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BOOK REVIEW ESSAYS

Latin American Extractivism and (or after) the Left

Donald V. Kingsbury
University of Toronto, CA
donald.kingsbury@utoronto.ca

This essay reviews the following works:

Planetary Mine: Territories of Extraction under Late Capitalism. By Martín Arboleda. New York: Verso, 2020. Pp. xiv + 288. $29.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781788732963.

Legacies of the Left Turn in Latin America: The Promise of Inclusive Citizenship. Edited by Manuel Balán and Françoise Montambeault. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019. Pp. xxvii + 472. $60.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9780268106577.

Growth without Development: Peru in Comparative Perspective. By Rubén Berríos. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018. Pp. ix + 156. $90.00 hardcover. ISBN: 9781498550734.

Who Speaks for Nature? Indigenous Movements, Public Opinion, and the Petro-State in Ecuador. By Todd A. Eisenstadt and Karleen Jones West. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019, Pp. x + 288. $19.53 hardcover. ISBN: 9780190908959.

Latin America's Pink Tide: Breakthroughs and Shortcomings. Edited by Steve Ellner. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2019. Pp. vi + 364. $39.00 paperback. ISBN: 9781538125632.

The Myth of Economic Development. By Celso Furtado. Translated by Jordan B. Jones. Newark: Polity Press, 2020. Pp. xxx + 90. $19.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781509540143.

After the Pink Tide: Corporate State Formation and New Egalitarianisms in Latin America. Edited by Marina Gold and Alessandro Zagato. Oxford: Berghahn, 2020. Pp. 218. $29.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781789208764.

Bolivia in the Age of Gas. By Bret Gustafson. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020. Pp. xviii + 328. $27.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781478010999.

Resource Radicals: From Petro-nationalism to Post-extractivism in Ecuador. By Thea Riofrancos. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020. Pp. xi + 264. $26.95 paperback. ISBN: 9781478008484.

Los ciclos políticos y económicos de América Latina y el boom de materias primas. Edited by Francisco Sánchez and Mercedes García Montero. Madrid: Tecnos, 2019. Pp. 376. $24.75 paperback. ISBN: 9788430975495.

Las fronteras del neoextractivismo en América Latina: Conflictos socioambientales, giro ecoterritorial y nuevas dependencias. By Maristella Svampa. Beilefeld: Beilefeld University Press, an imprint of Transcript Verlag, 2019. Pp. 142. Open access e-book. ISBN: 9783839445266. DOI: 10.14361/9783839445266-003.

The early 2000s in Latin America were a time of reconstruction and unraveling. In the 1990s, as poverty rates and inequality skyrocketed and quality of life deteriorated for majorities across the region, traditional elites were discredited by their own actions and by powerful new—or newly mobilized—social

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movements. Voter turnout plummeted and presidential mandates were truncated by popular uprisings as dissatisfaction with the corruption and exclusion now associated with representative democracy spread. The resulting openings proved opportune for longtime opposition figures like Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and the Workers' Party (PT) in Brazil, and marginal ones like Néstor Kirchner in Argentina's fractured but hegemonic Peronismo. More left-leaning elements in centrist coalitions, like Michele Bachelet's Socialist party in Chile's long-ruling Concertación, had their voices amplified, also seen in Pepe Mujica's more progressive term as president in Uruguay's Frente Amplio. In Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution, Bolivia's Movimiento al Socialismo, and the Revolución Ciudadana in Ecuador, wide-ranging and enduring changes to the dynamics of state, society, economy, and nature were enshrined in new constitutions. Development, democracy, and sovereignty were central demands in these leftward swings. Present as well, implicitly and explicitly, was an indictment of the resource dependency understood to have caused the region's historical and recent troubles.[1]

The reforms of the "Left Turn" or "Pink Tide," guided by local constraints and opportunities, addressed neoliberalism's crises. With a wide range of variation across national contexts, governments moved to build central states supporting social welfare and financial intervention, greater or reimagined democratic participation, regional integration and South-South solidarity, independence from the United States, and—for a time—alternative ways of conceiving and pursuing development.

By 2015 the tide began to ebb. Electoral reversals, fracturing coalitions, and the bust of the commodity cycle emboldened a resurgent right to implement new rounds of austerity and rapprochement with the United States, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Bank.[2] By this point neoextractivism was already circulating in the streets and being honed conceptually as one way to understand the limits of the left in power. Neoextractivism—also referred to as progressive extractivism or simply extractivism—combines a number of long-standing social movement and intellectual positions in the Americas. In his peerless *Open Veins of Latin America*, for example, Eduardo Galeano chronicled how mining in Potosí, Bolivia, under the Spanish Empire reshaped landscapes along the Pacific Coast and deep into the interior; he concluded in bleak terms: "the more a product is desired by the world market, the greater the misery it brings to the Latin American peoples whose sacrifice creates it."[3] Movements like the struggles of Brazilian rubber tappers in Acre against agribusiness or of the Lenka people in Honduras against hydroelectric dams also point to efforts not just to oppose exploitative development but also to build alternatives in the process. The work of Alberto Acosta, Eduardo Gudynas, and Maristella Svampa (considered here), among others, has been central in identifying, differentiating, and elaborating the conceptual characteristics of extractivism both regionally and in specific national cases.[4] From these elements, extractivism is understood as "a structural trait of capitalism as a world economy" that has undergone significant transformations in the twenty-first century (Svampa, 15). While extractivism dates to the conquest of the Americas, today it offers a unique conceptual position to consider geopolitical realignments taking place under Chinese leadership, the "vertiginous reprimarization" of Latin American economies and societies, and the myths of development in the context of the climate crisis (Svampa, 17, 20).

The scope of extraction in the twenty-first century has expanded in multiple directions. New technologies allow for the removal of entire mountains. Others facilitate the mining of human desires and futures. However, more than just a description of removal and plunder, a consequence of poor policy making, or a resource curse, extractivism as a concept identifies a logic, a set of subject-producing practices, and a way of being in the world. As Imre Szeman and Jennifer Wenzel observe, writing about extractivism in literary and cultural criticism, "the moment one adds the suffix *-ism* to any noun, extraction is transformed into a system or ideology, a representational and symbolic space linked to the use (and abuse) of nature-as-resource."[5]

1 Fernando Coronil, "The Future in Question: History and Utopia in Latin America (1989–2010)," in *Business as Usual: The Roots of the Global Financial Meltdown*, ed. Craig Calhoun and Georgi Derluguian (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 231–264; Arturo Escobar, "Latin America at a Crossroads: Alternative Modernizations, Post-liberalism, or Post-development?," *Cultural Studies* 24, no. 1 (2010): 1–65.

2 Barry Cannon, *The Right in Latin America: Elite Power, Hegemony, and the Struggle for the State* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

3 Eduardo Galeano, *The Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent*, translated by Cedric Belfrage, 25th anniversary ed. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997), 31, 61.

4 Alberto Acosta, "Post-extractivismo: Entre el discurso y la praxis. algunas reflexiones gruesas para la acción," *Ciencia Política* 11, no. 21 (2016): 287–332. Acosta was also central to the collective Acción Ecológica's *El Ecuador post-petrolero* (Quito: Acción Ecológica, 2010). Eduardo Gudynas, "El estado compensador y nuevos extractivismos: Las ambivalencias del progresismo sudamericano," *Nueva Sociedad*, no. 237 (2012); Eduardo Gudynas, *Extractivismos: Ecología, economía, y política de un modo de entender el desarrollo y la naturaleza* (Cochabamba: Centro de Documentación e Información Bolivia, 2015).

5 Imre Szeman and Jennifer Wenzel, "What Do We Talk about When We Talk about Extractivism?," *Textual Practice* 35, no. 3 (2021): 21. DOI: 10.1080/0950236X.2021.1889829.

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Extractivism exceeds the processes of extraction itself, with all of the asymmetries and violence they entail. It is an ideology, a world- and subject-making (and breaking) machine.

The Argentine sociologist, author, and activist Maristella Svampa has been among extractivism's most prominent critics. Her recent work on the subject, *Las fronteras del neoextractivismo en América Latina*, highlights important themes in thinking around extractivism while considering its fates after the Left Turn. Svampa coined the widely used term "commodity consensus" to highlight the common sense of the Pink Tide, in which central governments maximize resource exports to generate revenues needed to repair the damage done by the Washington Consensus (28–29).[6] The new approach, however, remains firmly in the mindset that nature is a collection of "natural resources" to be sold in exchange for modernization. This "*imaginario eldoradista*" promises a fast track to Europeanesque modernity through commodity exports and has, Svampa concludes, stood in for and in the way of actual social change for centuries (29). Neoextractivism's key difference lies in the resistances it has engendered.

During the Pink Tide's "positive phase" that accompanied the boom of 2003–2008/10, governments—as in Bolivia and Ecuador, for example—attempted to resolve the contradiction between the sacrifice of nature and the ecological and indigenist narratives championed by leaders like Evo Morales and Rafael Correa through an array of social programs (32). However, with the ensuing "multiplication of megaprojects" the "whitewashing" work of the Commodities Consensus became too obvious to ignore. "The clear result …," writes Svampa, "is that the expansion of the frontier of rights (collectives, territories, environments) met its limit at capital's frontiers," triggering opposition (35). The megaprojects of this second phase—such as the highway through the Isiboro Sécure National Park and Indigenous Territory (TIPNIS) in Bolivia, oil exploration in Ecuador's Yasuní National Park, the opening of the Arco Minero del Orinoco (AMO) in Venezuela, fracking in Vaca Muerta in Argentina, or the Belo Monte hydroelectric complex in Brazil—recomposed politics throughout the region. Onetime critics of developmentalism such as former Bolivian vice president Álvaro García Linera became its champions, and opposition to extraction by formerly allied social movements was increasingly met with the rhetorical and physical violence of avowedly progressive states.[7] The Left Turn, faced with a choice between extraction and the local movements that made their governments possible, sided with extraction.

In response to the Left Turn's turn, a *giro ecoterritorial* (ecoterritorial turn, another of Svampa's concepts) articulated familiar forms of resistance such as marches, blockades, transnational collaborations, and local electoral campaigns, with an emphasis on *autogestión* and resignification, mobilizing new or newly imagined themes, languages, and strategies (45).[8] Territory thus comes to mean more than blank space or latent economic value (40). It is rather part of subjectivity, an interactive space in which human and nature combine beyond or against state boundaries (56). For Svampa, then, care and autonomy are less theoretical markers than survival strategies—struggles in which women have always played a determining role (65–66).

Extractivism is thus, for Svampa, an expression of capital's inherent need to generate, dominate, and appropriate surplus value and recreate the world in its image—an image experienced in Latin America as the sacrifice of nature in service of a Eurocentric, masculinist, and developmentalist fantasy. The Pink Tide, often using the language of decolonization and lambasting the ecocidal impacts of global capitalism, in many ways worsened dependency while furthering a developmentalism that Svampa sees as always at the core of the region's problems rather than their putative solutions (115). This is why the ecoterritorial turn has been animated not only by decolonization and the criticism of Eurocentric approaches to development, but also by feminist languages of care and interdependency (122).

[6] See also Maristella Svampa, "Commodities Consensus: Neoextractivism and Enclosure of the Commons in the Americas," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 114, no. 1 (2015): 66–82.

[7] See, for example, Álvaro García Linera, *Geopolítica de la Amazonía: Poder hacendal-patrimonial y acumulación capitalista* (La Paz: Vicepresidencia del Estado Plurinacional, 2012). Once an imprisoned guerrilla and one of the most prominent Marxist political theorists of the continent, the former vice president's transformation into the defender of megaprojects against grassroots opposition has earned him the ire of a significant portion of the left throughout the region. See, for example, *Viewpoint* magazine's special edition "Álvaro García Linera: A Bolivian Marxist Seduced," available at: https://viewpointmag.com/2015/02/25/alvaro-garcia-linera-a-bolivian-marxist-seduced/.

[8] *Autogestión*, awkwardly translated as autonomous self-management or self-governance, became a key principle in movements against neoliberal restructuring in the early 2000s. Though the concept has affinities with Italian Workerist strains of Marxism, it also has its own long and independent lineage in Latin America. See, for example, Colectivo Situaciones, *Notes for a New Social Protagonism*, translated by Nate Holdren and Sebastián Touza (New York: Autonomedia, 2002); and Donald Kingsbury, *Only the People Can Save the People: Constituent Power, Revolution, and Counterrevolution in Venezuela* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2018).

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Development and developmentalism have been the target of critical attention in Latin America since their Cold War origins.[9] The recent translation (the first in English) of Celso Furtado's *Myth of Economic Development* presents a useful vantage for considering extractivism's conceptual debts to this critical lineage. Originally published in Portuguese in 1974, *The Myth of Economic Development* responds to the Club of Rome's landmark 1972 study *The Limits to Growth*. In *Limits*, the Club of Rome argued forcefully against prevailing approaches to development, concluding the world's finite resources could not sustain infinite or unlimited growth. It in turn called for a fundamental adjustment of political economy's operating presuppositions by replacing the "growthism" of the North, which requires unlimited economic expansion, with systemic equilibrium within our socioecological limits. Failure to tackle this transition in a globally coordinated and thoroughgoing fashion, the study concluded, could only produce tragedy (Furtado, xv).

For Furtado *Limits to Growth* made several important interventions. It was, however, not without its own limits. He commended its recognition of "a planetary economic system" and the reliance of countries in the developed North on raw materials imported from the South (3). He also agreed with criticisms of the naive techno-optimism that permeated (and continues to permeate) policy and popular culture, in which scientific progress and capitalist competition would solve any problem humanity might encounter (5). This sort of technological fix, he underscored, was little more than a rebranding of the destructive consumption the capitalist world system misleadingly but seductively identifie with "progress" (5). Furtado also emphasized the study's conclusion that in this way capitalism undermines its own socioeconomic and ecological conditions of possibility; infinite and global growth would only accelerate catastrophe.

However, the report misses a key element of global political economy: "peripheral economies will never be *developed*, in the sense of being similar to the economies that currently make up the center of the capitalist system" (63). This has nothing to do with any defect of peripheral peoples, states, economies, or landscapes (9). It is rather because core countries have, as a condition of their development, restricted development in the periphery. The uneven distribution of affluence and deprivation are features, not errors, of the model, meaning "a cataclysmic rupture, on a foreseeable future," triggered by continued development across the globe "lacks plausibility" (63). *Limits to Growth* rings alarm bells that generalizing the affluence of the northern core will bring about environmental collapse. For Furtado, such a generalization could only ever be possible in a different—nonindustrial, nondevelopmentalist, and noncapitalist—geopolitical setting.

It turns out of course that making northern consumptive affluence universal was not required for the rich to sabotage future life on Earth. By the 2020s the global 1 percent controlled more wealth than 4.6 billion people combined, and the crises of the Anthropocene threaten every society on the planet, if unevenly.[10] Despite this seeming counterfactual, Furtado is prescient in identifying both the root cause of the climate crisis and, more concerningly, reasons responses will worsen rather than ameliorate its consequences. "Thanks to [the myth of development]," he concludes, "it has been possible to divert attention from the basic task of identifying fundamental collective necessities, and from the possibilities that the advance of science opens up to humankind. Instead, it has concentrated people's attention on abstract objectives, such as *investments*, *exports*, and *growth*" (63). Development's primary directive that growth—and for peripheral economies, growth via maximizing extraction and export—is the necessary prerequisite for human and social advancement is a fundamental attribute not only of the industrial capitalism at which Furtado took aim, but of neoextractivist regimes as well. Neither lived up to its promise, dealing potentially irreparable harm to landscapes and livelihoods in the process. This, for Furtado, is how development was designed.

Left Turn administrations often spoke in terms that resonated with the dependency school. Pink Tide states emphasized South-South cooperation and regional integration as solutions to the dilemmas of the lost decades. However, the geopolitical realignment triggered by China's growth shifted rather than concluded dependencies, and the promises of a progressive extractivism quickly became a point of divergence within the left itself. Thea Riofrancos traces this intra-left split in *Resource Radicals: From Petro-nationalism to Post-extractivism in Ecuador*. During Ecuador's Pink Tide years (2007–2017), "activists that once fought for the nationalization of natural resources now opposed all resource extraction, a leftist president found himself in conflict with the social movements who initially supported his political project, and the Left-in-power

[9] Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

[10] "World's Billionaires Have More Wealth Than 4.6 Billion People," Oxfam International, January 20, 2020, https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/worlds-billionaires-have-more-wealth-46-billion-people. On the consequences of climate change according to wealth, see Damian Carrington, "'Climate Apartheid': UN Expert Says Human Rights May Not Survive," *Guardian*, June 25, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jun/25/climate-apartheid-united-nations-expert-says-human-rights-may-not-survive-crisis.

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became synonymous with the expansion of extraction at any cost" (28). As opposed to the neoliberal era, however, this moment is characterized by political stability (at the level of the executive), and struggles became increasingly constitutionalized, pushing beyond the material removal and export of nature from Ecuadorean soil and into the meaning and substance of democracy and authority (57).

Extractivism in Ecuador, as elsewhere, is bigger than the presidency. In the 1990s multiple and independent movements—from unemployed workers in Ecuador's cities, to victims of Texaco's (and then Chevron's) environmental crimes in the Amazon, to CONAIE (the continent's largest Indigenous federation)—briefly coalesced around an anti-austerity and anti–structural adjustment platform. Correa had no ties to these movements; he was an economics professor at an elite university in Quito at the height of their resistance and, in 2005, economic minister for his predecessor. He was, however, able to identify himself with movement demands enough to seize the opportunity they created. By the time of the constitutionalization of these multiple and at times conflicting aims, gaps among movements and between movements and the state became issues of significant contention. As Correa embraced extraction first as a means to address social needs and then as the logic of the state itself, these contradictions proved irreconcilable.

Resource Radicals will be a key text in the expanding genealogy of extractivism in the Americas, particularly for the light it sheds on how competing understandings of the state and of neoliberalization shape sociopolitical and ecological relationships to development. In a chapter on technocrats, for example, Riofrancos notes, "as opposed to understanding neoliberalism as the contemporary incarnation of capitalism or imperialism, these state actors defined it as the 'weakness' of the state, its territorial 'absence' (especially in the territories where new mining and oil projects were located), and its failure to 'coordinate' the economy" (141). Post-neoliberalism is thus a project of reconstituted state power and the centralization of authority, which was increasingly deemed unquestionable in matters of extractive projects. Despite the 2007 constitution's promise of a new politics that expanded citizenship and democracy—even including nature as the civic equal to the human population—the Correa administration's resource nationalism maintained a vertical approach to state-society-nature relations.

Civic renewal was defined in terms of services rendered rather than engagement and protagonism. Framing the constitution by *sumak kawsay*, a Kichwa concept emphasizing the mutual and harmonious thriving of collective—human and nonhuman—life, proved insufficient for challenging the state's extractivist core. Instead, the Revolución Ciudadana increasingly identified democracy with development results, services rendered, and sovereignty, "forg[ing] an intimate link between democratic sovereignty and the exploitation of the nation's subsoil resources" (117). People and nature alike were thus subordinated to a logic of state whose functional exclusion of population and territory was notable in its similarity to previous extractivisms. Correa's difference, similar across the Pink Tide, lay with the way in which he popularized extraction without fundamentally altering the economic or class structures of the country, let alone how it related to nature.

Like many treatments of the topic, the extractivists in *Resource Radicals* are state officials and national and multinational corporations. Largely left out, however, are what we might call the passive extractivists that benefit from and offer at least tacit support for extractive models in rallies and in the ballot box. There are other elements the extractivist/anti-extractivist dyad struggles to explain. How, for example, can it account for the simultaneous support among many Ecuadoreans for both anti-extractivist measures like the Yasuní-ITT Initiative (more below) and the "Plan B" to expand the oil frontier into the Indigenous and biodiverse territories once up for protection?[11] More attention to these passive extractivists could address these questions without recourse to the sort of extratheoretical notion of populism often deployed by critics of the Pink Tide.[12]

Todd Eisenstadt and Karleen Jones West's *Who Speaks for Nature? Indigenous Movements, Public Opinion, and the Petro-State in Ecuador* also offers insights into the contradictions of the Correa years in Ecuador. Based on an impressive nationwide survey on democratization, development, and environmental governance and activism during the Correa years, the book examines possibilities for environmental action under "extractive populism" (7). Their analyses also foreground the 2007 Ecuadorian constitution—a document in which extraction plays a constant if at times oblique role. For example, the adoption of *sumak kawsay* as a framework for the constitution and subsequent national development plans offered the hope of solving the broken riddle of development. Granting rights to nature both attracted local and international praise for the promise of balancing human needs and environmental stewardship. Requirements for Free Prior

[11] See, for example, Teresa Kramarz and Donald Kingsbury, *Populist Moments and Extractivist States in Venezuela and Ecuador: The People's Oil?* (New York: Palgrave, 2021).

[12] See, for example, Jorge Castañeda, "Latin America's Left Turn," *Foreign Affairs* 85 no. 3 (2006): 28–43.

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and Informed Consent (FPIC) for new resource concessions, finally, offered glimpses of alternative and more participatory ways for extraction to play a role in local, regional, and national economies. However, as Eisenstadt and West's historical and survey analysis illustrates, none of these promises came close to being fulfilled.

There are numerous reasons for these failures, from the mundane and technical to the complicated evolution of *correismo*. Both extremes were at play in the failed Yasuní-ITT Initiative to leave oil in the ground in the Amazon; a combination of missing implementing legislation and Correa's impatience pushed the government toward ever greater reliance on oil royalties (45). As multiple interviews conducted by Eisenstadt and West attest, the early days of the Correa administration were marked by a good-faith pursuit of decarbonization and alternatives to development like the Yasuní-ITT initiative. This spirit can also be seen in key cabinet appointments, for example, in naming the antimining activist Alberto Acosta to head the Ministry of Energy and Mines (180, 184). However, this potential off-ramp to a "green" administration, Eisenstadt and West conclude, was doomed from the moment Correa expelled transnational financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, leaving Ecuador with dwindling fiscal resources to implement his proposed social programs (213).

Who Speaks for Nature?'s expansive public opinion poll puts the resulting shift to neoextractivism in an interesting light: "people who live in areas on Ecuador's extractive frontiers already drilled for oil are much less likely to prioritize the environment over development, whereas those where oil is debated expect extraction to provide them with benefits are more likely to prioritize the environment over extraction" (15). Rather than immediate self-interest or essentialist notions of (usually indigenized) identity and environmentalist commitments, Eisenstadt and West find instead that it is "a new form of vulnerability—the vulnerability to extraction—that shapes attitudes toward the environment" (7). Support or opposition are, furthermore, largely determined by local factors and the complexities of negotiating livelihoods in imposed conditions. As one Sápara leader put it to the authors, "those whose lands have been polluted are in favor [of more extraction]. They live in that reality. Those who are opposed are those of us whose lands have not yet been contaminated, and above all, those of us who do not live near a paved highway" (145).

Riofrancos's and Eisenstadt and West's analyses consider extractivism as a structural and structuring mode not only of policy making, but of relating to nature and collectively imagining futures. This is much less so with other political scientific and economic considerations of extraction in the Americas. For example, in Francisco Sánchez and Mercedes García Montero's edited volume *Los ciclos políticos y económicos de América Latina y el* boom *de las materias primas*, extraction is an element rather than the foundation of a political era. The volume is based on a multinational elite survey that the assembled authors deploy to understand the latest left-right political cycle in the region. Their findings suggest a "contagion effect" of post-neoliberal policies that followed on the heels of a similarly widespread neoliberal turn across the political spectrum (353). The extractive boom was a necessary but not sufficient variable in this process, and, they argue, the bust of the commodity cycle has less to do with the left's poor electoral results since 2015 than political factors such as corruption scandals or flagging economic performance (356).

For Sánchez and García and their assembled authors, extractivism is not an ideology but rather a relatively transparent adjective. Their survey is less concerned with how states and citizens relate to their environments and define development than with the recomposition and performance of elites and parties in and out of power. Similarly, the chapters in Marina Gold and Alessandro Zagato's *After the Pink Tide: Corporate State Formation and New Egalitarianisms in Latin America* treat extractivism as an aspect of what Bruce Kapferer refers to as "the corporate state," or the "reconfiguration, redetermination, and submission of the orders of the nation-state to the rationalism of the economic, to an economistic pragmatism that pervades most areas of sociopolitical existence" (203). Progressive extractivism could only, Gold and Zagato argue, "limit privatization and partially redistribute national income," introducing "egalitarian elements into the structure of the state, which was however almost entirely preserved" (9). While perhaps a necessary corrective to neoliberalism's excesses, progressive extractivists only succeeded in strengthening the corporate state's grip on politics and society (196). They were, in other words, post-neoliberal only in a strictly chronological or transitional sense. What they are in transition *to* could be much worse.

Los ciclos políticos and *After the Pink Tide* treat extractivism as an elective procedure. The windfalls and pitfalls of commodity export–dominated economics are of concern for their analyses, but these works also assume a certain autonomy of the political from economic and natural spheres of experience. This does not mean, as analyses in Gold and Zagato's volume insist, that the political cannot be captured or colonized by economic rationality. This is, of course, their primary concern with the emergent "corporate state." However, in these studies the state is something that is captured, influenced, and dominated by other

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forces. As it gains conceptual cohesion, extractivism points toward a more contingent and entangled sense of the political. In extractivism the state is the ongoing result of economic and natural processes, subject formations, institutional evolution, and ideologies—that is, power relations and class struggle in a globalized and unevenly interconnected network of states, societies, and nature.

In *Growth without Development: Peru in Comparative Perspective* Rubén Berríos sees extractivism as a potentially "shortsighted" policy choice, but less a determining factor than other aspects of governance in the pursuit of development (vii). In Peru, political instability and widespread distrust of officials arising from chronic corruption and mismanagement produce poorer results than in Chile and South Korea, the other cases in his study. These two countries, he concludes, have benefited from macroeconomic stability and continuity of policies established by the dictatorships of Augusto Pinochet and Park Chung-Hee, respectively.[13]

Through sound political guidance, Berríos concludes, South Korea and Chile have been able to at least partially link economic growth with social and human development, as seen in education rates and the adoption of advanced technologies. This has allowed Chile to develop where Peru, for example, has faltered. Like the rest of Latin America, Berríos alleges, in Peru "there is no innovation culture. Latin America has produced great writers and lawyers but few scientists" (109). The thinking here is macroeconomically orthodox and offensively anachronistic. It illustrates precisely the sort of internalized colonialism criticized by Furtado and others, in which domestic policies and invented cultural dispositions are blamed for global, structural inequalities. Furthermore, and despite his book's title, Berríos's positive assessments of bloody dictators like Pinochet and Park reinforce a long-standing willingness by developmentalists to subordinate human rights to economic growth.

Other parts of *Growth without Development* illustrate the degree to which even conventional macroeconomic approaches hew to neostructural lines.[14] Rather than advocating for unchecked privatization and deregulation, Berríos proposes the state should play a significant—regulatory and coordinating—role in the economy, encouraging foreign direct investment and providing education, infrastructure, and law and order (5, 8, 121). Extractive states, he warns, can easily become weak states, tolerating or even encouraging corruption and criminality, both of which have a negative impact on private-sector-driven development (121). Good governance, investment in human capital—and, Berríos implies, the shoring up of states' repressive capacities—are the only way to counter the deleterious legacies of extraction.

Analyses of the Pink Tide centered on policy makers, elites, and institutional design tend to treat resource extraction as a secondary or instrumental concern rather than a historical condition. This can be seen, for example, in Manuel Balán and Françoise Monteambeault's edited volume *Legacies of the Left Turn in Latin America: The Promise of Inclusive Citizenship*. Editors and authors alike note the degree to which the Left Turn emerged in the coincidence of the crises of neoliberalization and a commodity supercycle propelled by China's demand for raw materials. The contributions in *Legacies of the Left Turn*, however, understand political economy as separate from rather than elements of socioecological relations. Citizenship regimes as presented here are defined by representation and participation, inclusion and exclusion, or party performance and electoral mandates. What is missed in this approach—characteristic of much work in political science—is how these civic formations rely on and are limited by the assumption that societies are apart from and above the conditions that make us. Such a divorce from context—as generations of Marxists, feminists, political ecologists, and critics of extractivism have pointed out—all too often makes a fetish of institutions, where a monolithic and finished entity smooths an analytical space roughed up by myriad social and environmental interactions, all of which are shot through with unequal power relations.

Legacies of the Left Turn thus offers an important but incomplete accounting of the Pink Tide's potential medium- and long-term impacts on citizenship in Latin America. It is something of a missed opportunity in that it gathers some of the most influential political scientists writing about Latin America of the last three decades, whose focus generally remains on institutional design and performance. Notable exceptions in the volume are Benjamin Goldfrank's chapter on limits to participatory reforms in the region ("Participatory Democracy in Latin America? Limited Legacies of the Left Turn"), Roberta Rice's chapter on Indigenous

[13] The role of the Cold War in rebuilding and industrializing South Korea is minor in Berríos's account (87). Nor are regional, hemispheric, and global imperatives fully considered in his estimation of the Pinochet coup and subsequent mass murder campaign. If anything, for Berríos the dictatorship acted as a corrective and continues to carry lessons: "When the military intervened in 1973, there was political polarization, nationalization, the seizure of plants by workers, and high inflation. This lead to the breakdown of Chilean democracy" (53).

[14] Fernando Ignacio Leiva, *Latin American Neostructuralism: The Contradictions of Post-neoliberal Development* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

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politics in the Andes ("Indigenous Autonomies under the New Left in the Andes"), and Eva Bratman's contribution on sustainable development in the Amazon ("Sustainable Development Reconsidered: The Left Turn's Legacies in the Amazon"). While these three chapters do not fully develop approaches to extraction, they point toward ways in which institutional analyses, long based in post–Cold War studies of democratization and development, might integrate new approaches to the shifting political terrain currently faced by movements and noted by scholars in other disciplines.

Goldfrank, Rice, and Bratman examine how attempts to expand participatory citizenship were undermined by neoextractivist development (in Balán and Monteambeault, 136). Resource exports provided leaders with badly needed funds, but in so doing elevated one (often foreign-dominated) element of economic policy to an untouchable matter of state. Criticism of new or existing mining, oil, gas, or agribusiness projects were ignored and criminalized by leaders such as Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Morales in Bolivia (173), and especially Correa in Ecuador (176)—leaders who also most outspokenly described themselves as revolutionaries forging participatory democracy (152).

As Bratman illustrates, neoextractivism was a bait-and-switch for activists in Brazil, undermining "what might otherwise have been stronger civil society resistance to specific policies that ultimately hitched the left's legacy to the power of corporate influence and export-oriented economic approaches" (in Balán and Monteambeault, 304). The resulting collision between neoextractivism and sustainable development in the Amazon was similar to that in the Andes. After an initial call for alternatives to development and more environmentally sound and politically inclusive modes of state-society-nature interactions, the mandate to extract carried the day. The left's environmental record could be seen as worse than its neoliberal predecessors—and, perhaps, of its right-wing successors—because these leaders faced less resistance and weakened or divided their erstwhile allies.

The chapters in Steve Ellner's *Latin America's Pink Tide: Breakthroughs and Shortcomings* stand out among the titles in this review in their defense of the Left Turn. The effect, however, is less apology than contextualization, and an insistence that criticisms of the supposedly inherent traits of the left or "cursed" resources are invested oversimplifications with partisan motivations. Ellner's criticisms of the neoextractivism thesis in many ways illustrate Riofrancos's characterization of a division within the left after neoliberalism. *Latin America's Pink Tide*, as its subtitle suggests, should thus be read as an intraleft attempt to come to terms with the recent past as it responds to the right's counteroffensives.

Ellner insists Pink Tide governments' failures were conjunctural rather than inevitable (13–14). Across the region, intransigent oppositions, foreign—that is, US—meddling, and inherited crises better explain the performance of Pink Tide governments than the assertion that any transformative agenda is inevitably doomed to failure (51). As Marcel Nelson's contribution ("Walking the 'Tightrope' of Socialist Governance") concludes, left-of-center governments in Latin America needed to accomplish the contradictory tasks of appeasing established power brokers that directly benefit from unjust orders when required, while pressing forward toward more egalitarian societies when they could (77).

For this reason, the authors in *Latin America's Pink Tide* are to varying degrees agnostic or dismissive of concerns raised by criticisms of extractivism. They recognize the historical legacy of extractivist modes of development and their toxic effects but also point to a lack of alternatives. Ellner emphasizes successes of extractives-supported social funding and insists it is unrealistic to think a decade and a half of reforms under challenging circumstances could correct for centuries of global and local inequalities (45–47). In their chapter on Brazil, Pedro Mendes Loureiro and Alfredo Saad-Filho contend that the PT's "pragmatic path of least resistance" in terms of confronting the country's neoliberal model and the forces that benefited most from it "depended on a favorable global economic environment" (105). As successive crises rocked the global economy in the 2010s and reduced demand for Brazilian exports, the PT's many marriages of political necessity became increasingly untenable and damaging to the political order as a whole, paving the way for Dilma Rousseff's impeachment under dubious circumstances in 2016 and the election of Jair Bolsonaro in 2018.[15]

In their chapter on Ecuador during and after the Correa years ("Left Populism, Democracy, State Building and the Ephemeral Counterhegemony of the Citizens' Revolution in Ecuador"), Patrick Clark and Jacobo García push back against criticisms of *correismo* as populism by describing his government's attempts to build a Weberian state (225). Clark and García insist on the necessity of shoring up the independence of the central state in a regionally divided country with a history of politics-as-state-capture, pointing, for example,

[15] On this, see also Matthew M. Taylor, "Coalitions, Corruption, and Crisis: The End of Brazil's Third Republic?," *Latin American Research Review* 55, no. 3 (2020): 595–604.

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to tax revenue's increased share in national budgets as an illustration of Correa's successes (227).[16] Clark and García also dismiss what they deem the "academic ultra-leftism" of concerns around neoextractivism that do not "recognize the structural limitations the government faced or the realities of Ecuadorian society" (231). This is a profoundly incomplete and disingenuous reading of most neoextractivist critiques of Correa, or of the Pink Tide more generally, dressing his continuity with neoliberalism in the robes of realpolitik. If anything, the critique of neoextractivism *begins* from the recognition of Latin America's structural position and especially the persistence of neoliberal approaches to politics and development (and the politics *of* development). Rather than concluding that Correa "had no control over its position as an exporter of primary commodities within the global economy" (231), attention to the permutations of neoextractivism highlight how extraction-led developments have proven disastrous. Quite aside from "ultra-leftism," then, the critique of extractivism is a realist approach to political economy and ecology. Its insistence on pursuing alternatives to development as usual is less utopian than grounded in the needs of the present.

A much more compelling criticism of neoextractivism comes from Luis Fernando Angosto-Ferrández's chapter ("Neo-extractivism, Class Formations, and the Pink Tide: Considerations of the Venezuelan Case") on the contested development of the AMO in Venezuela. Angosto-Ferrández argues that the AMO—the 12 percent of national territory now opened to foreign mining companies—is a site of contestation and class formation. Conflicts illustrate a shifting morphology of officially sanctioned and contested indigeneity in Venezuela stemming from debates around stalled recognitions from the 1999 constitution, claims to land and autonomy, and positions on extractive projects (257). Protests against military involvement in mining operations, corruption, or smuggling should thus not be automatically interpreted as resistance to extraction as such. They are rather part of a complex negotiation within an uneven constellation of forces that shape livelihood, landscape, and subjectivity in which "the capture of rent is … an organizing principle for social life" (259). Extractivism exceeds the processes and consequences of wrenching valuable materials from the earth. It is also and perhaps even primarily a way of unevenly ordering power and nature, livelihoods and landscapes. Extractivism is a subject-producing machine.

The chapters of *Latin America's Pink Tide* complicate left criticisms of progressive extractivist governments and demand we not overlook the social and economic justice accomplishments of resource export-dependent governments. However, critical authors also situated on the left call into question how evenly these gains were dispersed across geographical, racial, and gendered contexts. In *Bolivia in the Age of Gas*, Bret Gustafson places the social technologies of fossil capital front and center, highlighting the toxic effects of an extractivism pursued by governments and movements of the left as much as the right while acknowledging the challenges of imagining, let alone securing, post-hydrocarbon futures. Gustafson's book is historically expansive, beginning with the Chaco War of 1932–1935 and concluding with the 2020 ouster of Evo Morales, but it remains anchored and oriented by the ethnographer's attention to the quotidian. The result is a compelling analysis of petropower in Bolivia shaped as much by the commanding heights of the global fossil empire and the military-industrial complex (57) as by the gendered and colonial violence of everyday life on the gas frontier (80, 86).

The book's three sections—"Time," "Space," and "Excess"—express modalities through which petropower is exercised and experienced in Bolivia. Through these sections Gustafson attunes us to an extractive complex that operates not only in confrontations over land and resources but in a more molecular sense as well. Gas in Bolivia shapes culture, political horizons, and time in the anticipation of resource booms; it directs the emplacement of material extractive infrastructures and reorders national space; and it forces politics to remain centered on the distribution of extraction's spoils. As a result, "the collapse of historical time and memory into the temporality of gas extraction and sale had a numbing effect on Bolivian politics, contributing to feverish struggles over rents and the gas assemblage, and dislocating and distorting other political projects and visions" (20). Extractivism is expansive. It recreates worlds in its image.

The "gaseous state," in which the prerogatives of maintaining access to and control over the extractive sector overtakes that of the movement-directed apparatus that originally brought Evo to the presidency (176),[17] was in many ways locked in before his election as Bolivia's first Indigenous president (99). However,

[16] My own interviews with activists and former Correa administration officials, who all emphasized Correa's refusal to consider taxation as an alternative to increased dependence on hydrocarbon and mineral exports, run counter to these claims. Donald Kingsbury, Teresa Kramarz, and Kyle Jacques, "Populism or Petrostate? The Afterlives of Ecuador's Yasuní-ITT Initiative," *Society and Natural Resources* 32, no. 5 (2018): 530–547; see also Kramarz and Kingsbury, *Populist Moments and Extractivist States*. The Riofrancos and Eisenstadt and West volumes considered elsewhere in this review also run counter to Clark and García's assertions.

[17] Evo's party, Movimiento al Socialismo—Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos (MAS), was originally conceived as a movement of movements, connecting indigenist, mining, *cocalero*, and urban sectors against a neoliberal order.

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intensified extraction under MAS leadership has resulted in the steady erosion (if not outright defection) of social movement support for the government, evidence of which was on full display in the debates *within the left* about the degree to which Evo did or did not bear responsibility for his fall.[18]

This does not lead to the easy conclusion that Bolivia ought to (or can) simply "leave it in the ground." Gustafson states: "extractive subjectivity is a powerful discursive domain in Bolivia, a subject position that is widely embraced. (Consider again the challenge for those pursuing anti- or postextractivist futures in such a context.)" (239). Beyond questions of identity, even ecosocialist futures will require raw materials to reach decarbonized and egalitarian horizons—realities that the Evo and now Luis Arce administrations are banking on in their promises to industrialize Bolivia's lithium production (251).

Also attuned to these challenges, Martín Arboleda's *Planetary Mine: Territories of Extraction under Late Capitalism* uses "extraction as an analytical entry point to theorize uneven geographical development after the Western phase of capitalism"; it corrects the "hyperglobalist fallacy that posits the erosion and withering away of state sovereignty" with an analysis of "the planetary mine [that] signals the emergence of a more coercive, centralized, and authoritarian configuration of late neoliberal statecraft" (6). Extraction has been a constant driving concern in the Americas since the sixteenth century. In the twenty-first century it has become foundational to new geographical, ecological, and political logics that nonetheless remain ever more rooted in ostensibly abstract forms of economic violence and coercion (142). This "planetary mine," as described by Arboleda, is sustained as much by labor power and logistics technologies as it is by the spatial emplacements of governance necessary for a now fully globalized extractivist network (4).

In this planetary configuration the space for left-of-center governments to meaningfully alter existing global and local inequities is severely circumscribed. Arboleda focuses on Chile, a country that never meaningfully broke with the brutally neoliberalized extraction of the Pinochet years (1973–1989). Twenty years of centrist rule by the Concertación coalition, which ended with Sebastián Piñera's first term (2010–2014), did little to change mining, property regimes, or labor relations in Chile. Indeed, Chile's reliance on mineral exports, primarily copper, increased after the transfer to civilian rule and accelerated as China's demand for Chilean commodities grew in the early 2000s (64). In this way Chile illustrates the situation common to governments of the left, center, and right in Latin America. Every state in one way or another had to respond to the neoliberalization of the 1990s—"paying the social debt" as it was posed in Chile—but each was limited in terms of policy-making options as much as political will or vision (72). The Pink Tide's stated anti-neoliberalism and anti-imperialist emphasis on regional integration are important organizing principles, but in the end the pursuit of autonomy and development resulted in more, not less, entanglement in the debilitating webs of transnational capital (72).

Following the open Marxist tradition, Arboleda rejects understandings of states as timeless, unchanging, or objective institutions and norms. In *Planetary Mine*, states are rather contingent on class struggle, which is ongoing and international (22). As in other aspects of human (and nonhuman) life, digitization and the informational turn reflect the drive by states and capital to amplify exploitation, as seen in experiences as diverse as supply chain management's extension to the molecular level of minerals themselves (118), the proliferation of communication technologies as vectors for the production of surplus value (111), the financialization of extraction at the national and project level, or the explosion of household debt and microcredit (177, 189). This proliferation of devices of abstracted, systemic coercion shape subjectivity, infrastructures, and landscapes, as seen for example in urban agglomerations like Antofagasta, Chile, a port city that has become a gigantic extractive machine (130–131).

Arboleda's planetary mine—the book and the concept—will be central to understandings of extractivism going forward. However, he cautions, "too much emphasis on extractive logics can obfuscate the equally relevant function of labor exploitation, impersonal compulsions, fetishization, and all those economic processes that—despite not being immediately associated with extraction—are also central to it" (247). The early twenty-first century's explosion of extraction, as material process and critical conceptual enterprise, is noteworthy. It is not, however, unintelligibly new. For Arboleda, global capitalism has undergone a transformative intensification and rearticulation, but this should be understood through "a revitalized critique of political economy that posits value as the pulsing engine that drives the process of environment-making in contemporary society" (247). Extractivism cannot, for Arboleda, be understood outside capitalism. The former is an expression of the latter.

[18] Gabriel Hetland, "Understanding Bolivia's Nightmare," *NACLA*, November 20, 2019, https://nacla.org/news/2019/11/19/bolivia-morales-coup.

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It is perhaps for this reason that Arboleda ends *Planetary Mine* on a tentative, even optimistic note. It is also the note on which this essay concludes. He writes, "the monstrous robots of extraction that today gobble forests, arable lands, rivers, and ocean floors might be *dream images* of the technological landscapes of tomorrow, where humans and machines are no longer character masks of alien forces but work for the *buen vivir* of world society" (259). As societies make their first steps into decarbonizing energy transitions, extraction takes on yet another new role. A host of materials such as lithium, cobalt, and nickel are increasingly important as demand for renewable energy technologies increases. The green build-out will also require more mundane metals like copper and aluminum, and they will all have to come from somewhere. Through its focus on the role of territory, value, labor power, class formation, and class antagonism (all of which are always entangled), *Planetary Mine* highlights the need not only to think extractivism across historical moments and geopolitical spaces, but to recognize it in its fullness as part of the overarching project of a capitalism that started the climate crisis in the first place, worsened it, and still seeks to profit from the destruction it has wrought. Nothing short of the revolutionary reimagining of work, of our relations to the earth, and of our relations to each other will be capable of preventing history from repeating itself.

Extractivism is one way to explain the Pink Tide's failure to realize such a revolutionary transformation. As an array of related challenges, histories, and power relations, extractivism continues to define a political field now controlled by the right and further darkened by a pandemic. Extractivism is not a problem of a particular political orientation but a civilizational disposition; it makes little sense, conceptually speaking, if considered in isolation from development and developmentalism, from neoliberalism and its legacies, or from global capitalism itself. It depends on and reproduces a state-society-nature dynamic of order and command, of sacrificing the environment in the name of an ever elusive progress. The Pink Tide's brief and failed attempt to steer extractivism against itself illustrates the durability of this complex. Extractivism after the left in Latin America is once again more brutal, and the right's attacks on social solidarity have shredded promises of redistribution. It remains extractivism, however, and it remains the terrain on which politics and the relationship between state, society, and nature will be contested.

Author Information

Donald V. Kingsbury is assistant professor of political science at the University of Toronto. He is the author of *Only the People Can Save the People: Constituent Power, Revolution, and Counterrevolution in Venezuela* (2018) and, with Teresa Kramarz, *Extractivist States and Populist Moments in Venezuela and Ecuador: The People's Oil?* (2021).

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