining and pro-development positions. For anti-mining thinkers, mining is a 'false promise' of modernity that leads the community to betrayal, disconnection and hardship (Coumans 2011; Kirsch 2010). For the pro-mining and pro-development theorists, there is a 'promise' of modernity off-set by mining that is central to future community well-being and prosperity (World Bank 2010). Thus on the one hand there is the 'false promise of modernity' and the other the 'promise of modernity'. However underlying this polarisation is a perspective shared by both positions. In applying post-colonial feminist theory, Kapoor argues that in subscribing to either of these ideological/theoretical stances, the researcher, advocate, or company have positioned themselves as either bringing modernity to the community in question or as saving them from the 'false hope' of modernity (Kapoor 2004). Both positions place the 'outsider' as able to solve, uncover, and empower the communities, which implicitly dis-empowers the community and places them in a discursively passive position within the effective power relations at play in a particular development situation.

WAD feminists argue that, from a discursive point of view, this is problematic as it sets up a power imbalance between the privileged outsider, usually an expert or skilled technician in a field related to the development project, and the community as the 'subject' to whom they apply their skills directly, or who benefits incidentally from the outsiders activity. In either case, the community is passive with respect to such outsiders, and participates in their activity only as a recipient or beneficiary of their actions. Spivak and Kapoor argue that the power imbalance posits the researcher or company as 'solving' or 'discovering' a problem against the backdrop of the 'other' foreign subject (Spivak 1999; Kapoor 2004). As we have seen in the examples above, both Dan, with his clearly pro-development view of mining, and Lisa, with her critical view of the impact of mining, share this presumption. That is, the outsider assumes that the community is passive or without the power to negotiate the terms of their 'development'. The assumption that the community is without power is directly visible in the

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examples of both Dan and Lisa, particularly insofar as both seem to disregard the possible contexts in which informants can and do articulate themselves; denying a person or a community the meaning of their own words and thus their agency. In this relationship the researcher, consultant or company are positioned as a more enlightened observer of the situation, and as thereby empowered to intervene on behalf of the 'victimised' community's needs.

Like many WAD and post-development theorists, Developing World feminists claim that development discourse implicitly assumes that western-style development is the norm. That is, development in both its theoretical and practical forms is often understood to be an ahistorical *fait accompli*, ignoring the fact that it has been elaborated and unfolded through a historical tradition of colonial domination and premised upon 'developed' world superiority over the 'developing' world. Spivak and Kapoor warn that the discourse of the development industry presents 'the "developed world" as more civilized, knowledgeable and empowered than its counterpart, the "developing world"' (Spivak 1999; Kapoor 2004). Due to this implicit presumption, Kapoor argues that 'our encounters with, and representations of, our 'subjects' are…coded or framed in terms of an us/them dichotomy in which 'we' aid/develop/civilize/empower 'them' (Kapoor 2004, p. 42).

Based upon this view, the various company engagements with the communities considered in this thesis can be analysed in terms of the ways in which each community is positioned discursively as the 'passive subject' and focus of an external and 'civilizing' development. In a discussion of the mining industry's effect on the landscape, Trigger notes that there is 'within the industry… a central disposition that equates 'development' with a process of making the Australian Landscape *productive, civilized* and *familiar*' (Trigger 1997, p. 166). Although Trigger's argument applies to the effects mining companies have on the landscape in Australia, the interview with Dan suggests they can be applied to the Mongolian context. More so, Trigger's point amplifies that made by Spivak and Kapoor - that the culture of 'development' related to mining carries with it a discourse in which the company is construed as bringing civilization and modernity to a 'primitive', undeveloped' situation (Trigger 1997; Kirsch 2010). In such a case the thematic discourses concerned with Mining and

Development are as important as are the cultural specificities that work to construct the power relations of that given environment.

From the vantage point of this critical perspective, there is some importance in recognising the way in which the company, fieldworkers and international institutions 'code' or conceptualise the community, since once the operation of this coding is made visible, it becomes possible to take it into account, and so position the community discursively with respect to these coding's and conceptualisations in a way that its ' difference is not allowed to be sublated and the West [for which read multinational companies, international institutions, foreign academics and field workers, etc] is revitalized, de-ethnocentrised and provincialized' (Kapoor 2008, p. 11). Below I propose that such a recoding can be accomplished by refocusing attention from community 'impacts' to community 'expectations'.

Firstly, I will observe the non-community stakeholders in the company-community engagement - the international development/financial organisations. This is particularly relevant to the UHG project where we have witnessed the removal of the community as central to the mining process to the prominence of and its replacement by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) which has complete responsibility for community relations and sustainable development programs associated with the project (as discussed in Chapter Four). My observations of these institutions, while I was operating in the community and while researching from the World Bank corporate office in Ulaanbaatar, were concerned with the way they justify themselves in relation to the community. Their discursive positioning is premised on the notion that Mongolia as a nation has no previous experience of large-scale mineral extractions and therefore has no comprehension of the scale of change or infrastructure required in managing the industry responsibly. I observed and had discussions with many international consultants in the agency that constantly referred to the ill-prepared nature of Mongolian government or Mongolians to deal with the minerals boom.

A discussion with Bill, whose job within an international organization is to advise and assist government for sustainable economic growth from minerals extraction, provides an example:

> B: They do not acknowledge that these [negative impacts] are going to be an issue and I think that they are coming to it, but they're not yet planning for it.

IC: So it's going to be a threat to the local community, would they see it is a negative or would they …

B: [interrupts]: most of them see it [mining] as a big positive as it's jobs, opportunity it's development and at this point in time they do not see the downsides yet as they haven't really happened. But this will come unless things are well done and well planned… So, in terms of things like 'in-migration' it is helping government to plan for it, accommodate it and build the infrastructure for it…

First of all, Bill acknowledges that there are expectations in the community and his descriptions match the expectations I discuss in the following section. Secondly, Bill suggests that Mongolian community groups are 'in denial' and ill-prepared for the impending scale of the negative consequences of mining. He does not state this maliciously or with pretension, but believes from his many years of experience working in developing world contexts that Mongolia needs to adopt more liberal-democratic reforms for the country to survive and prosper from the minerals boom. Therefore he and his institutions work and produce reports with international experts directed at building the capacity of Mongolian local and national leaders to deal with such impending risks. Finally, it can be observed that the community is not included as a part of the solution that Bill proposes, and that he instead looks to international experts as those best placed to negotiate the structure of development.

WAD theorists Kapoor and Mohanty argue that the structure of international development, which is largely directed by international financial institutions, is managed and administered in ways that build business for the benefit of those institutions themselves (Mohanty 2003; Kapoor 2008). That is, they suggest that the growth of organisations like Bill's:

> shows how the representation of countries as 'underdeveloped' and 'poor' helps justify and reproduce bureaucratic red tape and power… ultimately it does not matter if the schemes are a success or failure… rather than working themselves out of a job by reducing poverty, development administrations (local and external) can often ensure, through the construction and/or strengthening of a bureaucratic and technical apparatus their own survival if not extension (Kapoor 2008, p. 48).

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Bill does not say directly that Mongolia or its local communities are 'underdeveloped' or 'poor', however he does imply that they are ill-prepared and 'in denial'. These are both attitudes that position the knowledge and skills of his organisation as able to provide expertise and assistance. That is, Bill's claims are underwritten by a construction of Mongolia and Mongolian communities as passive subjects of a process they are ill-equipped to understand and in the face of which they require external assistance.

In essence Bill, like Dan and Lisa, is an 'outsider' assuming that the community is without power. However, the strategy by which power is discursively reinforced this time through the claim that the community is already doomed to a host of negative impacts which they must resist in certain pre-defined ways – similar to the moral 'good life' implied in Dan's statement. In the statements of both informants we can observe the same positioning of community as passive victim, which serves to legitimise the intervention of outside agencies through the rendering of 'help' or 'assistance'. The following section draws upon research that demonstrates that the community is aware of both the possible positive and negative impacts of mining, but that this knowledge is often not taken seriously by international actors.

6.3 Community Expectations of Development

Considering this aforementioned hierarchy inherent in development discourse in Mongolia, it is imperative to outline how members of the community can be interpreted as understanding future developments of mining. My research found that the community engages socially and relationally with mining earlier than the impact stage of mining, in what I term the 'expectations' stage of mine development. Although it could be argued that an expectation is an impact, considering the negative association that 'impacts' in mining generally carry, I would like to highlight 'expectations' as a separate stage during the development of a large-scale mine, a stage that happens before the large scale impacts are generally felt. 'Expectations' are not often considered in CSR literature nor are they captured by the SIA process, since the SIA is focused on registering impacts and changes – that is, effects that are currently taking place and which can be identified – while expectations are formed before the actual commencement of mining operations (see International Institute on Environment and Development 2002). I argue that the 'expectations' stage is a time when the community

can articulate its own desires for modernisation or development, without relying on company or consultant perceptions of development.

On a practical level, the consideration of 'expectations' for researchers and mining companies also becomes an important key to understanding the community assets and their perception of the aims and possible outcomes of development from mining. By exploring the 'expectations' stage, the company and researcher can inform themselves of the level of development desired by the community and the degree of change they find acceptable.

For example, while sitting with the Khanbogd hospital director 'Baysaa', discussing her thoughts on the arrival of mining, she observed:

> I imagine in the future we [the community] will have positive developments. If mining companies begin operations, more people will move and settle in our soum. In this way our hospital will be bigger - like a medical centre. I hope then that the hospital service will be of a better quality.

Likewise, a local hotelier noted that in the future she hoped the mine would provide employment and help to provide the town with twenty-four hour electricity. She stated:

> When the Investment Agreement goes through and more people get work, business and life will be better. If one person gets a job then it's a great help for the whole family. There is limited electricity in Khanbogd and when OT is signed Khanbogd will have electricity.

Baysaa and the hotelier's 'expectations' from mining indicate that many people are unemployed and that families are going without basic necessities. They both clearly state that they would welcome job creation and infrastructure development to support business (as opposed to running water as identified by Lisa) in the community, and in this they ostensibly align themselves with Dan's pro-development ideology. However the expectations of the community are articulated as practical necessities that do not carry with them a moral judgement. This contrasts distinctly with the way in which pro-development discourse attaches a 'civilizing' or moralizing agenda to community development.

The perspective of the Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii people on the expectations of mining provides researchers and companies a direct view into community needs and desires for development. When discussing expectations for community development with both communities, the research found that community members were aware of the possible benefits and were informed of the development areas which would best suit their daily needs.

Furthermore, the focus on 'expectations' also provides an alternative space where the community can reposition (or maintain a position) as a central participant in both the construction of, and dialogue concerning minerals development. In contrast to the outcome described in Chapter Four, whereby the Tsogttsetsii community was ousted from its position as central to decisions concerning minerals development, an examination of the 'expectations' of a community can broaden the scope of the company/community engagement and shift the power relationship between the two.

6.3.1 Oscillating Expectations

Expectations of mining are not the same in different countries or even different communities as Dan, Bill or Lisa imply. The social impacts felt in a particular society are dependent on the population surrounding the mine, the duration of mining in the area and the company's relationship with that mine and the community (Coumans 2011). In the case of towns that have been purpose-built to support mining operations, such as the 'Riu Valley' mining town in Romania, Mount Isa in northern Australia or the northern Mongolian town of Erdenet, mining has been a dominant feature of the landscape, the culture and economy of the community and in these instances the community and the mine are more tightly interwoven (Kideckel 2004, Rossabi 2005). In the case where pre-existing towns are located near mineral deposits, mining arrives as a foreign and new industry to the town bringing changes to lifestyles, landscapes and economies (Macdonald and Rowland 2002). As discussed in Chapter Four, in Tsogttsetsii coal extraction has been a part of the town's history for many years. However, in Khanbogd, mining has arrived in a traditionally rural/agricultural society that has not

previously experienced large scale capital wealth, 'modern' technologies or the infrastructure associated with mining.[67]

Due to the different historical legacies of mining in both soums, social changes and impacts are being experienced differently. In some senses Tsogttsetsii is far more impacted upon then Khanbogd, however the impacts have been more gradual over an extended period. Conversely, at the time of research, Khanbogd had experienced less visible impacts but the speed of change had been greater. Likewise, although large scale impacts of mining had minimally impacted the *townspeople* of Khanbogd, they had affected the *herders* of Khanbogd significantly. In different ways the lives of both the Tsogttsetsii *townspeople* and *herders* had been changed dramatically by the mines.

When I stayed in Tsogttsetsii soum, where a high-impact[68] mine had been operating for five years and was closer to the township than was the case in Khanbogd, I did not find the abundance of positive expectations for development expressed by those in Khanbogd. In particular, people from lower socio-economic positions, including herders and single parent households, disclosed their views that mining would not benefit people in their 'position'. This is best illustrated by a woman called Tsetgee who was once a herder on UHG's land but was asked to re-locate for the mining operation. Tsetgee now makes *Huurshuur* (a fried meat pastry sold at fifteen cents apiece) for a living, she explained:

> the population is increasing from here and there, which probably brings a lot of merchandisers along as well. That's the main change, I think… There's no [better] change in our lives, mining will not help us 'ordinary' people.

Tsetgee's comment demonstrates the view among those like her that mining is beginning to assist a particular sub-set of the community – the merchants and traders. However, she did

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[67] Newspaper reports mention an ancient history of artisanal mining in the area however this was not discussed by people living in the area or with discussions with local geologists. A short history in illegal mining in Khanbogd in the mid-2000s provided people of Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii with some economic benefits.

[68] I emphasise high-impact mining to indicate the time when UHG began operations. Prior to this small TT had been operating for 40 plus years in a very low-impact fashion, as described in Chapter 4.

not perceive these higher-level economic shifts as likely to assist those from lower socio-economic and herder backgrounds. Opinions like those of Tsetgee were echoed by other informants/participants of this group in Tsogttsetsii with whom I spoke, however negative perspectives were not articulated in the corresponding socio-economic groups in Khanbogd, where mining was currently having a lesser impact.

Importantly, Tsetgee's observation illustrates that the initial experience of mining did not meet with her original 'expectations'. In Tsogttsetsii people are beginning to experience Ferguson's 'false hope' of modernity. What was unique to the South Gobi, and is not reflected the anti-development literature, is that despite these negative assessments, an overarching insistence that mining was good for Mongolia and that it needed to continue was still evident among those in Tsogttsetsii (and herders and towns people in Khanbogd).[69] However, it was clearly qualified with more negative assessments among residents there than in the interviews in Khanbogd centre soum.

These interviews disclosed a shift in 'expectations' that communities held about what mining companies could do to off-set their impacts, rather than direct complaints against the companies and what they stood for, as anti-mining and development activists often claim (for example, Coumans 2011). That is, at the time my informants were not asserting direct criticisms against the company or towards mining per se but instead voicing a shift in their opinions about the future prospects of mining for the community, a shift towards an increased pessimism as their experiences deepened. This is another important distinction which an attention to the expectations phase can help to draw out.

6.3.2 Choice and Balance in Sustainable Development

In Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii my research found that the changes brought on by mining were primarily articulated by the community in positive terms and not as concerns about, or fears

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[69] Since writing this, herders have filed a complaint against Rio Tinto 'demanding just compensation for the impacts of ... Oyu Tolgoi' (London Mining Network, 2012). In the three years since the field work was conducted, it seems herders have shifted from having positive expectations of mining to petitioning against the company for not having their needs met. Chapter Eight will unpack some of the decisions of the company, which may have contributed to herder discontent.

of, the impending mining boom. For example, in Tsogttsetsii there was a decreased optimism concerning the expectations of mining. In this case the community is comprised of isolated, vulnerable groups, the development needs of whom mining could not meet. Khanbogd people clearly demonstrated a desire for 'development' and believed that mining could be a relief from economic hardship. However, the community was not blind to the negative consequences mining could have for the community. Informants often articulated the need for responsible mining practices and discussed policies and strategies for sustainable development in their interviews.

The expectation, voiced by most community members across both sites, was one that mining, if properly carried out, should not affect the natural environment and that it was important for herder lifestyles to sustain themselves alongside mining operations. This echoes the discussions in Chapters Four and Five of the importance of herding to Mongolians as a livelihood, but it is also anchored more broadly in the ontological commitment of Mongolians, and a sense of national identity. The following statement made to me by an elderly herder exemplifies similar attitudes encountered in many interviews I undertook with both townspeople and herders: "but it [mining] needs to be done positively so that we can also survive'. At the time of research these types of statements suggested to me, and data collected from herders directly stated, that they feared that their lifestyles were at risk from mining, but expected that mining would be carried out in a way that would mitigate that risk.

The caution by the community manifests a clear difference between the respective approaches of company and community to modernisation and development. Dan, for example, does not discuss any of the negative effects of mining. He displays what Trigger terms 'a certainty of purpose… [and] certainty of perspective on what is worthwhile in life… that leaves very little room for ambiguity (Trigger 1997, p. 175). There is an underlying assumption that 'development' correlates to his particular notion of 'townships' and modernisation. Likewise, the primary focus of international organisations, as discerned from documentation, my observations of team meetings, expert forums and personal interviews with Bill over six months, is that the focus of their attention was on town centres, and the impacts upon them of rapid population growth in the face of a lack of supporting

infrastructure. These were considered to be the immediate threats of mining to the South Gobi (World Bank 2009a).

Thus Bill, like Dan, seems to consider 'development' as a single field in which everyone shares the same discursive understandings. In a sense, both Bill and Dan are working to change communities in spite of what those communities might want. As noted above, Spivak and Kapoor make the point that one can't really pretend to be helping a community to 'survive if one does not listen to what that community itself thinks that its 'survival' means (Kapoor, 2004; Spivak 1999). In contrast to Bill and Dan, the community's primary concern, expressed in most interviews, was for herders and the natural environment, however at the time of research this was a marginal priority in the development agenda of international organisations and mining companies and only very rarely discussed informally (this is explored in Chapter Seven). Predictably, the concerns of the community I documented in 2009 are now the issues that the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO) has drafted a complaint about in 2012. The complaint will lead to an investigation which will determine whether the IFC and the World Bank will be able to provide a $900 million loan to Rio Tinto (Ombudsman 2012).

I do not suggest by this that outsider organizations intentionally attempt to abuse the situation of Mongolian peoples and mine communities. Instead my argument is that the perception and attitude that is prevalent among international donors and mining companies, often represents Mongolian government and communities as 'slow', 'behind' and 'under-developed'. These representations have a tendency to fix the Mongolian communities into a position of perceived helplessness, which then reinforces the company's or international organizations' belief that the community needs their assistance. In an important sense these external actors discursively position themselves above the community, reinforcing their place in this position by constructing the community as existing in a state of ignorance as relates to an understanding of the risks of development, thereby underestimating the community's capacity to weigh the possible benefits/losses and engage with them on its own behalf. Interviews with the community show that its members clearly understand that there are negative impacts that will be incurred by mining processes and have prioritized the environment and herder sustainability as non-negotiable losses, though these are not reflected by international

organisations. The current CAO situation at OT offers a perfect example of why the company and international organisations should re-position their engagement with the community.

6.4   Conclusion

A focus on community 'expectations' is an attempt to shift community development in mining away from the positioning of community as passive subject in current pro- and anti-development discourse. More importantly it attempts to position the community as an informed subject, articulating its requirements, instead of it being situated as a silent and passive recipient. I will argue in Chapters Seven and Eight that re-positioning the community does not simply mean recording grievances or adding community and gendered concerns to the current development discourse, but also requires an understanding of the ontological position of that concern and the meaning within which it is important to a community. In doing this, the community becomes an active agent in the dialogue, able to shape the nature of the discourse of development.

For example, acknowledging that the community is actively demanding a particular, culturally mediated kind of 'modernity' instead of being passive recipients of 'development', as is the case in Khanbogd, also allows us view the concerns raised about development and the sustainability articulated in Tsogttsetsii in a more nuanced light, as a failure of the mine to fulfil obligations flowing from an initial community expectation, rather than as impingements by an aggressive external actor on a passive victim. I have argued that this can be facilitated by reconstructing, as closely as possible, the unique ontological context which informs the discursive statements a community might make. Thus, for example, in the case of Lisa provided in this chapter, the taking at face value the report of the need to 'collect water' and pigeon-holding of this as an 'impact', grasps only one sense of this discursive utterance. Indeed what it misses is the ontological context in which this statement is embedded, a context which includes (but is not exhausted by): the group's sense of obligation and hospitality towards an outsider; its willingness to enter into an engagement with the company (via its representative) in terms that are not its own; a willingness to tolerate a certain degree of misunderstanding of its own position as part of this engagement – all of which frame the simple statement of fact which made its way into the official statement of impacts.

Chapter 7 – Gendered Impacts of Mining in Mongolia

7.1 Introduction

During fieldwork, the primary discourse of communities and mining companies engagement is centred around discussions of the 'impacts' associated with the arrival of mining. Many gender and mining specialists, specifically 'impact based theorists', focus on the impacts incurred by communities as a result of the operations of the company (McGuire 2003). The primary tool used by companies to capture, monitor and measure changes of social development is Social Impact Assessments (SIA), (Vanclay 2002). My fieldwork observations and interview based data suggested that, despite the fact that the discourse of the SIA was shared between the community and the company, each of these stakeholders perceive and articulate impacts differently from each other, particularly in the area of gender. The obvious consequences of such misunderstandings results in preventative measures being misdirected, the community perspectives being ignored, and/or development programs being misapplied – all outcomes hindering the company-community relationship and community development. This chapter will address this aspect of mining in Mongolia.

As outlined in Chapter Two, WAD theorists argue that development programs anchored in Western ontology can evade the actual development requirements of developing communities. Continually they explain how oppression, gender, development and equality are often defined by Western concepts and then incorrectly imported into impacted communities where alternative understandings may reside. However, I have also argued above (in Chapter Five) that companies are fluid and that decisions made by particular groups within the company may differ from stipulated corporate structures and guidelines. As such, in some cases SIA policies and standards may not be as rigidly enforced as claimed in public company documentation. I argue in this chapter that underlining Western ontological commitments influence the SIA categories that inform the SIA document, particularly in regard to gender related impacts. These ontological commitments are closely aligned with the liberal discourse within which SIAs are framed, and as such contain certain Western biases, which can be clearly seen in the treatment of gender in Mongolia.

7.2 SIA regulation, theory and practice in Mongolia

At the time of research, one of the most active Mongolian-based NGOs focused on the minerals industry, in both large and small-scale operations across the country, was the Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD). CHRD was, and continues to be, intimately engaged with the social and environmental issues associated with the sites that were the subjects of the fieldwork for this thesis. As a board member of OT Watch[70] and participants in the external review of the Oyu Tolgoi baseline study (Centre for Policy Research 2008), CHRD represents important stakeholders in the SIA process associated with the Oyu Tolgoi development. Initial observations and discussions with a CHRD informant, Davaa, demonstrated her concern with the lack of government engagement with the SIA process. She was particularly worried about the absence of appropriate legislation relating to the social impacts of mining. As such, Davaa was involved in a campaign run by CHRD to lobby the Mongolian government and mining companies for improved engagement with the social aspects of mining, rather than a narrowly focused agenda of environmental concerns. Davaa explained to me:

> We focus on the SIA of mining companies because we have an EIA law in Mongolia …
> but that law does not require a separate SIA. This means SIA is always left out from
> the assessment of mining activities. There is one sentence under the EIA law that says
> EIA *should* include an SIA. But it is only a suggestion.

Indeed, the two documents pertaining to the monitoring of impacts focus on environmental regulations, with very limited attention given to social issues (Environmental Protection Law Of Mongolia, 1995; Law of Mongolia on Environmental Impact Assessments, 1998). The one reference to social issues in both laws, as mentioned by Davaa, is in Article five on the 'State Environmental Guidelines and Principles' of the *Environmental Protection Law of Mongolia* which states: 'In following its guidelines on environmental protection, the State shall act in accordance with the following principles: 1) the creation of favorable environmental conditions for people to live, work, and rest' (Gonchigdorj, 1995). Thus Mongolian legislation appears to

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[70] 'Oyu Tolgoi Watch is a Mongolian NGO founded in 2010 to monitor Oyu Tolgoi investment agreement
compliance with national and international laws and standards' (Mine Watch Mongolia 2010)

give a secondary place to the 'social' concerns and impacts of mining, relying solely on the environmental issues (Freudenburg 1986; Barrow 2000). Furthermore, 'gender' issues, which would be usually positioned under the 'social' category are completely absent from regulation and policy.

NGOs such as CHRD are not alone in responding to the absence of SIA legislation. Mining companies active in Mongolia display a similar tendency. Since SIAs conducted in Mongolia currently exist within a weak national regulatory framework, companies rely upon international standards in their formulation of assessments and as the source for directing the social categories they employ in their SIA. For instance, IMMI and UHG have both publicly released SIA-like documents which directly invoke international standards in the absence of Mongolian legislation. Indeed, UHG's ESIA goes further and explicitly states: 'Where there is an inconsistency between Mongolian law and international treaties to which Mongolia is a signatory, then the provisions of the international treaty will prevail' (Environmental Resources Management and Sustainability East Asia 2010).

Significantly, these documents both employ a 'grouped approach' to social issues. UHG have a combined Environmental and Social Impacts to create the *Environmental and Social Impact Assessment: UHG Phase II Project,* and OT has combined social and economic impacts to draft the *Oyu Tolgoi Project Socio-Economic Impact Assessment*. Davaa highlights that in Mongolia, the practical effects of grouping different categorical impacts from mining results in a lack of attention to social concerns in reporting:

> If you see the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) reports all the EIA are not adequate in the social part. They are all focused on the environmental part. Also, the EIA is approved by the Ministry of Environment. So only the environmental experts are reviewing the report and they are not looking at the social component. So we are advocating for a more detailed SIA process.

In other words, the effect of this 'grouped approach' reflects the partialities of the current Mongolian legislative regime, where the social is abridged for the environmental. Davaa's assessment is supported by the theoretical literature on SIAs. Lockie argues that 'different theoretical and methodological approaches are required for different impact categories'

(Lockie 2003). In the Mongolian situation, SIAs are the 'orphans' of EIA, receiving less attention and importance from both government and companies, as compared to environmental issues (Burdge 2002, Lahiri-Dutt & Ahmad 2011).

7.2.1 International influences and foreign values

It is important to note that a principal factor driving a company's use of international standards in SIA, are the requirements placed upon them to secure support from international finance institutions who make adherence to such standards a condition of the granting of financial support (Macdonald 2012). Thus, for example, UHG's ESIA was compiled to conform to the financing requirements of EBRD and officially stated that the aim of the company is to conduct an ESIA to meet international and national regulatory mandates. They state:

> …[companies involved] prepared this integrated Environmental & Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) to meet European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Performance Requirements (2008) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) Safeguards Policies. Although prepared with particular attention to EBRD Performance Requirements, this ESIA has been developed in a way that meets International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards, ADB Safeguards Policies and which is in alignment with Equator Principles funding requirements (Enviromental Resources Managment and Sustainability East Asia 2010, p. 1).

Significantly, this is a clear statement on the part of UHG that the primary purpose of the ESIA is the fulfilment of international expectations. The preparation of the ESIA to meet the expectations or needs of the community is clearly a secondary concern. Despite these limitations, there are certain benefits to the employment of International guidelines and standards. Sen (1999) argued, for instance, that such standards have an ability to be a source of 'countervailing power' and, likewise, a local practitioner, Macdonald, observed that in Mongolia, due to the lack of national regulations to protect communities from less responsible mining corporations, international standards provide a good benchmark for responsible practice for practitioners (Macdonald 2012).

Others, however, have pointed to the ways in which a reliance on international standards can also be methodologically and theoretically problematic, because international standards are

enshrined with foreign values and often rely on 'international experts' to direct and interpret the SIA process (Vanclay 2002, Macdonald 2012). For example, the management of UHG's SIA process was directed by a team solely made up of international 'experts', while Mongolian workers were exclusively tasked with the responsibility for gathering data. In this case, the international 'experts' decided upon the social categories, areas and issues that would be impacted upon as governed by international standards, without input into the framework from Mongolian workers (Macdonald 2012).

In both field sites the formation and utilisation of the SIA fell under the jurisdiction of the Community Relations (CR) departments who, in each case, hired an 'objective' third party to gather and compile data for the document. Both IMMI and UHG's respective SIAs have been researched and documented by 'objective' external advisors (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009; Environmental Resources Management and Sustainability East Asia 2010). Barrow questions the 'objectivity' of social impact assessors, stating "put crudely, an assessor is more of an 'actor' than an impartial and objective outside observer. Thus, even if applied in a technocratic fashion, SIA is not uninvolved or value-free" (Barrow 2000).

Furthermore, UHG's approach to SIA is not supported by emerging trends in literature that advocate for participatory methods in the SIA process (Esteves, et al. 2012). Vanclay, Esteves and Franks acknowledge the lack of community participation is due to developer organisations driving the SIA agenda and argue that 'one of the barriers to innovative, positive development outcomes is the limited understanding and skills of those who commission SIAs' (Esteves, Franks & Vanclay 2012, p. 40). Therefore, they recommend more engagement of social scientists that have the skills to observe the cultural, gendered, and relational social categories that affect the impact in a given context. Howitt extends on the concepts and highlights the importance of the industry to acknowledge differences in cross-cultural sites and emphasizes the need for specific 'local specialists' to document kinship structures, local values and capture colloquial nuances of the community (Howitt 2012 P. 29.).

Likewise, other development practitioners in Mongolia have criticised adding 'experts', 'external advisers' or 'specialists' for the following reasons. Stating:

It is the social scientist who decides the SIA scope and timetable, what the phases are and how these will proceed. In effect, these social scientists say to local people, "we are going to collaborate with you, now here is what we are going to collaborate on" (Confidential report, 2009).[71]

In this statement the critique is not focused on the method for gathering information as such, but is directed at the discourse that frames SIA and the subsequent power relations it embodies.

It is important to note that this critical lens refocuses the SIA literature away from a concern with method and policy, and draws attention to the discursive frame in which the method and policy is articulated. Consequently, the basic ontological premises, the 'ways of seeing the world' which inform the SIA process and the categories it employs, become the object of investigation (Howitt 2012. p. 83). The aim of this focus is to understand the limitations these ontological assumptions place on the ability of the SIA process to register the significance of impacts in the field.

7.3   Discourses in SIA

Given my focus on 'gender' as a social category, I initially began my analysis of the basic categories informing SIA discourse by examining the SIAs of both IMMI and UHG, and looking for every reference to the words 'sex', 'woman', 'women', or 'gender'. The analysis demonstrated that such keywords are always found grouped under the following three categories: Equal Opportunity to Employment (EEO); Prostitution/women's health; and with regard to women as section of society constituting a 'vulnerable group'. Similar research conducted by Sara Bice on Australian-based mining companies concludes that 'companies rarely consider gender issues in amongst other social issues' (Bice 2011 p 159). In addition, gender issues are also far less reported compared to other sustainability issues. Bice argues that in sustainability documents, gender issues represent only 4% of the major sustainability issues (Bice 2011). She also isolates three areas under which gender is treated which reflect the areas I have identified in the IMMI and UHG SIAs, suggesting there are areas within

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[71] A report was provided to me by a company representative on the validity of SIA versus other forms of impact monitoring. The representative asked to remain anonymous and for the report title not to be revealed.

which 'gender' is considered to be an area of concern and not in others. EEO is the dominant category in which gender impacts are cited within both of the company SIAs. The Oyu Tolgoi SIA, for example, identifies 'gender imbalance' as an impact, stating:

> Gender imbalance is a direct, negative impact from the Project and it will result from construction and operation phases of OT Project activity, but particularly the operation phases. It will be direct in nature (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009)

Both SIAs identify two aspects of this 'gender imbalance': women's equal access to employment alongside men; and their right to earn pay equal to the pay received by men. These two concerns reflect a GAD analysis which, as noted in Chapter Two, is anchored in liberal feminist discourse which grants an ontological privilege to a gendered individual to whom certain rights accrue – two of which are equality of access to employment and equality of pay. The attention to these impacts was observed not only in the SIA reports but also in both formal and informal discussions with foreign mine managers across different departments and consistently forms part of company discourse concerning gendered impacts at all levels.

In discussions with foreign workers, equal access to employment was raised on many occasions. Certain elements of current Mongolian legislation explicitly prevent women from working in certain roles at a mine site (Khan, Brink et al. 2013). The managers would express the need to change the laws and mentioned that either through local agreements and/or practice, the companies would hope to change the laws that prohibited women from specific jobs. For example, at Oyu Tolgoi the concern was with the prohibition of women from working underground, while at UHG the concern was with repealing the law forbidding women to drive trucks over a certain tonnage limit. At UHG they expressed how the inspectors 'turned a blind eye' to the illegality of women driving trucks on their site. He continued that the company hoped that through the examples of women driving the trucks on site, this would influence a change to the law. Again, in the case of Oyu Tolgoi the managers discussed the option of placing a section in the minerals agreement that permitted women to work underground. Likewise, the World Bank researched the issue of obstacles to female participation in mining and civil society and lobbied to change laws that restricted participation (Khan et al. 2013).

Remarkably, however, Mongolian mine-site workers of female or male gender did not echo these sentiments, and indeed nor did such issues get raised by Mongolians I spoke to who were hoping to work at the mine. Indeed, consultations with community members which specifically touched on mine-site employment did not discuss gender-based inequality in the workforce as an issue. Significantly, none of the Mongolian women I interviewed specifically stated that they desired a job for themselves in competition with or over a man, nor did they suggest that they felt that their sex or gender precluded them from employment. I observed that local desires for employment and benefit were seemingly at odds with company and Ulaanbaatar-based stakeholders engaged in the project. Instead their primary concern was that someone in their family obtains employment, which could then support all family members. The community women's perspective echoes Developing World Feminist, Johnsom-Odim who argues that for many developing world women it is not the creation of equality but the creation of opportunity itself that drives the development agenda (Jhonson-Odim 1991).

The EEO focus on the need to address 'gender pay equality' in the workplace is also something which my research did not find echoed in community attitudes. Thus the community women that I interviewed who were employed at the mine sites did not identify 'gender pay equality' as an issue confronting them directly. Indeed when they were asked specifically if they experienced any pay disparity based on their gender, they answered they did not.[72] I asked many women in Khanbogd the following question, and received similar replies:

> IC: Is the salary any different between women and men?

> Ariuka: At the first time, Mr Baat, director of LIV,[73] told us we would work according to the Mongolian labour law. But the salary of the people who are from Khanbogd was

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[72] I am not arguing that there are not disparities in pay based on gender in Mongolia. Pastore (2010) states that there are little differences in pay between men and women in Mongolia but significant difference 'in the way the market values the same characteristics of men and women'. Therefore, I am arguing that gender was not the driving force of inequality in employment in the South Gobi and at the time of research other social factors were oppressing indicators.

[73] 'LIV' is a pseudonym for a contracting company on site.

less than the other people from Ulaanbaatar. I wondered a lot why the salary was very different. I could not find the reason.

When questioned further, the women did confirm the existence of pay inequality, but that its source was based upon locality, i.e. based upon whether they were from a rural area (most often the community itself), as opposed to an urban centre. This difference in pay between women cannot be accounted for by gender, but can be understood in terms of a cultural difference which informed the decision of the manager responsible for allocating pay to the women. In this case it is clear that in order to understand the particular pay-related issue facing women mine employees, a particular cultural lens must be employed, one that registers the discrimination of regional difference, alongside a gendered one.

Another surprising source of discrimination in pay was based around 'who', as in which group of individuals, work was conducted for, as the following comment establishes:

> Ariuka: The salary was different depending on the job position. For the washers, there are two kinds of washers at the company, the washers who wash foreign people's clothes and the washers who wash Mongolian workers' clothes. They have an 8 hour shift and we have a 12 hour shift plus we sometimes work over time. They get money for over time but we do not.

In an attempt to understand why workers doing the same job would get paid differently depending on washing foreigners or Mongolians clothes, I asked whether the washers spoke English, she replied quiet directly and vehemently, 'No, they do not. They were not from Khanbogd. We were from Khanbogd'. As it turned out the workers washing foreigner clothes were from Ulaanbaatar and the workers washing Mongolian clothes were from Omnogovi and/or Khanbogd. This grievance was then re-iterated by workers from UB who then complained about the salary of foreign workers in the same position and undertaking similar jobs as themselves. My observations suggested that this form of employment discrimination was not instigated solely by foreign workers but also by Mongolian workers, who single out *hudoo hun* (countryside people). Thus, for example, a Mongolian safety manager stated to me that having to hire local people irritated him, he asked, 'why do we need to hire these

countryside people, they are like peasants and do not have running water and electricity so how can they work here and clean showers when they don't have showers themselves?'

I use this example to demonstrate that for the women in these communities and mine sites, equal pay was not the form of discrimination that most oppressed them. There is clearly a gender element at play in this situation since only women were employed as washers, a situation which is considered in the SIA:

> The direct involvement of women in formal, large-scale mining is generally limited to support activities such as management, clerical, security, catering and related jobs (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009).

However, in this particular context, the issue for women was not gender equality per se, or equality of pay, but was instead the discrimination they experienced based on the fact that they were rural people. Coupled with this, the distinction in pay rates based on whether the workers' clothes were foreign or Mongolian indicates that labour carried out for Westerners was more highly valued, and suggests that the source of the discrimination experienced by women was, in this case, grounded in a cultural interpretation of differing locality based on particular cultural considerations.

One of the current grievances of the Mongolian government towards foreign mining companies is the disparity in wages between foreigners and Mongolians and the lack of opportunity and employment for the South Gobi community (Khatsg 2013). This issue was once a grievance between Khanbogd and the IMMI but has now escalated to a national level debate that has become a political factor with the Prime Minister's office, demanding equal pay for equally qualified Mongolian and foreign workers. It would seem that in this case, the communities, companies and international financial lenders that monitor and guide SIA, would benefit from understanding the concerns of the community working in the South Gobi.

As Chapter Two highlighted, applying a WAD Feminist theory allows certain forms of discrimination, which are not visible to GAD approaches, to be grasped by pointing to the way in which a multiplicity of intersecting social discourses (such as race, class, regionality, etc.) are at work in communities. This is just such a case, in which *all* of these social influences need to be understood to perceive the discrimination at hand in the South Gobi. The GAD

approach, premised on the privileging of gender above other social categories, particularly culture, was not able to register the actual nature of the discrimination endured by South Gobi women. Indeed, practitioners working on the SIA did not register this as an impact or possible impact in the SIA document. The WAD approach, which specifically argues that attention needs to be directed to specific cultural conditions and traditions, and particularly to the ways in which they determine the articulation of gender, allows the meaning of the discrimination in this case to be grasped in its cultural articulation.

I draw the attention back to Howitt's (2012) argument that 'world views' are constructed by the understandings and meaning that inform the theoretical foundations of SIA. I observe in the example of EEO a constructed reality that represents women as fighting for employment equality, when in fact women in the community were found to be fighting for any family member to gain employment, and those who were employed were concerned to be treated in the same way as their urban and foreign counterparts. However, in this case the impacts identified by the community were not captured in the SIA and therefore programs directed at breaking down urban/rural and foreign/national barriers were not in place to address these issues. Indeed the 'world view' of the community members was not captured and the dominant discourse of SIA that is influenced by Western constructions of gender and the issues that are important to them were re-created.

7.4   SIA and Gender: a social ill?

The previous section indicated the way in which the ontology of GAD, grounded in gender as the primary category, informs the 'gendered categories' of SIAs at the mine sites examined for the fieldwork of this thesis. It also indicated the way in which such ontology led to a failure to register or anticipate the particular nature of an impact suffered by community women. It was also pointed out that such an impact could be better registered if a WAD approach was used to inform the collection of SIA data. There is a risk that this analysis might be viewed simply as echoing the position of impact-based theorists by suggesting that another social category, namely 'culture' or 'regionality', simply be added in order to 'complete' the SIA process. However it is possible to go further. As indicated in Chapter Two, the GAD approach is based on a consideration of the discourse of gender and how this might produce effects upon women – for example, denying them access to employment opportunities alongside men.

This is seen by viewing the discourse of the mine company and its employees through a gendered lens, that is, resituating it as one embedded within a particular patriarchal discourse that permits women to be denied equal access to employment. Given that such a discourse which can be located in cultural factors, has missed impacts upon women, it is possible to follow WAD theorists and resituate the gendered discourse in the context of an encultured one. That is, it is possible to consider the ways in which company discourse is informed by a gendered discourse that is itself informed by a cultural discourse. With this, analysis is extended beyond the particular categories employed for methodology and policy, and brings into view the discursive frame in which the categories and the relations between them are articulated. The significance of such an analysis can be seen by examining another discourse on the mine site in which gender is articulated in a particularly cultural way.

7.4.1 *Prostitution and Mining*

My arrival at OT and discussions with staff about my research led to young women seeking me out and discussing observations of the actions of some of the men in the company. Prostitution is cited in both SIAs as a possible impact in the community, although it is only mentioned on a few occasions (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009). Chimgee, a young woman from Ulaanbaatar who was a close informant of mine, was one of the first women to approach me at OT. We spent a few months together and it was through travelling with her around the South Gobi that I met other young women and learnt about their experiences at the IMMI and UHG mine sites. During one interview she related the following to me:

> I have a story for you. One of the interesting things I found when I worked at OT was the behaviour of the LIV[74] staff, in particular the foreign bosses. I spent one month working as a translator for a contracting company at OT. I saw many good and many bad things there. One of the interesting things that came up was the behaviour of this contracting company staff, in particular the foreign bosses. On my second day of work, I received a telephone call from the boss Philip who asked me if I would like to spend the night with him. I said 'why, what are you talking about'? He said, 'I would like to spend the night with you and have sex'. I said, 'no thank you' and he said 'I will pay you

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[74] Contracting company at the mine – name changed.

US$100 if you spend the night with me.' I said that I was not interested. I don't even know how he got my number – I was working for a different contracting company.

When I enquired more into whether this practice was standard and if other women agreed to these propositions, she continued:

Yes some women do it, maybe they arrive very poor and the money is good, maybe some are scared they will get fired, maybe some of them want boyfriends – I don't know. Anyway, often these girls would then get 'sent' to other foreign manager's rooms to 'clean' their rooms. Who 'cleans' rooms at 11pm at night? No one thought they were cleaning.

Further inquiry into Chimgee's account showed women who agreed to the initial proposals of these managers, were then later asked by these managers to 'visit' other foreign manager's rooms, suggesting a systemized acceptance of this conduct.[75]

Chimgee's story, and those of other female employee, suggests that a group of men within the company were involved in organizing sex work on-site, completely disconnected to any activities or social changes in the surrounding community. The sex work was also organized

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[75] Rio Tinto has many CSR guidelines and regulations that inform employees, contractors, stakeholders, and shareholders of the 'best practices' that the company adheres to. Of relevance to the issue of sex work on-site is their overarching global business conduct guidelines: The way we work and their Employment Policy both which direct the values of the core business. These documents contain explicit reference to the prohibition of sexual assault and harassment within the work place, for example:

Sexual or workplace harassment is not tolerated at Rio Tinto. Sexual harassment may include unwanted sexual advances, sexual jokes, subtle or overt pressure for sexual favours, sexual innuendoes, and offensive propositions [p11-12]'

Evidently, in Chimgee's story the manager's proposition would fall under Rio Tinto's definition of sexual harassment. The encounter included an 'offensive proposition', 'sexual advance' and 'subtle or overt pressure for sexual favours' by the manager. It is important at this stage to highlight the difficulty in characterising whether the actions described in Chimgee's account constitute 'sex work' or sexual harassment. I did not interview all the women involved and could not establish whether these actions were the result of coercion or of an empowered choice by the women to earn extra money. However since money was exchanged for sexual services, I will refer to these transactions as 'sex work'.

by a group of men in a specific contracting company[76] and facilitated to other foreign men. Chimgee makes a particular distinction that it is in fact the foreign people that are the instigators and consumers of the sex work on site. I investigated further and asked her specifically if Mongolian male workers were also engaged in these affairs and she said 'No, I don't think so'. Further discussions with the community relations team about this issue disclosed that sex work had begun with foreign workers but had started to spread into the Mongolian male sector. That is, the foreign bosses had perpetrated the actions and the trend then began to be practiced in the larger population of Mongols on site. As far as I was able to ascertain, the women were from both the local area and Ulaanbaatar.

My research suggests that there exists a discourse on the mine site which allows women workers to be positioned as available for sex work. Secondly, although the SIA does recognise the possibility of sex work as a possible impact, it locates its possible occurrence within the community. The possibility of prostitution occurring on the mine site is not cited. However the reports from informants above demonstrate that the actual nature of sex work impacting the community, at least at this stage of mine development, is quite different from the depiction of sex work outlined in the SIA report. Specifically, the SIA only considers the possible occurrence of sex work in the community, casting this as caused by social changes outside of the OT fence line. It attributes sex work to actions external to the company, located in the community, and arising to factors such as change of lifestyle/income, increased male populations and crime caused by in-migration. Thus, for example, under the heading 'population influx', the SIA states that the 'presence of mine workers and their families may contribute to the spread of other social ills (prostitution, alcoholism and STIs)' (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009 p116). The statement

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[76] Importantly the more blatant exploitation came from contracting companies at the project site as distinct to employees of the big mining companies – Ivanhoe Mines or Rio Tinto. This tends to imply that while the policy against sexual harassment is successfully enforced within the big companies, it is not so strictly enforced by the contractors they employ, as if corporate oversight does not extend into the contractors employed on the mine site. This is despite the fact that Rio Tinto has good practice policies that contracting companies are required to agree with to conduct business with them, for example, The way we work stipulates: 'in addition, any consultant, agent, contractor or supplier who fails to respect The way we work may see their contract terminated' (Rio Tinto 2009). The problem therefore seems to be in the monitoring and/or regulation of employee conduct. This further supports the previous chapter's argument that a mining company is multi-faceted, with different groups that operate within their own social and discursive frames.

acknowledges that 'social ills' and in this case 'prostitution', could be conducted by mine workers in the community.

The SIA clearly states the development of 'social ills' occurs within the community neighbouring the mine. However, the research showed that sex work had begun on-site before it had existed in the community. This is not to say that sex work might not be observed in the future along with the growth of the community, but it does demonstrate that currently: (1) the SIA again failed to register an actual gendered impact; (2) it diminishes and distances the company responsibility for the impact by attributing it to 'the presence of mine workers and their families' in the community; and (3) there is a distinct divide between what happens on-site and what occurs in the community, which has the discursive effect of separating the company and community sites into different autonomous spheres. The remainder of this chapter considers how the GAD ontology informs the SIA discourse that perpetuates and evades these issues. This can be further elucidated by considering another example of a discourse of gender on the mine site.

7.4.2 Boundaries and 'Othering'

Bolormaa, a young woman from Tsogttsetsii, told me about a group of strippers that had been flown from Ulaanbaatar to the OT site for employee 'entertainment'[77]. Bolormaa herself was an ex-stripper and had moved back to her home town in Tsogttsetsii to look for work on the mines. Her ex-partner Paul was an American driller who was contracting at OT. She relayed the following to me:

> Once I saw some photos of some girls on Paul's computer at OT. I knew some of them from work. I told Paul that they were Marco Polo[78] dancers. (She turns to me and giggles) I think Paul was a frequent customer at Marco Polo, so when they went to OT for work or leisure they took some girls with them.

I continued to ask her whether she was sure they weren't there to work on-site. She stated directly 'of course dancer girls would not go to work in OT. They posed for photos on those big

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[77] It is important to note that this was before Rio Tinto began to manage the site.

[78] Marco Polo is a well-known Pizzeria and strip club in Ulaanbaatar.

machines'. I asked how many girls were in the photos, and if they were there to dance or, also sexually service the men. She said 'maybe 10 were in the photos. They were dancers. I wasn't there so I don't know if they had sex, but probably they were having sex as well. But I can't say.'

At the time to which Bolormaa is referring, my estimates suggest that OT had approximately 200 to 300 people on-site. Given the layout of the camp, the shared mess hall, and the one pub (which is the only place to legally consume alcohol), it is inconceivable that the majority of people on-site would not have been aware of the presence of these women. Coupled with the on-site sex work, the fact that strippers were permitted on-site, even though it is clearly against corporate regulations, suggests a discourse within the industry that sexualises and constructs women in a particular way.

A theme that emerges from both Chimgee's and Bolormaa's account is that women on-site are being sexually harassed and possibly sexually exploited. The fact that managers could position women as sex workers when they were employed as translators, and permit strippers to be flown into a 'gender-neutral' and an Equal Opportunity work site, says something about the discourse of mining and its construction of gender. At first glance it seems that 'gender' as a social category, as pre-dominantly employed in the Gender and Mining literature by GAD theorists, could explain these actions in terms of the 'masculine' discourse of mining companies. One that articulates a particular construction of femininity pitted against a construction of masculinity – i.e. that women are objects to be used for male activity. However this simple picture is complicated once the discourse of foreign mine workers is more carefully interrogated, and the ontological assumptions implicit in it are laid bare.

Chapter Two also raised the limitations of a GAD analysis to describe the impacts and discourse of mining in cross-cultural settings. As I observed the experiences on the mine-site, it became apparent that a complex array of intersecting social categories, which included ethnicity and culture, operated alongside gender. That is, even in cases directly involving a women's biological sex, gender was often equal to, or secondary to other social categories. A clear example of the way in which other social categories operated alongside gender were references made to me, a Western woman, by male foreign informants, in which I was pitted against female Mongol employees. The significance of these references could only be

understood by grasping the way in which discourses of ethnicity inhabited those of gender in the statements made by those informants.

A discussion which exemplifies the attitudes of some foreign workers towards Mongolian women is the following conversation I had with Mike, who stated:

> You don't know these LIV girls they are wild, last time I was on the dance floor they ripped my shirt off. You don't know these women they are not civilized, there's something wild about them - it's just not civilized. That's why I like you, I've noticed you around a couple of times - I just want a good, civilized woman. You see, I'm not like one of those miners, I was in Indonesia for 2 years and I had the same girlfriend for one and a half years.

There are several points to note from this conversation: Firstly, the distinction Mike makes between 'civilized' and 'wild' echoes the similar distinction made by Dan when he makes a pro-development case for mining as a 'civilizing' process with the goal of creating a community fit for 'wives and families' (see Chapter Six). This mobilises the category of 'culture' to characterise women – not simply the notion of 'womanhood' is constructed with the aid of a particular construction of culture as either wild/civilised. Secondly, Mike's qualification that he is 'not like one of those miners' implicitly trades on an understanding of the promiscuity of mining workers, and positions this promiscuity as undesirable but 'natural', with himself as a positive exception to this norm. This indicates a specific assumption about the nature of male sexuality, the way in which men are gendered; this statement is grounded in the category of 'gender' and a particular construction and gendering of 'men'.

Thirdly, and most importantly, he distinguishes *between* women in ethnic terms: Mongolian women are 'wild', and 'untamed' – almost 'animal-like' in their behaviour – in contrast to a 'good, civilized' Western woman (see also Crawford & Unger 2000). Mike's comments characterize women within a discourse of ethnicity, privileging Western over Mongolian women in terms of ethnic and cultural criteria. Finally, the three categories clearly overlap – ethnicity, gender and culture become basic assumptions in each category and work together to inform Mike's statement to suffuse it with meaning. Therefore, I argue that neither culture,

ethnicity nor gender can be privileged. Each category mutually reinforces the other and supports, for the informant, the statements they are making.

Although Mongolian women aren't defined as indigenous women, Joni Paramenter has described similar experiences of Australian indigenous women working on mine sites. In her research she has described that those indigenous women:

> perceive themselves as occupying the bottom position of the mine site 'hierarchy', where non-indigenous men are at the top, followed by non-indigenous women, indigenous men, and then them (Parmenter 2011, p. 76).

This privileging of one ethnicity and gender over another, illustrates the way in which the discourses of both gender and ethnicity are simultaneously at work in constructing a notion of 'women' on a mine site, be they community women, employees, strippers flown in from Ulaanbaatar, or Western fieldworkers. Implicit in the notion of 'woman on the mine-site' is not only a recognition of their gender, but also a characterization of them in ethnic terms. Even if this characterization is one that asserts that such an ethnic difference exists yet does not matter, this itself is indicative of the operation of a particular discourse of ethnicity, one that has decided that ethnic differences do not matter. As Paramenter argues:

> Indigenous women are both indigenous and female, a double minority in a very unfamiliar environment, thereby conflating the experiences of both sexism and racism (Parmenter 2011, p. 82).

Although the Mongolian women are not an indigenous minority, the discussion with Mike represents a similar conflation of ethnicity and gender. These two discourses simultaneously inform Mike's statements, and it is impossible to grasp the construction of 'woman' at work in his statements without taking them both into account. That is, it is clear that to grasp this particular discursive construction of femininity it is not enough to just employ the category of gender; the discourse of culture intersects it and any notion of 'gender' can only be articulated in terms of particular cultural considerations.

7.5 Boundaries and frontiers of SIA

There are groups within the company that are engaged in an attempt to raise questions about the SIA in terms of the discourse framing this process. An example is provided by informal discussions I had with senior Rio Tinto staff members, who discussed fundamental problems within the SIA process as they perceived them. In particular, I had the chance to meet with a senior manager of Rio Tinto community relations practices in IMMI's Ulaanbaatar's office and he shared with me many of his thoughts on the mining industry and community-company relations. He gave me copies of his personal unpublished writings, which he said enabled him to 'think through' his work and ideas. In these writings he makes the following observation:

> Consultants should also be tasked to address one particular striking SIA omission: there is no systematic attempt to baseline survey company employees with the same care given to local populations (personal unpublished material, 2009 p3)

In this statement the manager critiques the SIA process and the discourse that solely focuses on an external review of the community and not an internal review of the company employees. Due to the population of the mine site being double the size of the community, the ongoing economic business exchanges and transportation of community based employees between the mine and the community, an internal review of the company is a logical proposition to capture this interaction. The manager in question does not, however, provide a framework in which extending the scope of SIA can be accomplished. This chapter argues that the insights of WAD theorists can be mobilised to unpack the multiple discourses which intersect and impact both these sites. For example, there are discursive ramifications that depict the company as being beyond examination and faultless, as observed in the former example of prostitution, where 'social ills' were in fact an internal impact on the company and not the community.

Howitt (2012) further contributes to the argument toward extending the scope of the SIA by considering the global implications of the mining industry on various stakeholders. Howitt explains:

where social power is constructed with racialised, territorial and gender-based characteristics, the legitimacy of state and corporate institutions in responding to social impacts in the eyes of interested parties needs to be considered (Howitt 2012, p. 85).

This position is strongly supported by developing world theorists, who argue that the role of international actors and their inherent discourses (including SIA) rely upon global systems that impact local communities.

The terrain mapped by the senior manager and Howitt points us to another way in which the relation between the company and community can be situated, namely, within the broader discourse of 'globalised mining'. An example of the globalised discourse of mining was bought to my attention by members from the NGO community, in the form of an international gendered impact. Although both SIAs failed to consider the possibility of cross-boundary sexually related violence, research demonstrated that it was occurring and that it was directly linked to the minerals industry. This impact provides clear examples of: 1) the importance of internally reviewing and assessing company employees; and 2) how multiple ontological categories residing in discourses at the local level extended into the global sphere.

During the year of fieldwork, I met an Australian social worker at the National Centre Against Violence (NCAV) in Ulaanbaatar. I contacted the NCAV to research gender-based violence in Mongolia and enquire about its relationship to mining.[79] The Australian social worker at NCAV relayed to me the story of one of her former clients in Australia. Sara was a Mongolian national who had been working as a waitress and became romantically involved with an Australian miner in Ulaanbaatar, who I will refer to as Tim. Sara and Tim married and moved to Australia, where they settled in Mt Isa, an isolated outback mining town. Within a week of arriving in Australia, Tim[80] assaulted Sara and chained her to the bed of their shared house. He kept her imprisoned for the next six months. During this period Sara was repeatedly

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[79] It is important to note that the following example was not a case that was directly involving either of the companies under research (although I can't say that it wasn't) but involved a foreign miner from an unidentified site in Mongolia.

[80] It is important to note that in Sara's case, Tim had no history of violence towards her until she entered the country. After entering Australia, Tim secretly cancelled her spousal visa, greying the lines between domestic violence and sex trafficking.

sexually abused by Tim and he also prostituted her to other men working at the mine site. She eventually escaped with the help of a neighbour who pretended to be a customer. Sara received assistance at a women's shelter in Brisbane, where the social worker now working at NCAV in Ulaanbaatar met and worked with her.

In my discussions with the social worker, she explained that this was an especially vicious case of sexual violence, but in her experience was not uncommon. She discussed numerous cases of Nigerian and Latin American women in similar situations, where Australian miners had married them abroad and then brought them back into their native country and abused them. She had worked on five cases with Mongolian women, all married to miners they had met in Mongolia. Sex-trafficking and its relationship to mining is an issue recognised by NGOs and activists but is a largely under-researched in Gender and Mining literature (Ralston & Keeble 2008; Liu & Finckenauer 2010).

7.6 Local and global discourses

People, capital, and information cross borders and traverse vast distances relatively easily in the context of the mining industry, making possible new impacts that are not merely localised within the geographical location of the mine-site and community but have a global impact. The SIA research conducted by a team of specialists analysing the impacts on a community by mining companies in a localised geographical area, may be appropriate to an EIA which is specifically concerned with local effects. However in a globalised context, where the social effects are not limited to a precise geographical area, such a limitation is not appropriate. As the manager of the personal writings suggested:

> SIA needs to look beyond the immediate community out into the broader region. SIA has tended to concentrate on communities and projects with a well-defined geographic boundary. Broader vision is needed (personal unpublished material 2009, p. 4).

Thus, the neighbouring community, the company, national and international levels could be included in the operating definition of transnational mining companies.

For example, drawing on the example of sex tourism, which can only occur in the context of the infrastructure and discourses of the international tourism industry, sex trafficking by miners working in another country can only take place because the international mining industry

operates within a global framework. An industry I have demonstrated to be imbued with gendered, cultured and ethnic discourses that create and perpetuate certain discourses about masculinity and femininity, which in turn impact women in various tangible ways.

Just as WAD theorists argue that the history of development and the various roles the states and international actors play in development must be recognised for a thorough understanding of the issues that oppress women (Chow 1991, Mohanty 2003), Howitt applies a similar argument to the field of SIA:

> Rather than assuming the neutrality and independence of the state in a particular impact assessment setting, the mature approach to conceptualising how power influences the impact assessment process is to bring the state and other powerful players into view – to give them a history and a context in the same way as local communities and issues are treated in understanding impact processes (Howitt 2012, p. 85).

An important aspect of understanding this impact is the international structure through which the minerals industry operates and where the abuses are carried out - the relationship between the discourses of the mining company, originating on-site and perpetuated at an international level. The realisation that globalisation plays a role in enabling impacts of mining to extend beyond the national borders of Mongolia leads to the recognition of a further limitation of the SIA process. Not only does the possible prostitution outlined in the SIAs extend beyond the 'social ills' of the local community, but also into the international arena, and these influences need to be more carefully conceptualised and reflected as impacts in policy.

7.7 Conclusion

Similar to the mining industry, the legislative processes in place to regulate the social and gendered impacts from mining in Mongolia are nascent and developing. In the light of this and also based on project financing requirements, mining companies rely on international standards and guidelines to develop their SIA's. On the one hand, international standards can be used as a force of countervailing power to ensure SIA's are at least documented in countries that do not regulate such impacts. On the other hand, international standards can also be an avenue to import notions of oppression, gender and development into a

community. That is, foreign conceptions that underpin SIA categories can contain different ontological premises, notions of power that occlude the impacts as understood by the South Gobi community.

A primary instance of the inherent values enshrined in the SIA process was provided by examining the use of gender in both the SIAs of the companies under research. Drawing on examples of gender in SIA demonstrated that GAD approaches have influenced the social categories of gender. When comparing the understanding, expressed in SIAs, of a 'gendered' impact to the issues of the gendered community, I have shown that the issues experienced are different from those captured in the SIA – where the SIA focused on Equal Employment Opportunity for women, the community focused on opportunity itself, or equal access to the opportunity and pay of urban workers. I have attributed this oversight to GAD's ontological privilege of gender as the primary social category to inform issues related to women in the South Gobi. The SIA focuses on women's employment and women's equal pay as ways to assist women's opportunities, however the women in this situation are being oppressed by alternative factors. Therefore, I have mobilised WAD theory and argued that any social analysis, if it is to do justice to the impacts of mining experienced by the gendered community, should be considered in terms of its particular cultural context and alongside other cultural differences.

By applying WAD theory, I argued that the SIA discourse must be resituated within the broader discourses informing the relationships between the community and the company in terms of the intersecting discourses of gender, ethnicity, and regionality. In this regard I argue that WAD, rather than GAD, theory is more applicable to understanding not only the impacts of mining in Mongolia but also in understanding the issues, like regionality and ethnic discrimination, which impact the individual and the broader community. In the next chapter I consider the ways in which this limited ontological assumption can be seen to be influenced and perpetuated by the decision-making of various actors within the company and the effect this has on further distancing the community from the company, a process that does not assist in bridging the company-community relationship or improve community development.

In the South Gobi, a WAD approach to SIA identifies the issues offset by minerals development in the community. However, it also challenges the nature of the territorial

discourses that shape the SIA. The chapter argued that in order to better register the impacts facing women and men, the scope of the SIA should be broadened to consider the internal impacts of the mine and the globalised nature of the discourses within which the mining industry operates. In this I extend on arguments that others have made and demonstrate the globalised nature of these impacts through data collected in the field. Therefore, I propose an extension of the focus from the embedding of the company within the community to the globalised context in which mining companies operate.

Chapter 8 – Lost in the Landscape

The previous chapters have revealed that the community is positioned as a passive actor in Mining and Development discourse in Mongolia. I have argued that the positioning partly manifests itself in the way in which the company or company-hired 'specialist' determines the process, content, structure, and conceptual scheme of the SIA. In this chapter I will extend on this discussion and address the aim of the research, and argue that the basic structure of SIA is ontologically committed to Western meanings, casting the company/community relationship in terms of external/internal or, as WAD argue, an 'us/them' or 'othering' relationship that consequently excludes the community as active participants in the SIA process (Kapoor 2008. In unpacking this relationship, the chapter identifies another ontological premise, specifically, that the assumption that the categories employed by SIA which are embodied in international and company standards are universally applicable and need merely to be applied by local experts in order to be relevant to a local situation, a notion, that I argue is in itself grounded in the Western understanding of the SIA as a technocratic, value-free process (Lockie 2001).

Initially, I analyzed interviews conducted with two mining company employees from different ethnocultural backgrounds, with the aim of recording their perception of the role of global corporate guidelines to effect change in the Mongolian context. The analysis clearly reflected that the two employees hold different interpretations of the use of the guidelines and SIA documents to their own practice, and demonstrates divergent positions which frame the us/them position. I argue that this us/them structure has the effect of foregrounding and favoring particular meanings and understandings within SIA discourse, which leads to the prioritisation of specific impacts according to a specific ontological framework of meanings and values.

Following this, I explore the impact of dust on herders from mining activities, which forms another central part of the chapter. I build on Howitt's and O'Faircheallaigh's argument that the SIA process is a meaning-laden construct within which actors foster and characterise issues which are important to them (Howitt 2012, O'Faircheallaigh 2012a). Likewise, I use the issue of dust to demonstrate that the community's meanings and understandings of impact

are not adequately recognised within the company, particularly by the high-level decision-makers. In this particular case, I examine the consequent prioritising of Western/universal norms and meanings within the SIA discourse of the company.

Finally, this chapter concludes that although the standards and processes guiding the SIA process privilege certain meanings and 'values frameworks', this does not mean that they should merely be jettisoned from the SIA process. Instead it is suggested that a dialogue between international standards and community understandings and approaches is required.

8.1 Us/them and 'Othering': A discourse of power

Like most SIA practices worldwide, and not too dissimilar to the International Commitments of UHG discussed in the earlier Chapter, IMMI's Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA) outlines a substantial list of international standards and guidelines that inform the categories, process and procedures intended to be used in its SIA process[81] (Vanclay 2002, O'Faircheallaigh 2012a). Moreover, as mentioned in Chapters Three and Seven, the CSR framework of IMMI is governed by Rio Tinto standards that apply globally to all of their operations, regardless of specific cultural contexts (Rio Tinto 2009b). What I explore here is a disjuncture I observed within the company between a Mongolian and a Western perception of global standards governing the SIA process. This is reflected in a cultural divide in interpretations of the process within the company and points to the lack of self-reflexivity within the company concerning the SIA process. I draw on the particular case of the community relations departments at IMMI.

I met with Scott, a foreign manager at IMMI and long-term resident in Mongolia, to discuss how the universal/global standards operate in the Mongolian context. The following discussion is drawn from an interview we had in his office:

> IC: Do you think Rio Tinto guidelines are appropriate to the Mongolian context?
>
> Scott: Well that's a big question but the best way for me to answer this question, is by talking about what we have already done. So, to me the things that we have done are pillars of the Rio Tinto standards… [They] are the baseline and the SIA that we have

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[81] See, Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009, pp. 15-16.

just finished… They've been done in a way that I have not felt, almost at any time, in the entire process for both those two things any resistance from Rio at a corporate level.

Scott acknowledges the measure of difficulty in discussing the relationship between the international and local context, by conceding the possibility of hidden tensions between them. He then refers to the social baseline and the SIA conducted for OT as an outstanding example of the standards in the field. Finally, he explains how even though the 'local' considerations used in the process by the IMMI community relations team, though not strictly part of the Rio Tinto process, were not considered problematic by Rio Tinto corporate, who were charged with overseeing the team's work with the community. This small admission points to the fluidity of the guidelines and the ability of Rio Tinto corporate to be flexible.

I also observed during my fieldwork that local processes at site or in local country offices were adapted to sociocultural contexts. In Scott's opinion, although the SIA did fit broadly into the corporate guidelines, Rio Tinto corporate allowed a great deal of latitude to consider the sociocultural context. This is also witnessed in other Rio Tinto sites in Australia, where indigenous cultural practices have been implemented into negotiations and community engagement activities (Doohan 2008). Scott continued to explain how IMMI embedded practices to suit the cultural context:

> So with the baseline, did we do it around the direct impact of the mine? No, we did it for the whole aimag. Did we have a team of external experts come in? No, we just had one advisor. The Center for Policy and Research team here [in Ulaanbataar] did it with the University team – it was very participatory, it was very public. Now it is a public document and we had a public launch... So, were those things prescribed by the Rio standard? No. but we did 'em and I think they went fine. We did the whole thing in both languages. In fact the process of the advisory committee was *all* in Mongolian language.

Scott suggests that there is certain fluidity in the corporate standards where local contextual issues can be considered and implemented, if they can be incorporated within the broader ambit of the corporate guidelines.

Important components of the process highlighted by Scott is that Mongolian experts were preferred to international ones, the local language was preferred and a larger area of the impact zone was included to fit the appropriate cultural contexts. Scott's recognition of the need to, at times, move away from the corporate guidelines suggests that he did not see fundamental incompatibilities with certain processes, but instead that ultimately the guidelines supported the attempt to restructure those processes in viable ways. In essence Scott views his team's engagement as addressing the us/them structure of the SIA by employing local experts to apply the general corporate protocols that govern it in a way that is thus more responsive to community expectations.

Scott also emphasised how in this instance, when the practices of the team diverged from what was mandated in the Rio Tinto standards (informed by the international guidelines and funding requirements) the corporate group were not concerned.

> They [Rio Tinto] have been in the loop, when we have wanted to implement those two things [SIA and social baseline] 'our' way. And by 'our' way… I mean it was me with the team saying 'we want to do these things a certain way' and never did we get anyone telling us 'no', which indicates to me that the answer to your question is 'yes'... And that's credit to the Rio Tinto corporate level; they have produced a standard that is technically focused and rigorous enough and yet culturally and contextually generic enough to be adaptable and flexible, while also maintaining compliance.

Indeed, in Scott's opinion, Rio Tinto guidelines (as directed by international standards) were able both to meet international standards and also accommodate local Mongolian specificities. A key component to this was the use of Mongolian experts, in order to address the us/them divide usually observed in the SIA process.

The methodology and process that IMMI employed to construct the Social Baseline that informed the SEIA itself was vastly different to that used by UHG in preparing their SIA and SIA related documentation, particularly in terms of applying more culturally sensitive approaches (Macdonald 2012). The method employed at OT, as described by Scott, was a far more organic and participatory process than that employed in creating the SIA for UHG. In the OT case, one international expert and a large team of Mongolians collaborated on both the

research design and data collection, and this team worked closely with the company CR team. These two documents, the original ESIA and the Social Baseline, are still utilised regionally and by the CR team in the company. By contrast, as I outlined in the previous chapter, UHG employed a large expatriate team of 'experts' with less Mongolian collaboration (Macdonald 2012). The outcome of the UHG process was a document and system that is minimally utilised either internally or externally of the company to mitigate or assist in comprehending change. In essence, UHG have far less 'ownership' over the SIA process and 'strong linkages to corporate and regional offices' are not maintained (Kemp 2011 p. 27). This comparative example suggests that in situations where cultural context and locally driven SIAs are produced, better outcomes and relationships with the community may be maintained.

An important external factor which should be taken into account in the case of UHG is the role of external funding agencies influencing the SIA for the project. It is a requirement that when a mining company enters into an agreement with an international financing agency to loan money for a project, that the company adheres to the direct requirements, standards and guidelines of the funding agency. Thus, regardless of specific company practices and policies, many international experts became involved in the SIA process by virtue of this relationship. For example, when IMMI completed their second SEIA for OT, they applied for funding from international financial lenders. After those lenders became involved, the method with which the SIA was compiled conformed to the requirements of that lender, and thus reflected the less productive method employed at UHG.[82] In the UHG process, an overwhelming majority of the experts employed were foreign and there was a massively reduced scope for Mongolian people's participation and approaches. This represents a stark contrast to the initiatives outlined by Scott in relation to the compilation of the first SEIA and indicates a company priority for compliance with business standards over a more vigorous and culturally nuanced approach to SIA practice. The us/them relationship, where we see the company overrides the community context, was uncritically re-asserted in the second SEIA due to the

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[82] Please note, UHG completed a Social Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA) and IMMI created an Environmental Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), both of which were their contributions to an SIA.

need to conform to the guidelines of other corporate stakeholders, particularly those responsible for providing finance for the mining company's activities.

In light of the lack of engagement with Mongolian expertise, it is perhaps not surprising that since IMMI has adopted the new methods for assessing SIA, the document itself and process by which it has been compiled has come under attack by the Mongolian Government, Office of the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman and various civil society organisations for not addressing local Mongolian issues and the concerns of community herders. This situation has put in jeopardy IMMI's access to the very loan they were applying for and has created a business case that supports my assertion that global CSR guidelines need to have the flexibility to include specific cultural contexts to shape and direct the SIA process (Khasg-Erdene 2013). The tension between IMMI and the Mongolian people suggests that the 'expert' opinions and processes that were meant to be brought in for 'good business standards', were in fact counter-productive to good business as 'good business' is currently understood (Ombudsman 2012; Khasg-Erdene 2013).

8.2   Mongolian perspective on global guidelines

I had similar discussions about the universal applicability of standards to the Mongolian context with Mongolian members of this CR team, in order to compare Scott's position. The following discussion suggested that not only corporate standards, but also my questions, were grounded in and interpreted by a particular cultural background of values and meanings.

> IC: Do you ever find that these policies are ever difficult to adapt to the Mongolian society?

> Tsegee: (very excitedly) YES! They are sometimes difficult - exactly. We are all human and hold some commonality. But every society, like the West, has different ways, beliefs and language for doing things. So sometimes these policies are different and difficult.

> IC: So do you translate these to fit Mongolia?

> Tsegee: Yes we can make the policies to try and fit Mongolia. Mongolia is still very young in mining and we are small, so no one is watching us… It is my dream to

influence and have these policies also learn from us. Because when you first read the policies they seem good but when you look under them they are very aggressive. They shouldn't be so aggressive.

Tsegee's excitement at my question also carried a tone of surprise, which suggested to me that this form of inquiry or self-reflexivity was not common within her working environment. Moreover, it was noted that whereas Scott's immediate reply was that he found my question difficult to answer and by contrast Tsegee addressed the question without hesitation.

Tsegee's response provides four further insights that contribute to the broader argument of this chapter. Firstly, she describes the standards as less culturally relevant, stating that at times they are quite difficult to implement. This is important because it points to issues with the meanings and values embodied in the standards themselves and indicates that despite the employment of Mongolian workers, those workers are still in some sense constrained by the SIA process. Secondly, her immediate response to my question was not to discuss the corporate policies, but to move directly to the problem she saw, which was the difference between individual Mongolian and Western 'beliefs and language for doing things'. In saying this she challenges the framework of the corporate discourse itself, which is different from Scott's approach of working *within* the discourse to solve the problem. Whereas Scott proceeds in a way that assumes local experts can stretch the standards to fit the local situation, Tsegee points instead to the way those standards constrain how local experts can interpret the local situation in terms of those standards. Thirdly, whereas Scott finds the standards 'generous' and 'flexible,' Tsegee characterises them as 'aggressive'. From background discussions, the implicit understanding as to the aggressive nature of the standards was that the company's interests were to be distinguished and protected before those of the community. By contrast to this adversarial us/them construction of the company/community relationship, many Mongolian company employees preferred to describe the relationship in terms that echoed community informants, namely in terms of 'hospitality'. This construction is quintessentially reflected in the following statement made by a community herder:

The company is a guest here in the Gobi but it acts like a host. They are not the host but they forget this.

As Chapter Four outlined, in Mongolia the notions of hospitality and sharing with strangers is regarded as a basic virtue that is fundamental to social relationships and is accompanied by numerous intertwining rules, roles, behaviors and norms which bind guest and host together through a set of practices. The performance of these ensures the maintenance of this relationship (Humphrey 2012). Essentially the guest is expected to respect and follow particular social protocols, while the host sets the tone of the relationship and the level of resources they are willing to share with the guest.

I interpret 'aggressiveness', as described by Tsegee, as the company assuming the position of host and relegating the community, in their own locality and context, to the position of guest. Consequently the company, even though well-intentioned, has failed in the first instance to grasp the nuance of their positioning within a Mongolian ontological frame. They are the guest and within that context they would be called to account for having failed to discharge the obligations required of that particular role. From within this frame, the company's assumption of the position of host through its control of the terms and agenda of the SIA structure is 'aggressive', since it usurps a role which belongs to the community.

In terms of a WAD analysis, the company's monopolisation of control over the SIA process can be understood in terms of its structuring as an us/them approach that positions the company as the active actor addressing an externalised, passive community. While Scott's team has to a degree recognised and attempted to address this, Tsegee's observation allows us to glimpse an additional issue, namely, the fact that this company-initiated attempt to breakdown the us/them dichotomy is itself a company initiative, actively originated and pursed by the company insofar as it controls and determines the discourse between these two actors. In an important sense the initiative of Scott's team only further emphasises for those outside the corporate ontological frame the company's monopolisation of the terms of the company/community engagement. The glimpse of an alternative Mongolian perspective provided by Tsegee's comments allows us to understand how this company initiative to address the us/them relationship could be interpreted as the action of a guest who has exceeded their proper role and, by so doing, has violated the proper protocol and their duties arising from it. In the dialogue between these different, potentially incommensurable

ontological positions, the SIA process, and certain attempts to improve it, only embodies one ontological position (us/them) and can't take account of another (guest/host).

Finally, Tsegee's solution for improving the corporate standards so that they are better suited to the cultural context in which they are applied is to have Mongolian perspectives and episteme influence the standards themselves. As Howitt argues, SIA should reflect 'the constellations of meaning, value and ethics embedded in those [SIA] keywords and the discursive and practice communities around them shape the theoretical content of SIA' (Howitt 2012, p. 91). An example of the community context influencing the theoretical foundations of SIA would be to develop (through training, official policy, etc.) a company culture which is open to other ontological constructions of their relationship to the community. In the Mongolian context, this could be a 'guest' in the community, on whom certain obligations fall.

8.3   Shifting Paradigms

Richard Howitt and Ciaran O'Faircheallaigh engage implicitly with what I term in Chapter Two, the 'ontological commitments' inherent in the discourse of SIA, that is, meanings, language and cultural understandings that construct the values which are enshrined in the SIA process. For example, with regard to non-indigenous people working in Australian indigenous contexts, O'Faircheallaigh states that 'one immediate issue is the necessity to develop an appreciation of the specific, historical, cultural and political imperatives that drive indigenous approaches and understandings' (O'Faircheallaigh 2012b, p. 150). The statement embodies the ontological quandary at the centre of the SIA discourse in cross-cultural environments – the issue of whether people can recognise specific social norms that construct meaning and a notion of self in a given context and which inform the interpretations and decisions they make.

In light of this I draw on O'Faircheallaigh's argument concerning ways to improve involvement by indigenous Australians in the SIA process. He argues that by widening the scope of the SIA to include the community in the framing of its terms, SIAs can be improved by registering *all* the impacts of mining on a community (O'Faircheallaigh 2012b). In this sense, if the Mongolian communities were able to broaden the basis of the SIA to emulate the power paradigm that constructs the society, a Guest/Host relationship rather than an Us/Them one,

the SIA may identify alternative concerns. According to O'Faircheallaigh this can be facilitated by insisting 'indigenous people should be able to define, control, and manage the scope and purpose of SIA' (O'Faircheallaigh 2012a, p. 152).

Thus bringing the community into the SIA process at this level may be understood as having the capacity to bring about a change at the ontological level, in a way that displaces the positioning of company and community in terms of the current 'us' and 'them' paradigm, but pointing to other ways of framing this relationship, for instance, as a Guest/Host. As Kapoor notes:

> Changing this relationship is not a question of mere good intentions or semantics: for instance, development organisations or researchers may now call their subjects 'beneficiaries', 'target groups', 'partners' or 'clients', instead of 'poor', 'underdeveloped' or 'disadvantaged', but this does not by itself change the discourse or dismantle the us/them power relationship. So caught up are we in this coding that it becomes important in our encounters with the Third World to ask who represents, and what baggage positions us in this us/them manner (Kapoor 2004, p. 629).

As argued in Chapter Five, this Chapter also suggests that heightened self-reflexivity resulting from the widened scope for community participation in the SIA process can potentially shift or reconstruct the current discourse of SIA. In particular, the inclusion of the community on a par with the company and field-workers in the framing of categories, the analysis and the process of data-gathering itself, offer an opportunity to shift the relationship between company and community towards a more equitable engagement.

There is evidence that companies are thinking along such lines already. Scott's efforts to address this by employing local experts are one example of a tentative recognition of the limits of the current SIA framework. Comments from the global practice manager of Rio Tinto demonstrate a concern that, in order for SIAs to become more effective, a re-evaluation of the us/them dichotomy currently informing the SIA process needs to occur. He noted:

> Any substantial local change [to the SIA process] will be an outcome of relationships between locals and company employees. In an externally introduced development,

both the 'us' and the 'them' warrant attention, since both will contribute to problems as well as to better community engagement.

Both Howitt and O'Faircheallaigh observe the lack of explicit theoretical discussion on SIA discourse and seek to provide a theoretical framework to stimulate discussion (Howitt 2012; O'Faircheallaigh 2012a). Importantly, Howitt explains that SIA, as a tool for recording social change, does not employ atomistic and free-floating categories that can be applied in any given context. He states that in SIA:

> [t]hose ways of seeing imply a theory of how the world is, and a sense of what it should be – a values framework for exercising judgment. Any description – even ostensibly objective descriptions relying on abstract numerical data and its statistical analysis – already implies a theoretical construction, a set of understandings and propositions of how the world and the social relationships that characterise it work (Howitt 2012, p. 83).

In essence, Howitt argues that although the documents defining the SIA and its scope represent it as a technocratic process operating with universally applicable, decontextualized codes and categories, they are in fact meaning-laden, embodying values which implicitly or explicitly 'help initiate new ways of seeing the world' (Howitt 2012 P 83) (Reynolds 1993). This is best exemplified in the process in which decisions of SIA are re-shaped and filtered through the company. Initially, I demonstrate how the individual ontological commitments change the meaning of the impact, and secondly, I observe the broader consequence this has for dismissing the community's agency in framing and contributing to their own positive development.

8.4 Ontological Meaning and Interpretations: the case of dust

Kemp identifies many of the organisational issues that affect the positive implementation of SIA in a company. Specifically, she outlines the tension between 'business needs versus social development', the non-conducive planning methodologies between company and community, the lack of team-ownership over the SIA process and internal structural arrangements including, resources, and internal communication (Kemp 2012). I discussed earlier an instance where the lack of 'ownership' over the SIA creates discontent or nullifies

the objectives of the SIA process. This section seeks to draw on another important element of the organisational space that can hopefully add a caveat to the areas outlined by Kemp, namely, that within all of these spaces it is necessary to observe the personal values framework or ontological commitments that actors within the company bring into the field of development and/or SIA.

To unpack and clarify these issues, I will track a specific impact discussed in the community and then reiterated on the mine site, and finally compare that with how it was viewed by decision-makers in Ulaanbaatar. In Chapter Four I discussed the important role land and animals play in situating the Self in society for the South Gobi people. Not surprisingly then, one of the most common impacts described to me by people living in the vicinity of both the mine sites were those impacts that affected animals and land, particularly decreased water and increased dust. The South Gobi area is prone to strong winds that create episodic dust incidence – they are occurrences that can last a couple of hours or a few days between 30-120 times a year (Batjargal et al. 2006) (see Image 10). These types of weather events are well-understood by local herders. Families observe the changes in the weather patterns and herd the animals close to the ger. They bring in any washing and any foods drying outdoors (Images 11 and 12), and close the ger to stop dust getting into food supplies, bedding and the drinking water. By contrast, the incidence of dust that the people refer to in interviews is not caused by natural storms. This dust is a new occurrence created by mining activities and heavy transport machinery hauling minerals and equipment to and from the mine (see Image 13). The herders that live alongside the mine site and particularly the transport corridors are subject to ongoing dust bellows, and exposure to it for them and their livestock is continual on days when the wind blows in their direction. Having travelled and stayed in these areas, the dust pollution is an ongoing complication to daily routines and permeates all aspects of life in the region.

Image 10: A car 100 meters in front of camera covered in a natural dust occurrence

Source: Author

Image 11: A staple dairy food of the herders being dried and pressed outside

Source: Author

Image 12: Drying curds on the roof of the ger

Source: http://www.bluepeak.net/mongolia/countryside.html

Image 13: The dust stirred by mining activities

Source: Author

The following collection of observations made by herders and professional community members provided me with an understanding of the degree to which dust is impacting upon many areas of people's lives.

> Female herder: Dust is very difficult. We cannot keep curds outside in order to make them dried because of the dust. It comes all through the ger and there is dust everywhere. All day it comes and comes.

> Female Herder: I need to check the wind where it comes from, before I wash clothes. If the wind comes from East then I won't wash - because the washing is covered in dust.

> Female Herder: The dust is terrible. The livestock's stomach is black and the young animals are very sick. It impacts on the herd; it smells, reduces grasses and destroys

the land. The mine was developed and the rain has dried up. Mining has impacted so badly on the land.

Male Herder: While maintaining the road, workers ruin the land, cut off plants at their roots and a lot of dust arises. We say to them 'work carefully'. But they said that they have the permission to be on the land.

Male Herder: It's very dusty here. Before it wasn't so bad, but now there's constant storm.

Male Herder: Not only my animals but all of the animals in this area are getting sick. We can't move to a new place, so where will we go?

Officials I spoke to also note the problem of dust:

Soum Doctor: Diseases such as respiratory tract infection, accidents and poisoning have increased lately. There is no statistical data about the professional connection for the diseases related to the increased dust since the commencement of these activities but I feel it is connected.

Police: The dust causes big crashes, many drivers have died and I then process all of this.

Vice Governor: If the road condition is improved that will be good enough. It [mining] will be perfect, if there's no dust.

These types of statements were commonly cited amongst all groups in both Khanbogd and Tsogttsetsii, however the severity of the complaints differed between the two areas.[83] We can see from descriptions that dust severely impacts upon all areas of people's lives, from dictating when they can and can't conduct daily chores to inhibiting the very sustainability of their livelihoods through livestock deterioration and limiting dairy product production for personal consumption and sale.

8.5   Misunderstandings and Meanings

Due to the high level of distress and frequency which the effect of dust was discussed with me, I wanted to examine specifically how the company was dealing with this impact caused by its mining activities. Importantly only some of the aforementioned impacts from dust are registered in the company SIA (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009). It is important to note that dust-related impacts did affect the lives of men and women differently, but that was something that was not registered specifically in the company SIA. Lahiri-Dutt notes that more attention needs to be focused on the 'different roles at the household and community levels [as] … their capacities to seize the opportunities provided by new infrastructural development… varies' (Lahiri-Dutt & Ahmad 2011, p. 117). For women, the traditionally female activities (washing, cooking, care of sick animals and ger orientated chores) were most commonly cited by herders as impacts, but are barely mentioned in the SIA. Yet, impacts of dust upon related male-associated activities, such as animal husbandry, water quality (men traditionally collect water) and pasture care are included (Centre for Policy Research and Population Training and Research Centre 2009; Hawkins & Seager 2009).

Although Lahiri-Dutt found that 'there is no doubt that large infrastructure projects negatively affect women more than men… (Lahiri-Dutt & Ahmad 2011, p. 132)', I would argue that this is not the case in my field site. I observed that the degree of the impact equally impinged on the lives of men and women. The significant point, however, is that the SIA did reflect the

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[83] Both urban and rural Tsogttsetsii inhabitants prioritised dust as a leading change in the community and it was the most openly reported negative impact from the mining operation in my interviews. This was also the case for herders of Khanbogd, but less so for soum centre people in Khanbogd who were out of the direct impact zone of the dust - being 45 kilometers away from the activities of the mine.

particular effects on women due to their specific roles. The Gender and Mining literature often argues that women are not consulted by the mining companies and/or are intimated by the SIA process and so participate either reluctantly or not at all. At both of my field sites, however, community workers state that women were consulted and, in my experience, the women were not timid about articulating their opinions of mining and its impacts on their lives in either public or private contexts. However, despite the solicitation of their concerns and the voicing of their opinions, their specific concerns were still not reflected in the SIA. In consideration of this I examine how social meanings and cultural nuance get mislaid in the corporate landscape.

Below I analyse the different meanings of the impact of dust in reference to four different research participants: 1) a female herder; 2) a male herder; 3) the male Mongolian environmental manager on site; and 4) the male Western environmental director who worked on-site and at the corporate level in Ulaanbaatar and Perth. What I will examine is three excerpts from the three discussions and then provide an analysis of the ontological commitments residing in them. What becomes evident is that company decisions are made on the basis of a particular 'values framework for exercising judgment', which can result in fundamental concerns of the community being left unaddressed and livelihoods becoming unsustainable.

I will begin with a comment I heard from a middle aged male herder in Khanbogd soum which was broadly representative of many herders in the area:

> We have lots of dust for the last few years. It gives bad influence, to not only people but also livestock. I think that it is because of drilling. Water level is getting lower and lower. Yield of grasses is getting worse too. It is not a good luck. We drink the dusty water, the meat is dusty, and all the food we eat seems affected by it (example Image 11). The meat we eat, the lungs, stomach have dust in them and then we eat it. The road is right here [50 meters away] and some days if the wind changes it will not affect me. But I still think it is a good idea to pave the road.

Contained within this explanation are many of the ontological commitments that have been discussed within Chapter Four. Firstly, the herder immediately connects the mining impact on

both the herd and the family, reflective of the shared living reality between animals and herders. Secondly, the connection to the disturbance of land through drilling, the loss of water and its relation to 'luck', is reminiscent of Damdin's referral to rules and maxims which govern people and nature in Mongolian cosmology. This type of argumentation was observed in almost all of the interviews in the area where it was observed there was a concern for the impact caused by mining, but a resolve that the two lifestyles could co-exist.

Similar observations were made by female herders and the following account made by Baysaa explains her observations of dust:

> The dust here is now the main problem. If it is windy I can't wash or make dairy products. My husband used to clean the [water] well once every two years, now he cleans it four times a year. The animals are sick, their eyes are bunged up and the furs are too dusty to sell and no one will buy them. My eldest daughter should be in kindergarten this year but I can't send her because now we don't have enough money. I might send my daughter to live in the center with my mother, because I am worried about her health. It is not good for children here, it worries me

Similarly to the male herder, Baysaa observes the impact of dust on humans and animals. However, by observing the female response, a more detailed picture of the impact of dust on herder families is depicted. Previously un-recorded impacts, like the effect of the dust on children, their schooling and insights into the family livelihoods are articulated.[84] More so, the different roles of men and women, specifically, caring for sick animals for women and men cleaning the water wells, demonstrates the specific gendered burdens to people's lifestyles. Problematically, as Lahiri-Dutt notes, if men and women are not both included as a part of the company engagement, then only half of the picture of the effect of mining on the community is painted, and only half of the impacts are registered (Lahiri-Dutt & Ahmad 2011).

After speaking with the herders, I talked to the on-site Mongolian environmental manager who had relocated from Ulaanbaatar to Khanbogd, at IMMI. His role in the company was to gather

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[84] As stated above, the women were consulted for the SIA, however their needs were not reflected in the document. Whether this was due to their needs not reflecting the categories of the SIA, or for patriarchal reasons, is unknown.

and monitor the environmental impacts for the company, manage on-site affairs and report to the manager (discussed next) in Ulaanbaatar. I sought his opinion on the impact of dust as described to me by the herders and he commented as follows:

> Hmm there has been no research with the examination of the livestock etcetera but it can be considered true because everyone knows that if you are drinking dusty water and breathing no good air, and the dust level is very high then [pauses mid-sentence and starts again]… If it is not adversely affecting the human health then why are the mines all over the world looking at this as a problem? The impacts on the human health are studied very well, and humans are one of the organisms same as the livestock's… But from the other side, the herders are not doctors or medical and scientists but they do know their livestock's very well. They might be suspicious of any change, it may be from the dust or the water, but because they don't have enough scientific background they may just point to this as it is very visual and very close, so they point to this impact at first. That's why I can't guarantee about the impact of livestock health but also I can't say that dust is not affecting them.

Initially the manager speaks of the fact that there is no research conducted in this area, which reflects something the community were also aware of, and had asked to be addressed.

There is also a tone of frustration at the fact that these impacts are not being properly addressed, detected in his exasperation that it is being 'researched' around the world but not acted upon in Mongolia. Here again he aligns himself with the community and insinuates that the request they have for monitoring dust is reasonable. Following this he voices similar concerns to the herder. He alludes to the close ties between humans and animals but in a more scientific language (as humans are one of the organisms same as the livestock). He holds that it is logical to care for animals, as we do the people, in a manner that reflects the herder's ontological relationship with non-human entities (Ghose & Majee 2000; Snyder,. 2012). Therefore, in two ways he is in agreement with the community and shares elements of their perception of the impact of dust.

Not surprisingly, he is also more aware than the community of the issues and the language of the mining companies. He states how the herders do not have the scientific capabilities to

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determine whether dust is actually affecting livestock and hints at how the 'visual' aspect of dust and other changes in the area may create an unjustified association for the herders. However he also acknowledges that herders know their animals very well and therefore there could also be truth in their assertions. In summary, the Mongolian manager makes no presumption as to whether dust is affecting the herders and the herd, but identifies it as something that requires further investigation. In this sense, the discourse is both embedded in the Mongolian herders understanding of the problem and also the issues that are facing the company. That is, his interpretation of the situation is one that attempts to reconcile two different, incompatible ontological assumptions – both the herders' and the company's.

I finally met with the director of the environmental department in Ulaanbaatar. He has worked in mining for over twenty years with a number of companies. He is a middle aged Western man who is charismatic, respected amongst his team and acknowledges that he is enjoying his time in Mongolia with the company. I met with him in his office and discuss the environmental issues that arose in the field. I also took the opportunity to ask him if he considers that 'dust' is an issue in the South Gobi. He replied:

> Well from my experience with Alcoa[85], we had bulk haul roads going through the Jarrah forests and all the tourists used to complain about the mud on the trees, you know 'you're killing the trees'… while in actual fact we found that it didn't impact the trees at all. Anyway, obviously the dust will make the grass less palatable. But I'm sure they already eat a tonne of that stuff, they evolved in this climate. But yes, that is something we are going to have to monitor.

What is clear from his account is that by the time we reach the highest level of company decision making personnel in the country, the close relationship between humans and animals, which is specific to this community, is almost entirely dismissed or lost. Instead the question of dust is reduced to a scientific consideration, categorised in environmental terms, without any regard for the social aspects of the relationship between herder and animal.

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[85] Aluminum mining company that operates globally, but he speaks specifically of a site in South-East Western Australia.

Additionally, throughout the interview, there is no mention of the actual herders as people, of the actual conditions under which they live, nor of the particular circumstances of the problem at hand. Instead, an analogy to a completely foreign situation is made. Likewise, he draws on an example that purports to compare the long historical knowledge of the herders in the area with the knowledge of tourists passing briefly through an area they are unlikely to visit again. The dismissal of the claims of the tourists is rhetorical, however it is also a categorical dismissal of the claims of the herder and more significantly of their ability to speak authoritatively about the situation confronting them.

The director does marginally deal with the risk to their livelihoods by simply stating 'they evolved in this climate', which, as I explained earlier, saw sporadic dust occurrences, not an ongoing event. While the director makes a flippant acknowledgement that the grass is less palatable and that dust is in fact digested by animals, he then dismisses the claims of herders again, as he is sure 'they already eat a tonne of the stuff', and won't be any worse affected. On one level he acknowledges that the herders have been in the area with their animals for a long time, but on the other hand he denigrates their capacity to properly assess the changes at hand. At the end of his response, a direct admission that dust needs to be monitored is made, however by this stage the directors foreign analogy and disregard for local knowledge discursively shifts the actual nature of the impact in the South Gobi. It as if the issue as articulated by the community is trivial, whereas when observed and lived in, it represents a significant ongoing issue affecting the health of herders and their ability to sustain their families and livelihoods in the area.

Comparing the nature of the impact as it was first articulated by the herder, with the story as told by the person in the decision making position, it can be seen that the impact is altered in meaning, language, and significance. That is, all of the significances of the impact for the community are stripped in the SIA process and an interpretation of the impact in alien terms is instead employed. Alongside this, the request of the communities and the inferred desire of the on-site manager to have the dust monitored and animals tested, are not yet acted upon.

The Western manager informed me that proper monitoring and control of the dust is not yet in action but will be something he has to look at. While the manager may finally decide that monitoring is appropriate in this case, if he understood the significance of herding and its

heritage to Mongolian people, the urgency with which he would have acted to put this into place might have been greater. At this divide in knowledge and meaning, we observe the interaction of what Howitt described earlier, as a two completely different 'values frameworks' – one used by the Manager to make his decision, the other in which the meanings, values, and needs of i) female roles and responsibilities, and ii) the herder way of life have no place. In a broader sense, if the cultural significance of a given impact is not properly understood by the decision makers, impact-mitigation programs risk being misdirected and communities concerns ignored.

This example demonstrates that the recognition of the knowledge and skills of the herders in the region becomes displaced in the corporate office, and even the recognition made by the Mongolian environmental officer of the issue and its social dimension, though 'internal' to the company, are not sufficient enough to weigh in the ultimate decision. What is clear in this case is that the director relies on the universalism inherent in Western discourse to compare the herder to a foreign situation, and draws on meanings and examples from his own experience in non-Mongolian contexts, to construct his interpretation of the impacts in the South Gobi. This poses a central challenge to attempts to address impacts in ways that are meaningful for mine-affected communities: How to bring multiple ontological positions into dialogue with each other. This thesis will not be able provide an answer to this quandary, but it does highlight the reality and difficulties of the multiple ontologies in Mining and Development – a problematic that is currently largely overlooked.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

In the South Gobi of Mongolia, the echoes of bleating camels and the lumbering of mineral haulage trucks are now a familiar sound. Their mingled tones represent the wordless dialogue of two distinct lifestyles co-habiting a shared landscape. These sounds, and the cultures and practices that generate them, once completely unknown to each other, are now in constant interaction. Yet this dichotomous imagery offers only a partial representation of each of these subjects and fails to register the multi-layered ontologies within the field of sociality of mining in the South Gobi. As I observed throughout the research, neither of these languages could be reduced to a homogenous sound, nor traced back to a singular notion of 'company' or 'community'. In fact each of these entities are constituted by various voices that are themselves connected to a multiplicity of groups and individuals interacting and defining themselves with and against each other. Thus, the overall aim of the thesis was to deconstruct and further understand this relationship – of and between the mine and the community – to maximize the positive benefits of mining for the region.

The observations made in this thesis and the conclusions drawn from them have shown that the relationship between the mine and the surrounding community is constantly evolving. Both the community and company would agree that this evolution has a positive aspect, particularly insofar as it brings with it infrastructure development and employment. However despite this, data also demonstrated that the impacts of mining are producing changes in the community that cause extreme hardship and negative change, particularly to 'traditional' herder lifestyles.

A feminist ontological analysis of the discourse of Mining and Development has uncovered social relations and axes of power specific to the company and community engagement of the South Gobi. The thesis has demonstrated that the process of mining and the CSR processes in place to mitigate the negative impacts of mining, threaten the social fabric of the community through subsuming the sociocultural meanings that are necessary for the community to map its development trajectory. An important consequence of this observation is that this

sublimation implicitly positions the community as a passive actor in the Mining and Development discourse. This thesis has further argued that such sublimation can be traced to points of disconnection in the discourse of the community and company that is inherently caused by a lack of recognition of specific ontological commitments underlying the community and company in the South Gobi.

9.2 Discourses of Mining in Mongolia

The research for this thesis was conducted in the early stages of large scale minerals development in the South Gobi and has attempted to trace and map the primary influences and issues I observed that effect positive development from mining. I entered the field while little to no academic accounts had been compiled on the impact of mining in Mongolia and before company social baselines or SIAs had been publically released. Likewise, limited social science literature was available on the lifestyles and livelihoods of the peoples of the South Gobi area (see Andrews et al. 1932; Lattimore 1942; Lattimore 1962). Therefore, I had very little understanding of what the social life and the changes and impacts of mining in the communities would be. In this sense, the histories of mining development, impacts and expectations from mining and regional ontological constructions I have portrayed are original contributions to knowledge to the field of Central Asian studies.

Consequently, the research was designed to gain access to the internal operations of the mining companies with the aim of building understanding of mining companies' rapid engagement in the development space, and to contribute to organizational literature. The access to company documents, personnel, and their inter-relations provided invaluable data to further understanding of the internal and external influences that shape the development decisions of the company that directly affect the community. The combination of a two-pronged ethnography, into both the affected community and operating company, enabled me to observe the discourse in which understandings of self, other, and development were discussed.

I felt at the time and now reflect upon the period, as a stage when mining in Mongolia was defining its development trajectory and shaping the discourse of current sustainability debates. The fieldwork highlighted primary themes within which the discourse of Mining and Development mobilized in the South Gobi, and related directly to relationships to landscape,

gender and patriarchy, expectations of mining, and local to global decision making processes. This window of time provided a unique insight into a changing community before rapid development had occurred and while expectations of development were largely optimistic. The consistent theme which transcended these fields was 'difference' and the lack of recognition of difference between stakeholders when in dialogue with each other in the aforementioned fields. Vivieros de Castro demands 'that we need richer ontologies' to better understand and theorize 'the social' (Vivieros de Castro 2004, p. 484). Indeed, Mongolian informants within the community spoke of a lack of understanding of their social reality by the company in constructing development programs for their future. Likewise, within the mining company, Mongolian and Western employees both demanded a better recognition of their mutual ontologies in discussing notions of development.

9.3 The ontological divide

As the theory and the methodological approach suggest, an understanding of the meaning, tradition and language within which notions of self (gender, ethnicity and class), change and impacts are understood by the community and company, provides insight into the discourse of Mining and Development in Mongolia and provides information about how to improve the dialogue. In order to understand discourses, it was important to discuss the broad political, social and economic influences that have shaped contemporary Mongolia (Baabar 2005). In particular, I focused on the growing social and political influences associated with Mongolia's transition to democracy and the resulting poverty and exacerbated under-development, and the rapid consequential development of a minerals economy (Rossabi 2005). The thesis also described and discussed the global and local influences that shape the mining company, including international guidelines, CSR agendas and global corporate policies. Specifically, I examined the organizational shifts and regulatory influences which have shaped the development of CSR (Vanclay 2002; Harcourt 2004; Jenkins 2004; Kemp, Keenan & Gronow 2010; Gilberthorpe & Banks 2011). Likewise, company employees' descriptions of development and impacts from mining revealed some of the tensions within the company as an organizational entity, and between this entity and the community.

Although the thesis demonstrated the complexity of both the company and community cultures, I also observed distinct ontological commitments in their respective discourses. I

framed this difference in terms of the liberal-communitarian divide, a debate concerned with the question of which of the ontological categories, 'universal' subject or the 'situated' self, should be privileged in interpreting and understanding the discourse of social actors (Taylor 1993; Matravers & Pike 2003). Through analysis of social structures, relationships to landscape, notions of gender, and impacts from mining, I have demonstrated that the herder, the miner and other parties in Mining and Development are committed to specific values deriving from different ontological perspectives. I argue that the mining company reflects a Western liberal approach, governed by corporate and international standards. By contrast, the community is situated in a communitarian-style ontology that reflects the herder, socialist, and emerging democratic history of the South Gobi communities.

A prominent illustration of the ontological divide is most evident in the definition of gender in both the Gender and Mining and Mining and Development discourses. I applied a WAD critique to the Gender and Mining theory to demonstrate that these social relations are not dominated by one particular social discourse – gender, as argued by the majority of Gender and Mining specialists – but instead is better understood in terms of multiple intersecting discourses of gender, ethnicity and culture and, importantly for Mongolia, the issue of regionality. Through a detailed description of the role of herding as a livelihood and its impact in the formation of current gender roles, the thesis observed how the complexity of Mongolian women's understanding and negotiation of the power-relations is different to Western notions (Humphrey 1978; Fernandez-Gimenez 1999; Nalini & Oidov 2001). I demonstrated that women in Mongolia are re-positioned into categories of patriarchy or oppression, as understood in Western terms, by comparing accounts of hospitality, cosmology and household roles of women as discussed in literature, with my own data and experiences of women in the field. It was pointed out that this re-positioning was itself premised on notions of the categories public/private and a notion of equality derived from Western liberalism, which was not relevant to the sociocultural or regional South Gobi context. In the light of this finding, I provided an alternative understanding of how women negotiate power and oppression in the South Gobi. This analysis and insight provides a contribution of knowledge to the understanding of gender relations and notions of patriarchy in Central Asian studies.

After establishing the concepts of power and the tools women utilize to negotiate gender roles in the South Gobi, I studied stakeholders (companies and outside actors) involved in Mining and Development to observe their definitions of Gender and oppression. I found that these actors also re-positioned community members into Western notions of power and oppression, which became problematic when consultants, researchers or company personnel researched the expectations of development or impacts of mining. For this reason, I critically analyzed the misinformed gendered impacts outlined in the SIAs pertaining to the field sites of this thesis, for prioritizing gender over ethnicity and regionality, which were the sources of oppression for women in the South Gobi. In particular, I argued that the definition of gender and the actual source of discrimination needed to be appropriately mapped, so that the company can accurately mitigate the actual impacts from mining. This critique was not conducted with the aim of discrediting the importance of Gender in Mining, for it is only through a feminist lens that these impacts could be identified, but to highlight the significance of understanding the local social interactions in the form of gender, race and regionality that constitute the fabric of the community under impact. As a result, the thesis demonstrated a narrow lens that prioritizes gender above other social actors is not sufficient to describe the impacts of women and men in Mongolia. An important contribution to knowledge is that an intersectional approach that considers multiple categories identified by the community should be included into the theorization of Gender and Mining more broadly. My findings are that this is an approach not strongly engaged in by the mining sector?

9.4 Ontology and power

An important component of this thesis was to understand why Mongolian worldviews, including their notions of gender, landscapes, change and development, continued to be absent from the majority of company CSR discourses. The thesis demonstrated the ways in which local meanings and practices are distorted in order to fit them within CSR 'abstract' universal/global processes, standards and guidelines. For instance, the thesis examined how the Mongolian *nutag*, or 'relationship to land', is re-framed in the discourse of SIA in Mining and Development as 'Environmental Impacts'. That is, I observed that international standards and practices are now directing sustainable development policy and that this is in tension with the communities' understanding of moral obligation and potential paths of development. I argued that, in essence, the company symbolically takes control of interpreting the ontologies

of the community and reframes them in a way that not only distances the community from contributing to the direction of development programs, but additionally gives a completely different significance to community social practices and understandings, in terms of a language and a set of meanings which are steeped in a Western ontology and, as such, carry their own culturally-specific meanings. Therefore a crucial outcome of the research not only depicts the importance of ontology but also demonstrates that ontologies themselves exist in a hierarchy of power.

I have argued that current Mining and Development discourse in Mongolia implicitly reshapes and pacifies the community. In consideration of this, I applied a feminist WAD theoretical lens to explore the discourse of Mining and Development to understand why the community is left out of this discussion in the first place. The chapter argued that the discourse of Mining and Development is embedded in Western ontological commitments, which position international actors (the company and the International lenders) as either saving the community from the 'false promises' of mining, or assisting it towards 'modern' development. In either situation, the community is disempowered from being an active actor in mapping the process of its own minerals development. Drawing on the description of the history of mining in Tsogttsetsii, I charted the process from the community's active involvement in the sustainability process to their removal as stakeholder. I argued that it was this initial disengagement that provokes the current power structure and demarcates the division between the company and the community in Mining and Development discourse in Mongolia.

The divide between the company and the community was especially evident in the process of SIA. In Chapter Seven I examined the orientation of the SIA and its external focus on mapping the impacts of mining in the community. I argued that that SIA operates via a discourse framed by an 'us' and 'them' relationship, whereby the company/expert is located in the active 'us' position, collecting and shaping the data, while the community is placed in the passive 'them' position as the data or subject of the SIA itself. I attribute this to the underlying commitment which structures SIA on the notion of atomistic individuals found in liberalism. Instead, I argued that mining companies need to recognise their role in the company-community relationship and re-position their focus to include an assessment of the internal impacts of mining within the company. The thesis has suggested that the SIA denies itself the

possibility of a 'situated' ontological position, maintaining instead that it is objective and value-free. It is in fact inherently committed in this to an ontological position grounded in the possibility of transcending the limits of culture, gender, regionality and ethnicity. Furthermore it was argued that these discourses overlap and intersect across local and global arenas, in ways that are reflected in SIA or often articulated in Mining and Development discourse. Therefore, I argue that the SIA process may potentially be extended to combine both of the suggestions made in this thesis – namely to 'baseline' company employees, and to widen the scope to take into account local to global impacts and processes. This would go some way towards a developing world feminist inspired SIA that could better document the impacts of mining on women and men affected by mining.

Drawing on communitarian and WAD theory, the challenge is not merely to 'correct' one ontological lens by adding a local point of view (Spivak 1999; Code 2003; Kapoor 2008). To do justice to the fact that impacts are identified and judged in terms of a specific, contextual social meaning requires structuring the process of SIA in terms of that dialogue between the company, community and external stakeholders. Bebbington Bornschlegl & Johnson states:

> Indeed, one of the intellectual challenges facing work on extractive industry henceforth is to find modes of analysis and narrative that are able to tack back and forth between these understandings of structure and explorations of difference (Bebbington, Bornschlegl & Johnson, 2013, p. 14).

As I have suggested, one way to enable this dialogue is to include the community as an active participant in the process which sets the frame for discourse of impacts. That is, to provide for active community participation in the framing, analysing and gathering of SIA data and its prioritisation. In this sense, the thesis shows that a technocratic check-list administered by local experts cannot adequately address the fact that impacts are values-dependent, and instead what is required in order to better capture and register impacts is a process that enables a dialogue between the 'thick vocabulary' in which impacts are registered and judged in the first place.

Chapter Eight identified one of the most significant findings of this thesis by demonstrating how individuals and their decision-making processes are directed by the ontological

commitments they carry. Through examining the issue of dust as understood by multiple stakeholders in the community, the on-site Mongolian worker and the Western environmental director, it was clearly observable that perceptions of and the priority accorded to the impact were constructed from different ontological viewpoints. Importantly, the chapter demonstrated that these actors operate within a hierarchy of social relations, a discourse constructed by social relations shaped by gender, ethnicity, and regionality. This finding not only highlights the importance of foregrounding ontology as a premise to approaching Mining and Development, but also demonstrates that the crucial issue for Mining and Development is how to negotiate and interpret different ontological frameworks, given that we are all insuperably committed to one. I suggest that to deal with the inevitable ontological commitments is not to circumvent or deny them, either as a western female researcher or as a company employee or herder, but rather to forge an alliance and dialogue that is based on recognition of different ontological positions. Finally, with the application of a feminist analysis, I argue that a theory premised on self-reflexivity, and the historically conscious practice of working together to achieve an understanding of ontological difference, can provide a clearer insight into the discourse of Mining and Development in Mongolia.

As mining has developed in Mongolia the international discourse of Mining and Development has begun to re-frame social meanings and fragment power relations of the South Gobi communities. Consequently, the community has become distanced and pacified in deciding its development trajectory. A symbolic example of this inversion of power was witnessed by the informal laws of hospitality and *nutag* – practices once directed and hosted by women and the people of a landscape, but now discursively replaced by the role of the company positioned as a host (as the company now decides the roles of the individual and the maxims for development). It seems the community has discursively become a guest to the mine's operations, a role which stands in direct contrast to the community's ontological commitments. In conclusion, if the company and indeed the international Mining and Development actors involved continue to operate in a paradigm that ignores ontological commitments and unintentionally reverses the role of their relationship with the Mongolian communities, Mining and Development programs and the best of CSR intentions will continue to land amiss.

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